

MSMECCII NEWSLETTER



 28th February, 2026



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Plastic Recycling :

Plastic Recycling Global Crisis: By 2026, plastic production exceeds 450 million tonnes annually, but global recycling rates remain very low, 9%. The Reality: The vast majority of plastic waste still ends up in landfills, incinerators, or polluting oceans and ecosystems.

Technological Shift: Advanced, AI-powered sorting and chemical recycling are beginning to improve efficiency, offering hope for hard-to-recycle materials.

Regulatory Action: Governments are strengthening policies like Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and banning single-use plastics to drive change.

Circular Economy: The focus is shifting from just "recycling" to a "circular economy"—designing products to be reusable or 100% recyclable from the start.

The Bottom Line: While technology advances, systemic change and reducing plastic production are essential to stop the pollution, as recycling.



The "Double" Problem: Plastic production has doubled in the last 20 years and is on track to double again by 2045. We are currently creating waste much faster than we are building the infrastructure to process it.

Profitability: For a recycling plant to be profitable in 2026, it typically needs to recover its investment within 24–30 months. This is only possible in regions with high EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) fees—where companies are forced to pay for the waste they create.



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Environmental Impact of Single Use Plastics: Key Facts for 2026

Each year, the world produces over 430 million tonnes of plastic. And nearly half of it is designed to be used just once and thrown away.

As we head into 2026, the scale of single-use plastic pollution is impossible to ignore. Global production of plastic continues to rise, while waste systems struggle to keep pace, and the effects are now visible well beyond landfills and oceans.

It's affecting climate, ecosystems, and human health all at the same time. New research shows microplastics turning up everywhere, from drinking water to human tissue.

As governments rush to tighten rules and companies set new targets, many are asking: Which facts actually matter? And what's finally making a difference?

In this article, I'll walk you through the essential facts and real-world solutions for single-use plastic pollution in 2026.

2026: The Plastic Turning Point - From Policy to Planet

Almost 36% of single-use plastic is used just for packaging. And only about 9% of all plastic waste is recycled globally. The rest either ends up in landfills or is burned. In either case, plastic leaks into the environment in one way or another. This year, however, marks a turning point. New rules like the EU's PPWR and the UK's extended producer responsibility scheme are now in force. Major brands are facing deadlines on their plastic packaging reduction targets for the first time. To get a more well-rounded understanding of the subject, we need to look at the overall carbon footprint of plastics. That's why I've curated the most important single-use plastic facts you must know in 2026:



Climate Footprint of Single-Use Plastics

The entire lifecycle of plastic leaves behind a massive carbon footprint. In 2019, it was responsible for around 1.8 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent emissions. Most of these emissions come from:

- Fossil fuels used in the manufacturing of plastic.
- The energy needed for manufacturing and transport.
- Incinerating plastic at end-of-life, which releases direct CO₂.



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How do Single-Use Plastics Affect the Environment?

Plastic doesn't just disappear after we use it. In 2022, around 82 million tonnes of plastic waste were mismanaged worldwide, meaning it was dumped or burned rather than properly collected.

Much of the single-use plastic waste follows the same path. It's either littered or dumped illegally, or is carried by rain or wind into rivers and streams. Eventually, it flows into coastal areas and the open ocean.

The worst hotspots for this leakage are regions where formal waste collection is limited. Countries in South and Southeast Asia, as well as parts of Africa, see the most plastic escaping into the natural environment. And it happens due to gaps in infrastructure.

Oceans and Wildlife Impacts We Cannot Ignore

Once plastic enters rivers and seas, it spreads rapidly. In 2019, an estimated 1.7 million tonnes of plastic ended up in the world's oceans. These plastics pose a direct threat to wildlife. Nearly all sea turtles and up to 90% of seabirds have fragments of plastic in their bodies. Thousands of marine animals are killed each year from getting injured by packaging materials or entangled in discarded fishing gear. Floating plastics can even carry invasive species and toxins across long distances.

Beyond harming marine animals or ecosystem, plastic pollution causes serious economic losses for those who depend on the ocean. If the problem continues, industries such as fishing and tourism could lose over \$10 billion each year.



How do Single-Use Plastics Affect Human Health?

By 2025, scientists have found microplastics in drinking water, food, and even human tissues.

Tiny particles have been detected in blood, lungs, and arteries, raising new questions about long-term health risks. Chemical additives like BPA and phthalates, which are common in many single-use products, are linked to hormone disruption and other effects.



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Biggest Contributors to Single-use Plastic Pollution

A handful of companies and countries account for most of the world's single-use plastic waste. The largest plastic producers in 2021 were:

- Sinopec in China
- ExxonMobil in the USA
- LyondellBasell in the Netherlands and the USA
- Saudi Aramco in Saudi Arabia
- PetroChina in China

In terms of waste, high-income countries like the US and much of Europe produce the most per person. But rapidly growing nations like China and India generate the highest total volumes. Across all regions, packaging is still the main driver. It makes up nearly half of the plastic thrown away each year.

What Different Countries are Doing to Combat Single-Use Plastic Pollution

Governments around the world are responding to plastic pollution in different ways. Some are using outright bans. Others are focused on taxes, producer responsibility, or reuse targets.

What's clear is that governments are moving faster and enforcing these rules more strictly. Below is a clear overview of what the major countries and regions are doing to address single-use plastic pollution.

Globally, there's a push for even bigger change. As of 2025, nearly every country is involved in UN negotiations for the world's first international plastics treaty. This could set common rules for decades to come.



How is The Market Adjusting to The Changes?

Companies are under pressure to use more recycled content. There's also an added emphasis on adopting single-use plastic alternatives. Reusable packaging and certified-compostable films are gaining ground.

Even so, the share of plastic that is actually recycled remains very low, at around 9% globally. Many brands are setting higher targets. But reaching them is not easy without big improvements in collection and sorting.



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Indian MSMEs Future during 2026-2031 – Key Outlook (20 Major Points)

1. MSMEs will be the backbone of India's vision of and self-reliance.
2. Strong growth driven by the policy reforms.
3. Increased digital adoption through initiatives.
4. Expansion in exports under the trade push.
5. Higher credit access via (CGTMSE).
6. Growth in green manufacturing aligned with India's Net-Zero commitments.
7. Strong opportunities in EV, renewable energy, and hydrogen sectors.
8. Integration into global value chains through FTAs.
9. Rise of women-led and rural MSME entrepreneurship.
10. Technology upgrades via Industry 4.0 and automation adoption.

Dr. Indrajit Ghosh (Chairman)

1. Increased participation in government procurement through (GeM).
2. Boost from Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes.
3. Formalization growth through Udyam Registration expansion.
4. Cluster development in textiles, leather, food processing, and plastics.
5. Stronger compliance and ESG adoption for global competitiveness.
6. Expansion of startup-MSME collaboration ecosystem.
7. Improved logistics via infrastructure corridors and multimodal transport.
8. Skill enhancement through Skill India programs.
9. Fintech-driven working capital solutions and digital payments growth.
10. Overall, MSMEs expected to significantly increase contribution to GDP, exports, and employment by 2031.



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Help Build Relationships and Connect: As a Chamber, our purpose is built upon businesses and their people. We know that at the end of the day, prices, costs, products, and services will never count as much as relationships. We are here to help you build and enhance relationships. Strong relationships not only help businesses, but they also help our community thrive. **Simplify:** Today's world comes with enough complications. We are always striving to simplify our processes and programs. **Education:** We know things change in all areas of business and community regularly. We will provide timely programs focused on topics that you as a community member or business owner need to know. **Community Well-Being:** Our Chamber strives to achieve a sense of community in today's technology-driven world. We will do whatever we can to foster that feeling of belonging and inclusiveness through our events, programs, member visits, and other happenings.



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Caring for the Environment

The environment isn't just a concept in a textbook—it's the living, breathing system that makes life on Earth possible. I see it as a vast, interconnected web where everything is linked. Forests, oceans, wetlands, and grasslands aren't separate pieces; they work together in quiet harmony. They clean the air we breathe, filter the water we drink, enrich the soil that grows our food, and help regulate the climate that shapes our daily lives. Yet over the past century, human activity has placed this delicate balance under enormous strain. Rapid industrial growth, heavy reliance on fossil fuels, and large-scale land changes have reshaped natural systems at an unprecedented pace. The buildup of greenhouse gases is warming the planet, shifting weather patterns, and intensifying storms, droughts, and heatwaves. At the same time, habitats are being fragmented or destroyed, putting countless species at risk and weakening the resilience of ecosystems.

Because of this, sustainable resource management is no longer just an academic idea—it is a necessity. Research-backed conservation efforts can help repair damaged ecosystems and prevent further loss. Moving toward renewable energy sources and adopting circular economic practices can significantly reduce environmental pressure. Equally important is the involvement of local communities and the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, both of which offer valuable insights into living in balance with nature. Ongoing environmental monitoring and collaboration across scientific disciplines are vital for making informed, responsible decisions. As global citizens, our responsibility goes beyond studying environmental change—we must also advocate for solutions that protect and restore the natural world. Caring for the environment is not optional; it is essential for preserving ecological stability and ensuring a healthy, thriving planet for generations to come.



Dr. Sandeep Marwah (Chancellor) AAFT University of Media and Arts

Dr. Sandeep Marwah is a globally acclaimed film industry pioneer, known for founding Noida Film City and creating Marwah Studios. He established the Academy of Film & Television, one of the top ten film schools globally, and holds seven world records for producing short films. With over 700 awards and the training of more than 19,000 media students, he leads numerous media organizations and serves as Chancellor of AAFT University and Chief Scout for India. He has also received honors from the House of Commons, Bavaria Parliament, and Wales.



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Indian Pharma Share in the Global Market and Its Future

The Indian pharmaceutical industry, widely known as the "Pharmacy of the World," plays an important role in global healthcare by supplying affordable and high-quality medicines to many countries. The global pharmaceutical market is valued at around \$1.6 trillion and India currently contributes about 3–3.5% of the global market value. India ranks third in the world in pharmaceutical production by volume and is a major supplier of medicines across the globe. India provides nearly 20% of the world's generic medicines and around 60% of the global vaccine supply. Indian pharmaceutical companies export medicines to more than 200 countries and pharma exports have reached about \$30 billion annually. The overall Indian pharmaceutical industry is currently valued at around \$55–60 billion and continues to grow steadily due to strong manufacturing capabilities and cost efficiency.

A key strength of India's pharma sector is the presence of a large number of USFDA-approved manufacturing plants and its ability to produce quality medicines at competitive prices. With rising healthcare needs, increasing chronic diseases and expanding domestic demand, the industry is expected to grow significantly in the coming years. Looking ahead, the Indian pharmaceutical market is projected to reach around \$120–130 billion by 2030 and India's share in the global pharmaceutical market may increase to nearly 5%. Pharma exports are also expected to rise substantially, supported by growing demand from the United States, Europe and emerging markets. Future growth will be driven by biosimilars, speciality medicines, innovation and stronger R&D investments. Government initiatives such as the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, expansion of healthcare coverage and increased focus on biotechnology and digital health are further strengthening the sector. The Indian pharmaceutical industry is well-positioned to become a major global pharmaceutical hub in the future.



Dr. Pramod K Rajput (Former Senior Vice President & Vertical Head) at Cadila Pharmaceuticals

Dr. Pramod Kumar (PK) Rajput is a highly experienced pharmaceutical leader, educator, and mentor with over 40 years of experience in the healthcare sector. Formerly the Senior Vice President and Vertical Head at **Cadila Pharmaceuticals**, he is recognized as a global speaker, author, and coach specializing in sales, marketing, and leadership development. Started as a medical representative in 1982, rising through the ranks to senior leadership roles at Cadila Pharmaceuticals, overseeing domestic and international business.

