

Despite ambitious policy moves, India hasn't had much success with plastic waste regulation due to various flaws. Analyze. (4)

Global plastic menace has gained wide consensus with the World Environment Day celebrated under the theme 'Beat Plastic Pollution'. Given the extent of population growth and proportionate plastic waste generation, India has introduced targets to eliminate single use plastic by 2022.

### PLASTIC WASTE REGULATION IN INDIA

India has been trying to deal with ubiquitous plastics for the past 2 decades. The rules and regulations have enumerated numerous methods to deal with them

- 1) Plastic Waste Management Rules 2016
  - includes all stakeholders
  - calls for Extended Producer Responsibility in waste collection.
- 2) Solid Waste Management Rules 2016
  - calls for consumer side waste segregation.
  - methods of recycling and disposal by local authority responsibility
- 3) Biomedical Waste Management Rules 2016 :-
  - phasing out of chlorinated plastic bag usage.
- 4) Standard Guidelines for Eliminating Single Use Plastic :-
  - gives bandwidth for the states to frame phasing out plans.

Despite being a member of BASEL CONVENTION, India still doesn't regulate plastic dumping in its waters.

### INHERENT FLAWS IN REGULATION

Regulations have not been put into serious effect due to following reasons.

#### 1) Baseline and Inventory :-

Lack of clear data about types and usage of plastics makes process of collection, recycling difficult process. Industries shy away from regulation due to cost constraints

## 2) Defining Single Use Plastics

(2)

Standard guidelines for SUP elimination delegates the responsibility to states and UT's for segregating SUP. Each state have their own definition of SUP, making it difficult for tracking usage.

## 3) Consumer apathy

Awareness among consumers is cited as major reason for poor implementation. Lenient regulations do not act as a deterrent to bring about behavioural change.

## 4) Industrial regulations:-

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) do not sketch a plan for recycling, reusing plastics. Lack of proper incentives by government and conflicting rules between industries and local body authorities.

## 5) Alternatives and recycling:-

Lack of alternative goods for plastic replacement is seeing slow shift. Recycling plants and usage are poor in number to deal with waste.

## IMPLEMENTING REGULATION

Plastic elimination must henceforth require a policy recalibration

- 1) Fines and regulations.
- 2) Graded Action Plan in lines of beating air pollution
- 3) Incentives like tax sops, carbon credits to industries
- 4) Research and development of alternative substances.
- 5) Preparation for inventory and recycling units by industries.
- 6) Consumer awareness, responsibilities

Countries like SWEDEN, US have demonstrated the market ability to reduce plastic to put into alternative usage like fuels, roads construction etc., Thus India needs to hasten its approaches to attain SWACHH BHARAT.