

Plastic Waste Management Rules 2018

Why in news?

\n\n

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules 2018.

\n\n

What is the amendment about?

\n\n

\n

- In 2016, Union government implemented the Plastic Waste Management Rules and Solid Waste Management Rules.

\n

- But the rules faced various challenges.

\n

- Based on representations received from various stakeholders, MoEF&CC had constituted a committee to resolve such issues.

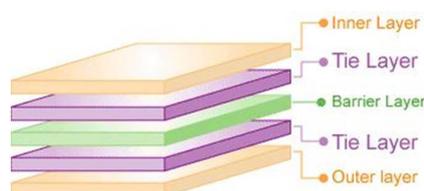
\n

- The amendments are based on recommendations submitted to the Ministry.

\n

\n\n

Multi-layer Barrier Film Schematic and Examples of Packaged Food Products



- tie layer: coextruded film or adhesive
- typical barrier film: PVOH, aluminum
- inner layer can be heat-sealable polymer
- outer layer may include printed graphics



\n\n

What are the highlights?

\n\n

- \n
 - The phasing out of Multi-layered Plastic (MLP) is now applicable only to MLP that are “non-recyclable or non-energy recoverable or have no alternate use”.
- \n
 - MLP is most widely used in food packing Industries.
- \n
 - The amended Rules prescribe a central registration system for the registration of the producer/importer/brand owner.
- \n
 - The system will be evolved by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
- \n
 - National registry has been prescribed for producers with presence in more than two states.
- \n
 - A state-level registration has been prescribed for smaller producers/brand owners operating within one or two states.
- \n
 - Any mechanism for the registration should be automated.
- \n
 - It should take into account ease of doing business for producers, recyclers and manufacturers.

\n\n

What are the shortfalls?

\n\n

- \n
 - **Dilution** - Many significant provisions of the earlier plastic waste management policy, 2016 have been discarded or diluted now.
- \n
 - The Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules 2018 has omitted the explicit pricing of carry bags mentioned in 2016 rule.
- \n
 - **MLP** - Multi-layered plastics are supposed to be phased out.
- \n
 - But these have been given a fresh lease of life by easing the norms concerned.

- \n
- Only MLP that are “non-recyclable or non-energy recoverable or have no alternate use” are to be phased out.
- \n
- This leaves hardly any category of multi-layered plastics to be phased out.
- \n
- Any product can be claimed to have some alternate use to escape the bar.
- \n
- **Producers** - The new norms seem to have been crafted with an eye on ease of doing business.
- \n
- This seems to be happening at the cost of the environment and public health due to plastic use.
- \n
- “Extended producer responsibility” bound plastic producers, importers and brand owners.
- \n
- They are required to ensure environmentally sound management of their products till the end of their useful life.
- \n
- The new policy is soft on “extended producer responsibility”.
- \n

\n\n

What are the concerns with plastic toxicity in India?

\n\n

- \n
- India is reckoned to generate over 25,000 tonnes of plastic waste every day.
- \n
- The residues can stain the environment and natural resources for hundreds of years.
- \n
- Plastic toxicity is known for its enduring adverse effects on territorial and aquatic life.
- \n
- In food, it can alter human hormones to cause major life-threatening diseases.
- \n
- Plastic materials, especially bags and bottles strewn on roads, have been noticed to cause flooding by blocking drains.
- \n
- They also kill stray cattle by choking.
- \n

\n\n

What is the way forward?

\n\n

- \n
 - Plastics are not totally dispensable as their use seems desirable in certain situations.
- \n
 - In fields like agriculture and automobiles, packaging, information technology and biomedical industries, they are relevant.
- \n
 - But their non-degradability and emission of toxic gases on combustion and incineration are growing concerns.
- \n
 - It is thus imperative to manage plastic debris appropriately.
- \n
 - It would be advisable to reassess the new set of rules and switch back to the 2016 plastic waste management norms.

\n\n

\n\n

Source: PIB, Business Standard

\n

