

## **World Environment Day Celebration (June 5, 2018)**

CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI) celebrated the World Environment Day (WED) on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. The brainstorming session on 'Beat Plastic Pollution: Myth & Reality' aligning with this year's WED theme was organised on this occasion. Shri Ravi Jashnani, President, Maharashtra Plastic Manufacturers' Association was the Chief Guest on this occasion.

While addressing the audience, Shri Jashnani said that the plastic ban recently legislated by Maharashtra Government is not enough to solve plastic pollution, instead there should have been more focus on plastic management. According to Maharashtra Plastic and Thermocol Products Notification 2018 initially passed by the Government of Maharashtra, plastic bags, cutlery and thermocol are banned, he added. He stated that when the concern was raised by plastic traders and manufacturers over the plastic ban the Maharashtra Government diluted the plastic ban by excluding small PET and PETE bottles with a carrying capacity of less than half a litre. Shri Jashnani said that still this is not enough, as food processing industry, mahila grih udyog and garment industry are severely affected due to the plastic ban. The plastic industries have started to shift outside Maharashtra, he added. Shri Jashnani said that out of the total solid waste plastic waste occupies only one percent. He revealed that whole issue of plastic pollution lies in the segregation of solid waste. There should be a brainstorming on how the process of segregation of dry waste can effectively be implemented by involving all stakeholders. There should be a penalty on the person if fails to do proper waste segregation. He exhorted that there is a need to educate the masses for waste segregation through which plastic could be managed efficiently.

Speaking on 'plastic impact on ocean life', the invited speaker Dr. Mahua Saha, Sr. Scientist, CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO), Goa said that 60-85% of marine waste consists plastic. She informed that the pollution caused by microplastics in seas is of growing environmental concern due to their slow degradability and biological ingestion by aquatic living organisms. She stated that India currently ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the list of the countries where plastic is not being properly managed. If further steps not taken in India, by 2020 India may rank 5<sup>th</sup> in the list in terms of plastic mismanagement, she added. She further informed that CSIR-NIO has undertaken research activities on microplastics. Dr. A.N. Vaidya, Chief Scientist, CSIR-NEERI delivered a lecture on 'plastic waste management: Policies and challenges'. He compared all the plastic waste management rules enacted in 2011, 2016 and 2018. He stated that Maharashtra Plastic and Thermocol Products Notification 2018 is more clear, precise and stringent than earlier rules. The principles of recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) are more precisely defined in the recently enacted rules, he added.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director, CSIR-NEERI said that there is a need to do life cycle assessment for evaluating environmental impacts of plastic waste management systems. We need to remove misconceptions about plastic, and ensure at least 20-30 times reuse of plastics. Dr. J.S. Pandey, Chief Scientist, CSIR-NEERI introduced the Chief Guest. Dr. (Mrs) Rima Biswas, Sr. Scientist, CSIR-NEERI conducted the proceedings. Dr. N.N. Rao, Chief Scientist, CSIR-NEERI proposed the vote of thanks.



Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director, CSIR-NEERI welcoming the Chief Guest Mr. Ravi Jashnani



Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director, CSIR-NEERI delivering the welcome address  
Seated on the dais (from left): Mr. Ravi Jashnani, Dr. J.S. Pandey and Dr. N.N. Rao



Dr. J.S. Pandey, Chief Scientist, introducing the Chief Guest



Dr. Mahua Saha, Sr. Scientist, CSIR-NIO delivering a lecture on 'microplastics'



Dr. A.N. Vaidya, Chief Scientist, delivering a lecture on ‘Plastic waste management: policies and challenges’