

Ms. Neha Nitesh Hatwar, Senior Research Fellow (CSIR-NEERI), Ph.D. Scholar (AcSIR) working under supervision of Dr. Asifa Qureshi, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR-NEERI, delivered an oral presentation on "Novel Bacterial Consortia Designed for Biodegradation of PVC Pollution in the Environment" at the 66th AMI (Association of Microbiologists of India) International Conference & Research Conclave 2025, organised at Devbhoomi Uttarakhand University, Deharadun. She was honoured with the Best Oral Presentation Award, one of the prestigious recognitions at the conference, competing with researchers from 50+ Universities across India. Her research addressed the global concern of PVC pollution—one of the most recalcitrant polymers due to its chlorine-rich structure and toxic additives. She highlighted the efficacy of 'specially designed microbial consortia' capable of degrading PVC under optimized conditions. Her findings underscore the necessity to develop sustainable approach for Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastics mitigation by exploring novel microbial communities from plastic contaminated soils, which would utilize PVC films as sole carbon source with reduced emissions. Ms. Hatwar's award-winning work signifies valuable contribution towards microbial bioremediation of PVCs and strengthens the scientific roadmap for sustainable solutions to plastics that end up in landfills.

