



# Draft EPR Notification: Plastic Packaging Waste

## Why in News

Recently, the Union Environment Ministry has come out with a draft notification for regulation of **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** under [Plastic Waste Management rules 2016](#).

- The draft **specifies the quantity of waste that will have to be managed** by producers, importers and brand owners who generate plastic packaging waste in India.
- Earlier, the Ministry had notified the [Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021](#). These rules prohibit specific **single-use plastic** items which have “**low utility and high littering potential**” by 2022.

## Key Points

- **Producers' Mandate:**
  - It mandates **producers of plastic packaging material to collect all of their produce by 2024** and ensure that a minimum percentage of it be recycled as well as used in subsequent supply.
  - Producers of plastic will be **obliged to declare to the government**, via a centralised website, how much **plastic they produce annually**.
- **EPR Certificates :**
  - It has also specified a system whereby **makers and users of plastic packaging can collect certificates** — called EPR certificates — **and trade in them**.
    - EPR means the **responsibility of a producer** for the environmentally sound **management of the product** (plastic packaging) until the **end of its life**.
    - The certificates will **help organisations in making up for their shortfall** from other organisations that have used recycled content in excess of their obligation.
- **End-of-Life Disposal:**
  - Only a fraction of **plastic that cannot be recycled** — such as **multi-layered multi-material plastics** — **will be eligible to be sent for end-of-life disposal** such as road construction, waste to energy, waste to oil and cement kilns.
  - The methods only prescribed by the [Central Pollution Control Board \(CPCB\)](#) will be permitted for their disposal.
- **Categorization of Plastic Packaging:**
  - **Rigid Plastic:**
    - They are plastic products that **do not give easily when squeezed**. Many are large, bulky items like lawn chairs, buckets, toddler toys etc.
  - **Flexible Plastic:**
    - It includes **packaging of single layer or multilayer (more than one layer with different types of plastic)**, plastic sheets and covers made of plastic sheet, carry bags (including carry bags made of compostable plastics), plastic sachet or pouches.

- **Multi-Layered Plastic Packaging:**
  - They are the plastics which **have at least one layer of plastic and at least one layer of material other than plastic.**
- **Targets:**
  - Companies will have to collect at least :
    - **35%** of the target in **2021-22**.
    - **70%** of the target by **2022-23**.
    - **100%** of the target by **2024**.
  - In 2024, a minimum **50% of their rigid plastic** will have to be recycled as will 30% of their category 2 and 3 plastic.
  - Every year will see **progressively higher targets** and after 2026-27, 80% of their category 1 and 60% of the other two categories will need to be recycled.
  - There are **similar targets**, with slight variations, for companies that use packaging material as well as import them.
- **Buying EPR Certificates:**
  - If entities **cannot fulfil their obligations**, they will on a “case by case basis” be **permitted to buy certificates**.
  - The **CPCB will develop a mechanism** for such exchanges on a centralised online portal.
- **Non Compliance:**
  - Non-compliance, however, **will not invite a traditional fine**. Instead an **environmental compensation** will be levied, though the rules do not specify how much this compensation will be.
- **Fine:**
  - Entities that **do not meet their targets or do not purchase enough credits** to meet their annual target must **pay a fine**.
    - Were they to meet their targets within three years, they stand to get a 40% refund. Beyond that, however, the money will be forfeited.
  - **Funds** collected in this way will be put in an **escrow account** and can be **used in collection and recycling**/end of life disposal of uncollected and non-recycled/ non-end of life disposal of plastic packaging waste on which the environmental compensation is levied.
- **Banning Plastics:**
  - From **July 2022**, the manufacture of a **range of plastic products will be banned**. The list includes: Earbuds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks etc.

**Source: TH**