PLEXCONCIL - The Plastics Export Promotion Council

PLEXCONNECT

Edition 37, July 2022

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Plexconnect is published by:
The Plastics Export Promotion Council

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India has historically been a major hub for import and export and from being a largely agricultural economy, today, the country, owing to the speed of economic activity, has become a global powerhouse for trade and commerce. Plastics exports in the post-independence era was mainly limited to raw materials as in the case of many other products and today, our industry is a world leader in several value added segments.

As I write this piece, it my pleasure to congratulate Plexconcil on its 67th Anniversary! It has been a very long journey but one that speaks of many accomplishments and achievements, despite the numerous crisis that we have been faced time and again. The journey from USD 16 Million in 1955 to USD 13 Billion presently has been no small feat and I extend my sincerest appreciation to our dynamic export fraternity as well as the Indian Govt who have over the decades built a strong foundation that continues to inspire and steer us towards greater growth.

Plexconcil has played a very crucial role in the growth of plastics exports, putting Indian plastics on the world map by leading delegations, organizing several RBSMs and constantly engaging in dialogue with the Govt and plastic trade associations in India and internationally. With times, our efforts and action have gained much momentum and today, the Council has been taking several confident strides to boost exports. At a recent COA meeting, the Council has a growth target of 25% or USD 16.69 Billion for the current fiscal. To achieve this, the Council has planned 22 international exhibition participation as well as made strategic pacts with ANIPAC, etc to boost exports. Plans are also in full swing to host our first Plastics Exhibition, PLEXCONNECT 2023 in addition to numerous other activities.

The past month has been busy indeed. To begin with, at our recently concluded COA, Shri. Alok Dwivediji took over from Shri. S K Ranjanji as Govt. Nominee. While we thank Shri. Ranjan ji for always having been of great support to the Council, we welcome Shri. Dwivediji and look forward to forging stronger bonds in coming times. The Council also concluded its first Certificate programme in International Business. The first batch of students were awarded their certificates and plans are in place to start the next batch sometime in September.

The Programme has been especially designed and conducted by mentors and veterans from the industry on a range of topics that will not only help new entrants to the export foray but is of immense benefit to existing professionals looking to upgrade or acquire new skills in exports.

There is much discussion and concern over the implementation of the SUP ban from this month. The Council recently also conducted a Webinar to help exporters understand the news rules and regulations. As citizens, we are all responsible for our environment and while there is absolutely no doubt of the vast benefits of plastics, I would urge our fraternity to look beyond commerce and use every tool and opportunity to extend their reach to newer areas in business in the interest of our Earth's future.

During May 2022, India exported plastics worth USD 1,073 million, lower by 5.1% from USD 1,130 million in May 2021. Cumulative value of plastics export during April 2022 – May 2022 was USD 2,173 million as against USD 2,117 million during the same period last year, registering a positive growth of 2.6%. The lower figure may be accounted to several factors such as raw material prices, but we are well on track to achieve our targets.

We also bring you an interesting interview with Mr. Chakravarthy AVPS of Ecobliss India on pharma packaging and its growing dominance in current times. This is in addition to news, views, information, etc.

As I end this note, I heartily congratulate Team Plexconcil and all members on the 67th Anniversary once again and wish you all the very best for the future.

Warm regards,

Arvind Goenka
Chairman

Participation at JEC World 2022, France – Paris – May 03rd to May 05th, 2022

The Council Participated at JEC World 2022, France – Paris – May 03rd to May 05th, 2022 with 8 Exhibitors. Shri. Deepanshu Khurana, Second Secretary (Economic & Commerce), Embassy of India, Paris had fruitful interactions with the Indian exhibitors.

Interactive Session with DGFT in Kolkata on 7th May 2022 | Eastern Region

An interactive session with Shri Santosh Kumar Sarangi, DGFT was organized by FIEO (Eastern Region office) in Kolkata. Shri Arvind Goenka, Chairman and Mr Nilotpal Biswas, RD, PLEXCONCIL (ER) represented the Council at this meeting. During the open house discussion, Chairman took up export related issues for the Plastic industries which need to be addressed.

Outreach Programme on Free Trade Agreements with UAE and Australia was held at Hotel ITC Grand Chola, Guindy on May 10, 2022 | Southern Region

The Outreach Programme on Free Trade Agreements with UAE and Australia was held at Hotel ITC Grand Chola, Guindy on May 10, 2022. Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance, Dr. L. Murugan, Hon'ble Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Smt. Anupriya Patel, Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India and Thiru T.M. Anbarasan, Hon'ble Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Govt. of Tamil Nadu participated in the said Outreach Programme.

The programme was primarily organised to sensitise exporters of goods and services, especially leather textiles, pharmaceuticals, engineering products, plastics, leather, etc from Tamil Nadu on India-UAE CEPA and India- Australia ECTA signed recently. The Council was part of the organizing committee for this event with CLE and Guidance Tamil Nadu, Govt. of Tamil Nadu being the lead organisers.

Eastern Regional Committee Meeting of PLEXCONCIL – 10th May 2022 | Eastern Region

Above meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Mr Prasan Lohia, Regional Chairman, PLEXCONCIL(ER). Members reviewed the plastics export performance. Various issues and concerns were also discussed. Membership development programs/drive was also discussed in the meeting.

Meeting with RCPSDC on 11th May 2022 at 11am at the Head Office, Mumbai | Western Region

A meeting was organized with Ms. Suchita Roy, Regional Manager – West, RCPSDC on 11th May 2022 at HO to discuss RCPSDC and the role of the Council as the "Training Partner". Executive Director welcomed the representative from RCPSDC and requested her to make the presentation and to take it forward.

Human Hair Panel Meeting | 11th May 2022 | Southern Region

The 1st Human Hair Panel Committee Meeting for the year 2022-2023 was held on **11th May 2022 at Plexconcil Southern Regional Office.** The meeting was held in hybrid mode and Mr. Benjamin Cherian, Panel Chairman took the following agenda points and discussed in detail:

- Impact on the restriction of unworked hair 0501
- Challenges faced by exporters on implementation of Notification 51 (2015-20)
- Recent issues near India-Nepal borders on smuggling
- Indicative price to customs for Non-remy Double drawn and Single drawn remy
- Ways and means to increase the exports

- Increase of membership in the council
- Skill Development & Training Program
- Events / BSM / RBSM / Delegations

District as export hubs meeting with Additional DGFT Ahmedabad – Focus@75 |Western Region

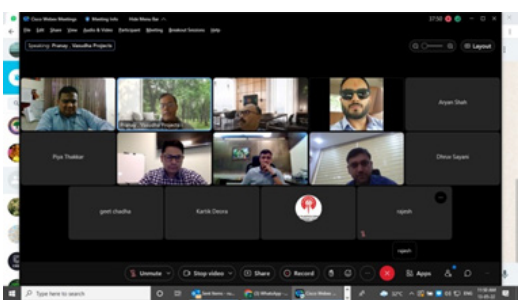
A VC meeting was held on 11th May 2022 under the Chairmanship of Addl. DGFT and Export Commissionerate along with the DGFT Nodal Officers, respective DICs and assigned EPCs on District as export hubs initiative for Gujarat Region. The agenda of the meeting was to review and revise existing district export action plans as per the guidelines. Relevant inputs were given by Plexconcil during the meeting on this important initiative. Meeting was attended by Naman Marjadi, Asst. Director, Plexconcil Ahmedabad and Ms Bharti Parave, Assistant Director, Plexconcil.

Stakeholders' Outreach Program - Unblocking business opportunities: India's trade agreements with UAE & Australia organised by DoC; Govt of Karnataka & SEPC on 12th May 2022 at Bangalore | Southern Region

Stakeholders' Outreach Program - unblocking business opportunities: India's trade agreements with UAE & Australia organised by DoC; Govt of Karnataka & SEPC on 12th May 2022 at Bangalore. Shri. Pralhad Joshi, Hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Govt. of India addressed the participants about the importance and opportunities of India-UAE-CEPA & India-Aus-ECTA FTAs at the Outreach Programme. Mr Darpan Jain, Jt Secretary; Mr Tapan Mazumder, ADG-FT; Dr Abhay Sinha, DG, SEPC; Mr Unnikrishnan, Jt DG, FIEO also emphasized the benefits to the participants at the programme. The Council was part of the organizing committee for this event with SEPC and VTPC, Govt. of Karnataka being the lead organisers.

Youth Wing Committee Meeting: 13th May 2022 Southern Region

A brief meeting was organized on 13th May 2022 on VC with the Youth Wing Committee members to discuss the plans to promote the e-Directory "PLEXePAGES" amongst the Plastic Industry. Mr. Pranoy Kumar, Mr. Dhruven Chitalia, and Mr. Mayank Goenka along with Mr. Ruban Hobday, RD – South participated in the meeting.



Meeting organized by Ministry of Commerce on 13th May 2022 | Northern Region

R.O. Delhi participated in a meeting held on 13th May 2022 on the direction of Ministry of Commerce & Industry regarding the collaboration with the Ministry of MSME to achieve the target of US Dollar 500 billion as per the vision of our Prime Minister. As per the directive, the Delhi office has managed to comprehend with the Ministry of MSME for joint collaboration to achieve the above target set forth for the Council through various meetings with the officials of Ministry of MSME.

Northern Regional Committee Meeting held on 16th May 2022

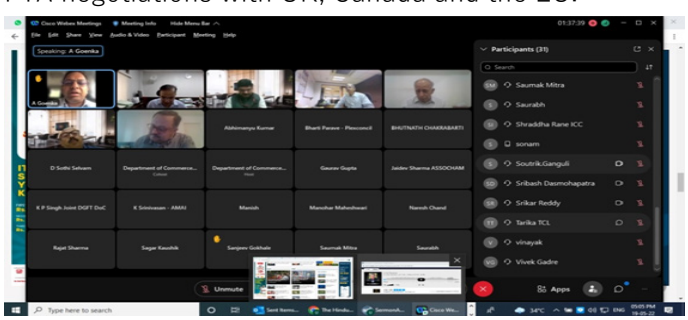
The Delhi office also successfully conducted the Regional Committee meeting on 16th May 2022 which was attended by the Chairman, Regional Chairman (North) and other Regional Committee members. One of the key points discussed during the meeting was visit to the various clusters and conducting the various seminars across the Northern Region. In an effort to achieve the same, the Delhi office has interacted with the relevant officials of the NOIDA Industrial Development Authority for their cluster visit and will be visiting their clusters shortly and have also interacted with the various local association dealing in plastics across Northern India for the seminars.

Meeting with YGROO Digital Pvt Ltd on 17th May 2022 | Southern Region

A virtual meeting was held with M/s. YGROO Digital Pvt Ltd with regard to training of Council's Social Media. The meeting was represented by Mr. Ruban Hobday, Regional Director – South.

Industry Consultations Meeting for FTA Negotiations with Canada, UK and EU on 19th May 2022 | Western Region

The Industry Consultations Meeting for FTA Negotiations with Canada, UK and EU was held virtually on 19th May 2022 to take inputs from the trade and industry. Mr. Sribash Dasmohapatra, Executive Director Plexconcil attended the meeting called upon by FT(Europe) Division, Department of Commerce, for discussing about FTA negotiations with UK, Canada and the EU.



Writing Instrument Panel Meeting – 20th May 2022| Eastern Region

Above panel meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Vimal Chand Rathod, Panel Chairman. Members reviewed the export performance and export related issues and concerns were also discussed.

Launch Function of IPLAS (International Plastics Exhibition) 2022, June 10-13, 2022 held at Chennai on 21st May 2022 | Southern Region

The Launch Function of IPLAS (International Plastics Exhibition) 2022 was held on 21st May 2022 at Hotel GRT Grand, Chennai. IPLAS, organized by The Tamil Nadu Plastics Manufacturer's Association will be showcasing the complete range of Plastics processing Machinery, Raw Materials, Auxiliaries, Moulds & Dies, and Products. During the Launch Function itself few of interested companies made on-spot stall bookings. The launch function witnessed trade members in large attending the event.

The Council being an Export Partner to the IPLAS event was allotted complimentary booth and also slot in the Seminar Session to inform the participants on the Benefits of Exports of Value Added Plastics. The program was represented Mr.Ruban Hobday, Regional Director-South and Mr. R. Dayanidhi, Assistant Director.

1st Meeting of the Panel PVC Flooring/PVC Leather/ Laminates | 24th May 2022 | Eastern Region

Above meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Mr Arvind Goenka, Chairman, PLEXCONCIL. During the meeting Chairman made a detailed PPT presentation on India's plastic export and also the present export scenario of PVC Flooring, PVC Leather & PVC sheeting. After the presentation, Member Exporters discussed various issues and concerns which need to be addressed for the development of the Industry.

Pipes & Fittings Panel Meeting | 25th May 2022 | Southern Region

The 1st Pipes & Fittings Panel Committee Meeting for the year 2022-2023 was held on 25th May 2022 at Plexconcil Southern Regional Office. The meeting was held in hybrid mode and Mr. P. Mohan, Panel Chairman held details discussions on the following points:

- Review of Raw Material Prices
- Export Performance
- Economic Issues impacting the trade
- FTA with UAE & Australia
- Skill Development through RCPCSDC (Skill Council)
- Inputs for the new FTP which may be released in Sep 2022
- Case status of Lead stabiliser issue in PVC Pipes & Fittings
- Promotion Plans (Exhibitions/BSM/Plexconnect)

Meeting on Reverse Buyer Seller Meet at PLASTINDIA 2023 – 26th May 2022 | Northern Region

A meeting was held regarding the Reverse Buyer Seller Meet to be undertaken by the Council. The meeting was held through the Virtual Mode on 26th May 2022 to address the issue of conducting the Reverse Buyer Meet by the Council to be held during PLASTINDIA scheduled to be held between February 1 – 5, 2023. It was mentioned by the Regional Director North that Council should seek the support of various Embassies/High Commissions abroad as well as the local associations and invite the buyers for the meeting. The Regional Director – North shall will assist the Council by interacting with the Ministry of Commerce officials towards issuance of the Note Verbale as and when required by the Foreign Buyers to enable to expedite their visit to India for the Reverse Buyer Seller Meet.

Launch of Indian Business Portal by FIEO on 27th May 2022 | Northern Region

The Council Delhi office attended the conference regarding the launch of Indian Business Portal by FIEO on 27th May 2022 which is classified as the International Hub for Indian Exporters and Foreign Buyers. The same platform will be highlighted amongst our members to have a one to one interaction with the Foreign Buyers for their products. The event was attended by Mr. Ashutosh Kumar, Regional Director – North. The event was marked by the presence by the presence of various officials of FIEO. The Chief Guest for the event was Ms. Anupriya Patel, Honourable Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Government of India.

Hooghly District (West Bengal) Export Promotion Committee Meeting | 30th May 2022 | Eastern Region

The 2nd Meeting of the above committee held on 30.5.2022. RD, PLEXCONCIL(ER) joined the meeting virtually.

Certificate Course in International Business | 30th May 2022 |Western Region

The Council successfully concluded its 1st batch of Certificate Course in International Business. The duration of the Course was 8-weekends (Saturday & Sundays) online with 6 hours per week which started from 9th April 2022 and ended on 30th May 2022. The objective of this course was to equip the participants to face the challenges of the international market while acquiring the practical knowledge of being in an Export-Import Business. The curriculum was well designed and the teaching faculty were well experienced professionals from the Industry & Educational Institutions.

Miscellaneous Panel Meeting | 31st May 2022 | Southern Region

The 1st Miscellaneous Panel Committee Meeting for the year 2022-2023 was held virtually on 31st May 2022. Mr. Rajiv Chitalia, Panel Chairman held details discussions on the following points:

- Suggestions to Enhance and Grow exports
- Issues/Grievances faced by the Industry
- Promotion Plans (Exhibitions/BSM/Plexconnect)

THE PLASTICS EXPORT
PROMOTION COUNCIL

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24th – 27th August, 2022

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Shaping a Brighter Future in Plastics Exports

The spate of global crises in the past especially two years has, while on one hand disturbed the existing economic structures and exposed their fragilities; it has provided India with an exceptional prospect for India to expand its export and gain greater access to Western markets in particular.

Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19, Indian exports bounced and surpassed the pre-pandemic levels, driven by the timely interventions of the government to revive domestic demand and nurturing exports diversification. The top categories of exports were ranging from the sectors like engineering goods, processed petroleum, gems and jewellery, organic and inorganic chemical, plastics, pharmaceutical, and drugs demonstrating advancements in the domestic-value addition and enhanced manufacturing capacities of the country.

To make India a US$ 5 trillion economy by 2025, the Government is undertaking a multi-pronged pathway by aiming to build up the supply side for enhanced domestic competitiveness, focusing on expansion of international market access, strengthening the export ecosystem through various initiatives and policies support like PLI, RoDTEP, PM Gati Shakti, etc. as well as engaging and negotiating various trade agreements with large economies like Australia, Canada, the UK, UAE, the EU, etc.

In recent times, the format of 'competitive, cooperative federalism' has sparked efforts across states as the Govt continues to make cohesive efforts to convert each district into an export hub by decentralizing the planning process and putting local stakeholders at the focal point.

In alignment, the NITI Aayog has also launched the EPI index to evaluate the readiness and capacity of states concerning their export potential. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched LEADS for logistics availability across states. Therefore, ground-level interventions based on the performance of states and UTs in the indices like EPI and LEADS can ensure a

strong supply chain with a competitive edge in the global market.

Major global challenges and way ahead

Recently, the global economy has witnessed major episodes of disruptions resulting in the slowing down of economic growth. The global economy was struggling to curtail the negative impact of the trade dispute between US-China on the global supply chains, and the COVID-19 across the board global scale lockdowns. The latest geopolitical tension between Russia and Ukraine at a time when the world economy is struggling to recover from the debilitating blow of these collective negative shocks will further prolong the recovery process.

Having said that, as the west seems to lessen the reliance on China and Russia, it opens new avenues for India to expand its trade ties. To capitalise on this opportunity, India needs free access to these markets for seamless trade flows and the answer lies in establishing strategic bilateral relationships with economies that have enormous potential to expand trade flows.

While the growth trend in exports is laudable, the national and state-level export policies must also align for seamless export flows to maintain the pace going forward. To maintain the momentum, some of the key areas of focus should include strengthening of export infrastructure including ports, logistics, inland transportation, etc; aggressively focus on FTAs with thrust on exports; and continuous monitoring of progress at State level including implementation of export action plans, logistics and infra support, export growth trends, etc.

For the country, a new era of export-led growth is unfolding. The future of India's trade looks bright with the present multi-prolonged efforts of the Government to develop the overall trade ecosystem.

The Role of PLEXCONCIL

Established in the year 1955 by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India, PLEXCONCIL celebrates its 67th Anniversary on 15th July. It was one of several Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) launched by the Government to project India's image abroad as a reliable supplier of high quality products in order to give a boost to the country's exports. Today as the apex body of the plastics export industry, the Council represents a growing number of exporters who manufacture/trade in plastics products ranging from plastics raw materials to semi-finished and finished items.

The Council is administered by the Committee of Administration (CoA) consisting of nominees from Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India and Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India; as well as elected representatives from the export trade.

Manoj Agarwal, Chairman cum Managing Director, Kanpur Plastipack Ltd

It's been a tremendous journey. Value added manufactured Plastics products got a big boost as soon as Petrochemical plants first by IPCL and then subsequently Reliance industries in the 80s enabled easier availability of raw material to processors. The game changer was definitely the reforms started by Government of India in the 90s. Of course, over the years ease of doing business initiatives at DGFT and the DOC have allowed the exporters to concentrate on the business rather than in the governments offices. The Indian manufacturing Industry on the other hand developed at a fast pace to offer world class products as new entrepreneurs invested in technology and imported machines which enabled high quality products in larger volumes.

In my experience over the years, I have realized that first and foremost service and building relationships with customers are of utmost importance. Both of these can only be achieved by offering world class products and keeping a strong emphasis on quality. Possibly being fair and honest to your self will be a close second. In their eagerness to penetrate the market many Indian exporters often forget the ethos and the cultural difference between nations. This becomes more important specially when dealing with advanced countries of Europe, USA and Japan. Each one of them have a style of their own and absorbing that would lead to a healthier outcome. Being reliable in your dealings will always pay in the long run.

In no uncertain terms I can say that Plexconcil's contribution to the growth and development of Exports has been unsurpassed. The council has always been proactive in taking up trade related issues with all Government bodies whenever and wherever needed. I recall one significant initiative of the Council when we went as a delegation to Iraq despite US sanctions and were able to successfully export under the Oil for Food Programme of the UNO.

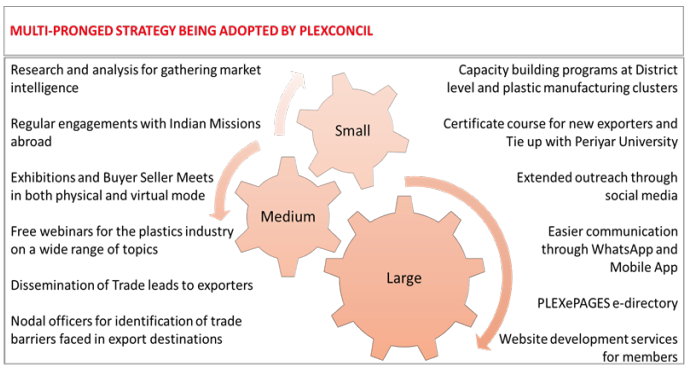
The future of plastics? An interesting question raised at a time when globally the so-called saviours of the environment have made plastics bashing their daily bread. Plastics is here to stay, and its uses and applications cannot be replaced by anything else. I have often been unable to understand why a "glass" bottle, or a can of a beverage does not damage the environment while a packet of "Lays chips" does. Have we ever thought about the damage to the environment due the use of paper? The pollution it creates, the energy it consumes and most of all the irreplaceable trees that are cut down.

Indian plastics has a long way to go, and its growth will continue in times to come.

Empowering Plastics Exports

In FY 2021-22, for the first time, India crossed its USD 400 Billion in merchandise exports, ten days before its target date. Experts have noted that one of the key factors driving the surge in exports is pent up demand that was not met during major waves of the Covid-19 pandemic. Expansionary monetary policy by developed economies in response to the economic impact of the pandemic has also boosted demand for Indian exports. Bouyed by optimism, the country has now set a target to achieve US$ 500 billion in 2022-23.

Plastics exports during the same period also witnessed a phenomenal 35% growth over the previous fiscal. Exceeding all expectations, Plastic exports in FY 21-22 surpassed USD 13 Billion with plans to achieve US$ 16.3 billion in 2022-23. The global export market of plastics is valued at US$ 1 trillion and while India's present market share is about 1%, the opportunities to expand is immense. Recognizing the emerging prospects and demand for Indian plastics, PLEXCONCIL is pursuing a multi-pronged strategy to achieve the target and become a preferred supplier of value added plastics to the world.



The Plastics Export Promotion Council

Empowering Indian Plastics Exports since 1955

67 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

2022	13,352.23
2020	10,000.14
2015	7,588.07
2010	3,669.82
2005	2,395.74
1995	365.60
1985	58.03
1975	18.47
1965	6.66
1955	0.16

PROMOTING INDIA AS
The international Plastic Sourcing Hub

Exports in US$ Million

Lalit Agarwal, Director, Glen Industries Pvt. Ltd.

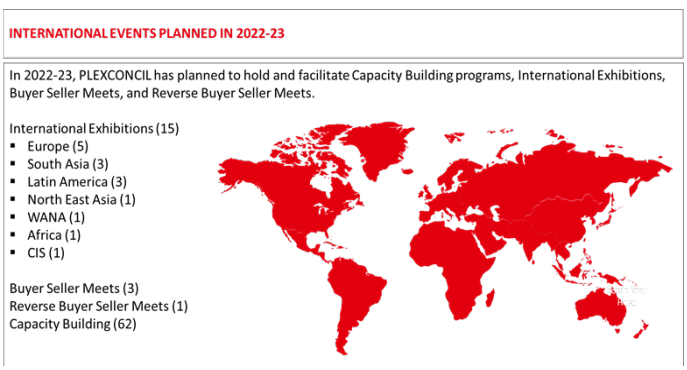
The Indian plastic industry has travelled a long distance in the past 20 years. The industry has been growing at a compounded growth rate of 10-12% per year and the major turning points have been easy availability of Indian made raw material and locally made machinery. From being primarily dependent on imports of raw material in early part of the century, India has become net exporter of raw material. Focus is now being given on exports of value added products.

Today the plastic industry is USD 13 billion per annum in exports and growing year on year. The industry contributes about Rs. 3,00,000 crores to the GDP of India and is one of the largest employer in India having more than 50000 MSME employing about 5.0 million people. The Govt of India has also set a target of Rs. 10,00,000 crores for the plastic industry in India in next 5 years.

It is my belief that emerging entrepreneurs should focus on value added finished products, innovating designs and newer application of plastic. Plastic recycling, nano plastics and compostable plastics will be new areas to work on. Import substitution is another area where new entrepreneurs should concentrate on. Local producers of raw material of plastics should make the inputs available to the industry at a very competitive prices compared to global prices to make export of value added products more competitive in the international market.

Plexconcil has been leading the plastic exports growth by organising participations in exhibitions overseas by the exporters, organising buyers sellers meet, reverse buyers sellers meet, taking trade delegation abroad, educating exporters on standards, process, regulations of various international markets, disseminating international market news. The council also helps in taking specific approach to different market approach in addition to providing updates to exporters on Export Policy of Govt of India, Foreign Trade Policy, various Govt Schemes and Bilateral trades; as well as organising training and skill development courses for the development of the plastic industry.

The Indian plastic industry is likely to grow at a compound growth rate of 8% per year in next 10 years, which will put huge pressure on the availability of raw material and skilled manpower to the industry. Exports will rise at an even faster rate of 12%. In spite of negative buzz being created for the single use plastic, the industry will grow at a very fast pace primarily owing to the reason that the per capita consumption of plastic is quite low in India compared to developed countries. Local Urban bodies have a key role in recycling of plastics and should set up segregation facilities at their yards so that recycling of plastic becomes more organised in nature. Once we are able to recycle more plastics, environmental pollution and damage will be contained and will give boost to higher consumption of plastics. Covid and Russia-Ukraine war has put lot of strain on the freight cost for exports including plastic products and Govt should focus on how the freight cost can be brought down. This problem requires immediate attention of the Govt of India.



A critical link in the Plastics Ecosystem

A catalyst if the growth of the Indian plastics industry, Plexconcil plays an integral role in linking the industry not only to the world, but also furthering ties with the domestic plastic sector as well as serving as the voice for the industry. The key functions and areas of responsibility includes:

- Proactively shaping the business landscape for the Indian plastics exports through participation at various industry fairs under the India Pavilion.
- Identifying new markets with export potential, organizing trade meets through Reverse Buyer Seller programmes as well as host trade delegations while leading exporter delegations to facilitate export growth, the Council
- Acting as the voice of the industry by acting as the bridge between the Government and the trade. In policy framing, redressals, providing industry insights to the GOI and more.
- Facilitating networking opportunities with industry professionals, JVs & collaboration, host its annual awards in recognition of excellence achieved in exports, extend assistance and support in redressal of member issues, share information about changes in Government policies and procedures, etc.
- Monitoring technology developments, offer business support, tools & advertising opportunities to help exporter businesses grow.
- Representing over 20 product categories from across the industry segments.

SERVICES OFFERED	
General services	• Registration-cum-Membership Certificate • Certificate of Origin (Non Preferential) • VISA recommendation letter • Carrying sample letter
Trade & regulatory Services	• Trade Fairs & Exhibitions in India and abroad • Trade statistics and market intelligence • Buyer-Seller meets & reverse Buyer-Seller meets • Conferences/Seminars/Webinars/Workshops related to exports • Updates with regard to FTP, FTAs, Customs, RBI etc. • Representation on behalf of members to authorities for a speedy redressal
Other services	• Liaise with Govt. Departments and Indian Missions abroad • Monthly trade e-magazine (PlexConnect) • Certificate Course in exports • Access to PlexConnect Mobile App

Nemish Sayani, Managing Director, Crystal Plastics & Metallizing Pvt Ltd.

Indian plastics exports have seen an exponential growth over the last 10 years and it is an interesting time in India now with the last 5 years focused on Prime Minister's vision to Make in India. Indian plastic industry market is one of the leading sectors in the country's economy. The industry employs more than 4 million people in the country. India manufactures various types of products such as plastics and linoleum, houseware products, cordage, fishnets, floorcoverings, medical items, packaging items, plastic films, pipes, raw material, etc. The country majorly exports plastic raw materials, films, sheets, woven sacks, fabrics and tarpaulin. The current policies of the government are extremely favourable for exporters and the plastic community should make the most of it.

Plexconcil has played an important role in taking plastic exports in India to greater heights. The services Plexconcil offers has helped many first timers exporters get their paperwork done with ease. More importantly the hand holding the councils offers every member of plastic export fraternity has been most beneficial. This support system is a key to any manufacturer and exporter where through the council they get access to various global markets to build their business footprint.

From my own experience in the business, the most valuable lessons that I have learnt and that I'd like to share is; be an early bird in setting business milestones or identifying products and markets where you can set a benchmark and secondly, chase quality not profitability because once your product does the talking everything else will follow.

Today, India exports plastic to more than 200 countries in the world. The top 5 consumer and houseware product importing countries are the US, Germany Japan, the UK and France. India largely exports plastic and the related products to the US, China, UAE, Germany, Italy, the UK, Bangladesh, Nepal, Turkey, France, Viet Nam, Indonesia, etc. The total plastic exports from India to France during 2020-21 was around US$ 162 million. In order to boost exports to France and Europe, the PLEXCONCIL collaborated with Indo-French Chamber in the first quarter of 2021-22. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has asked the Indian plastic industry to set a target of becoming a Rs 10 lakh-crore industry in the near future, and with the new foreign trade policies being negotiated, the future of plastic trade surely looks bright.

Awarding Export Excellence

Promoting India as a sourcing hub for plastics and helping exporters to reach out to global markets is a primary role played by Plexconcil since inception. However, in recognition of the fine sachievments and head strides made by exporters, Plexconcil instituted the Annual Exports Awards. The Awards is aimed at not only applauding excellence in exports but serves as a plaftform to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, gender diversity as well as industry luminaries for the decades of inspired contribution to the industry. The Awards are given in about 47 categories presently including an award for Lifetime Achievement that was introduced this year.

Vimal Rathod, Managing Director, Flair Writing Industries Ltd.

The Indian Plastic industry, particularly the Writing Instruments industry has grown many folds over the decade. The main driver for such growth is the increase in demand both in Domestic & International markets owing to which there has been manifold expansion of processing capacities. Today, India is among the top manufacturing hubs in the Writing Instruments sector in the world. Majority of the European and American manufacturers have either closed down their manufacturing activity in their own country and moved to third world countries with joint ventures with the local manufacturers. While China is still the largest manufacturer & supplier to the world, the Indian industry is continuing to build capacities and becoming a major sourcing hub.

In today's highly competitive landscape, for manufacturers/exporters to be able to sustain, it is imperative that we ensure production at a global scale. Unless you build the capacity & supply within the time schedule and deliver good quality consistently, you cannot survive for long. Focus on innovation, especially in Writing instruments, design & trends are also key to maintaining a competitive edge.

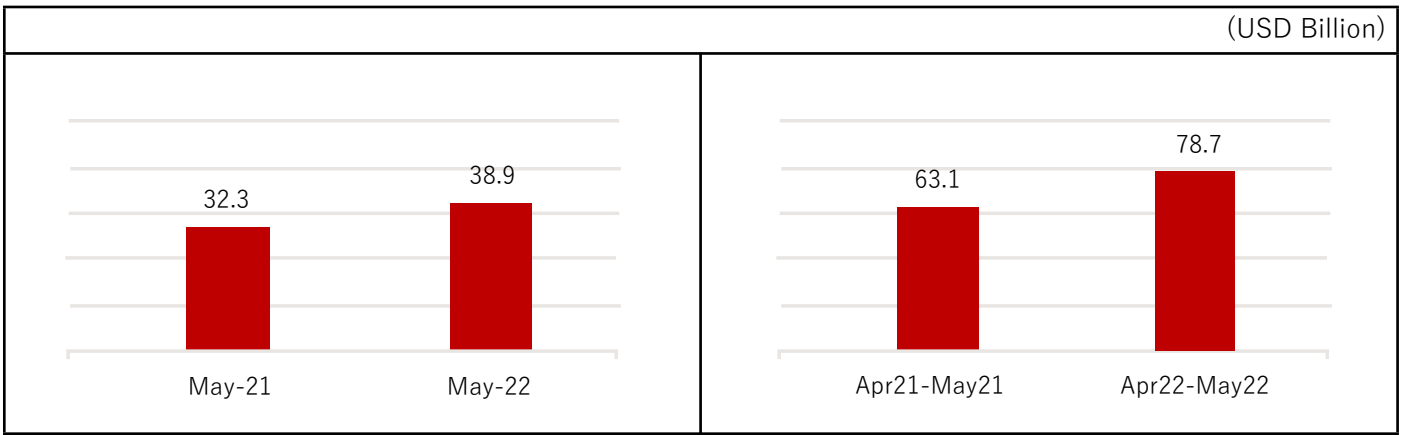
Over the decades, Plexconcil has been very helpful in expanding the export market and also solving the local problems. The various Buyer Seller meets, Trade Delegations, Exhibitions and other information provided by the council, has been very helpful for exporters in finding the right customers internationally. The council has also been of great support in highlighting industry issues and in negotiating better export incentives from the government, for the export fraternity. Having said that, with growing demand globally and outlook in favour of India, especially considering our quality and price, I truly believe that the future for especially, the Writing Industry is very bright.

Export Performance – May 2022

TREND IN OVERALL EXPORTS

India reported merchandise exports of USD 38.9 billion in May 2022, up 20.6% from USD 32.3 billion in May 2021. Cumulative value of merchandise exports during April 2022 – May 2022 was USD 78.7 billion as against USD 63.1 billion during the same period last year, reflecting a growth of 24.9%.

Exhibit 1: Trend in overall merchandise exports from India

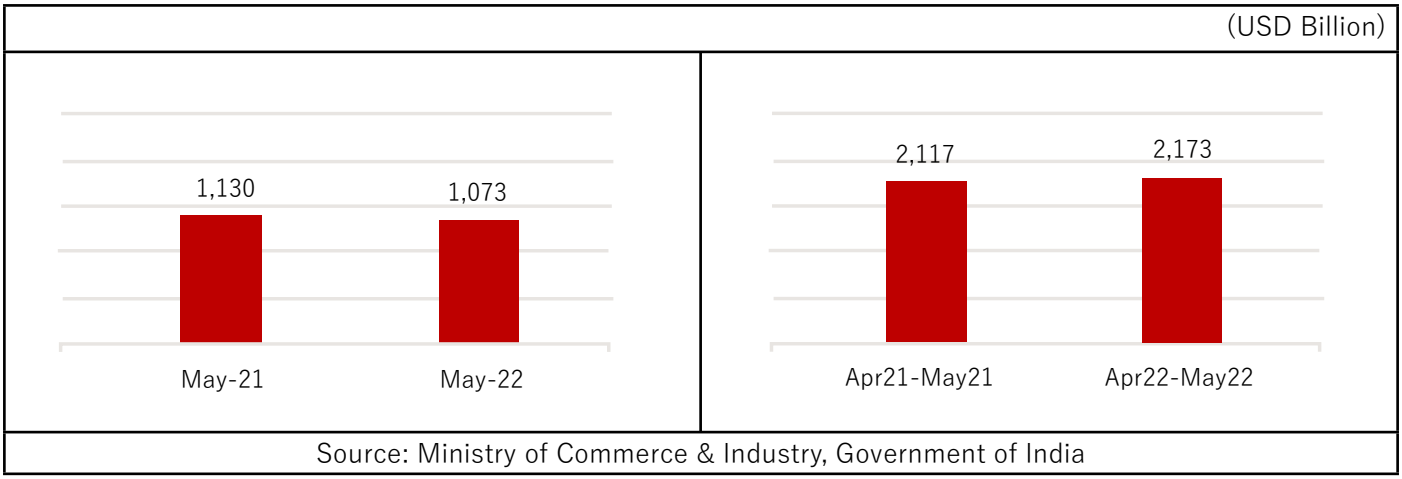


Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

TREND IN PLASTICS EXPORT

During May 2022, India exported plastics worth USD 1,073 million, lower by 5.1% from USD 1,130 million in May 2021. Cumulative value of plastics export during April 2022 – May 2022 was USD 2,173 million as against USD 2,117 million during the same period last year, registering a positive growth of 2.6%.

Exhibit 2: Trend in plastics export by India



Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

PLASTICS EXPORT, BY PANEL

In May 2022, most of the product panels, especially Medical items of plastics; Plastic pipes & fittings; Plastic films & sheets; FRP & Composites; Packaging items - flexible, rigid; Writing instruments & stationery; Cordage, fishnets & monofilaments; and Miscellaneous products reported a strong positive growth in exports. Export of Plastic raw materials; Human hair & related products; and FIBC, woven sacks, woven fabrics, & tarpaulin, however, was in the negative.

Exhibit 3: Panel-wise % growth in plastics export by India

Panel	May-21	May-22	Growth	Apr 21- May 21	Apr 22- May 22	Growth
	(USD Mn)	(USD Mn)	(%)	(USD Mn)	(USD Mn)	(%)
Consumer & houseware products	56.4	60.5	+7.3%	115.6	130.1	+12.5%
Cordage, fishnets & monofilaments	18.4	22.9	+24.6%	37.6	46.9	+24.7%
FIBC, woven sacks, woven fabrics, & tarpaulin	133.4	131.9	-1.1%	262.7	273.6	+4.2%
Floorcoverings, leathercloth & laminates	52.0	54.8	+5.3%	101.5	110.2	+8.6%
FRP & Composites	32.6	38.4	+17.8%	65.8	79.3	+20.4%
Human hair & related products	63.1	59.1	-6.3%	123.5	112.3	-9.1%
Medical items of plastics	28.9	42.7	+47.9%	59.5	82.5	+38.6%
Miscellaneous products & items nes	62.2	87.4	+40.5%	120.8	171.3	+41.8%
Packaging items - flexible, rigid	49.4	55.0	+11.4%	97.1	110.6	+13.9%
Plastic films & sheets	174.7	182.5	+4.5%	333.1	372.1	+11.7%
Plastic pipes & fittings	17.0	25.1	+47.8%	38.8	52.4	+35.1%
Plastic raw materials	423.7	289.4	-31.7%	726.6	582.3	-19.9%
Writing instruments & stationery	18.3	23.0	+25.7%	34.1	49.0	+43.9%
	1,130.0	1,072.7	-5.1%	2,116.7	2,172.6	+2.6%

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

Export of **Consumer & house ware products** increased by 7.3% in May 2022 due to higher shipment of Table-ware and kitchenware, and other hygienic and toilet articles of plastics (HS code 3924); Other builders ware of plastics (HS code 39259090); Plastic moulded suit cases (HS code 42021220); and Plastic tooth brushes (HS code 96032100).

Cordage, fishnets & monofilaments exports were also up by 24.6% in May 2022 aided by improved sales of Other twine of polyethylene or polypropylene (HS code 56074900); and Made up fishing nets (HS code 560811).

In case of **FIBC, woven sacks, woven fabrics, & tarpaulin,** exports in May 2022 fell by 1.1% as Indian exporters reported a decline in sales of woven fabrics obtained from strip or the like (HS code 540720).

Export of **Floor coverings, leather cloth & laminates** gained 5.3% during May 2022 on account of higher sales of PVC floor coverings (HS code 391810) and Decorative laminates (HS code 48239019).

Export of **FRP & Composites** was up by 17.8% due to increased sales of Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s (HS code 39269099).

Export of **Human hair & related products** was lower by 6.3% due to a decline in sales of Human hair, dressed, thinned, bleached or otherwise worked (HS code 67030010) to China.

Export of **Medical items of plastics** witnessed an increase of 47.9% in May 2022 due to higher sales of Spectacle lenses of other materials (HS code 90015000); Syringes, with or without needles (HS code 90183100); Catheters (HS code 90183910); Cannulae (HS code 90183930); and Blood transfusion apparatus (HS code 90189032).

Export of **Miscellaneous products & items nes** increased by 40.5% in May 2022 due to higher sales of Hangers (HS code 39269069); and Optical fibres, optical fibres bundles and cables (HS code 90011000).

Packaging items - flexible, rigid export increased by 11.4% on higher sales of Boxes, cases, crates and similar articles of plastics (HS code 392310); Sacks and bags of polymers of ethylene (HS code 39232100); Other Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics (HS code 39233090); and Other articles for conveyance or packing of goods (HS code 39239090).

Plastic films & sheets witnessed an increase of 4.5% in exports during May 2022 due to higher shipments of Self-adhesive films and sheets of plastics, whether or not in rolls (HS code 3919); Plates and sheets of polyethylene (HS code 392010); Films and sheets of polymers of vinyl chloride (HS code 392049); Other packaging film (HS code 39206919); Other flexible, metallised films and sheets (HS code 39219094); Other flexible, laminated films and sheets (HS code 39219096).

Export of **Plastic pipes & fittings** witnessed a growth of 47.8% due to improved sales of Tubes of polyethylene (HS code 39172110); Rigid tubes, pipes and hoses of polymers of vinyl chloride (HS code 391723); Flexible tubes, pipes and hoses, having a minimum burst pressure of 27.6 MPa (HS code 39173100); and Other fittings (HS code 39174000).

Plastics raw materials export was lower by 31.7% in May 2022 due to a decline in sales of Linear low-density polyethylene (HS code 39011010, 39014010); Low-density polyethylene (HS code 39011020); Polyethylene having a specific gravity of 0.94 or more (HS code 390120); Polypropylene (HS code 390210); Propylene copolymers (HS code 39023000); Other Moulding Powder of polymers of styrene (HS code 39031990); and Polyethylene terephthalate in various forms (HS code 390761). It may be noted that prices of most polymers have softened in May 2022.

Export of **Writing instruments & stationery** witnessed an increase of 25.7% in May 2022 due to higher sales of Ball point pens (HS code 960810).

Exhibit 4: Details of % change seen in top 50 items of export

HS Code	Description	Apr 21 – May 21	Apr 22 – May 22	Growth
		(USD Mn)	(USD Mn)	(%)
63053200	Flexible intermediate bulk containers	145.0	164.4	+13.4%
39076190	Polyethylene terephthalate: Other primary form	145.3	100.3	-31.0%
39021000	Polypropylene, in primary forms	123.0	67.2	-45.4%
67030010	Human hair, dressed, thinned, bleached or otherwise worked	117.2	81.0	-30.9%
39232990	Other sacks and bags, incl. cones, of plastics	75.6	80.8	+6.9%
90011000	Optical fibres, optical fibre bundles and cables	59.3	102.6	+73.1%
39269099	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s: Other	65.0	77.8	+19.7%
39202020	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of ethylene: Flexible, plain	62.0	65.3	+5.3%
39076990	Polyethylene terephthalate: Other primary form	55.0	44.6	-18.8%
39269080	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s: Polypropylene articles, not elsewhere	43.2	46.6	+7.9%
48239019	Decorative laminates	39.9	48.3	+21.2%
39069090	Acrylic polymers, in primary forms (excl. polymethyl methacrylate): Other	38.7	36.3	-6.2%
39014010	Linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE), in which ethylene monomer unit contributes less than 95 % by weight of the total polymer content	54.9	14.6	-73.4%
39206220	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyethylene terephthalate: Flexible, plain	43.2	43.7	+1.1%
39232100	Sacks and bags, incl. cones, of polymers of ethylene	31.3	39.1	+24.9%
39012000	Polyethylene with a specific gravity of >= 0,94, in primary forms	33.3	7.2	-78.3%
59039090	Textile fabrics impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with plastics other than polyvinyl chloride or polyurethane: Other	37.1	30.6	-17.4%
39202090	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of ethylene, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles: Other	30.5	34.0	+11.2%
39239090	Articles for the conveyance or packaging of goods, of plastics: Other	28.9	31.8	+10.0%
39046100	Polytetrafluoroethylene, in primary forms	24.0	23.1	-3.8%
05010010	Human hair, unworked; whether or not washed or scoured	4.8	26.7	+453.4%
54072090	Woven fabrics of strip or the like, of synthetic filament, incl. monofilament of >= 67 decitex and with a cross sectional dimension of <= 1 mm: Other	26.0	22.8	-12.2%

56074900	Twine, cordage, ropes and cables of polyethylene or polypropylene	17.5	21.6	+23.7%
90015000	Spectacle lenses of materials other than glass	20.5	23.6	+15.0%
39219099	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles: Other	17.8	18.6	+4.3%
39073010	Epoxide resins, in primary forms: Epoxy resins	12.0	18.3	+52.8%
39206290	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyethylene terephthalate, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles: Other	25.9	19.9	-23.3%
90183930	Cannulae	13.3	23.3	+75.4%
96081019	Ball-point pens	14.0	22.7	+62.1%
39219094	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles: Flexible, metallised	15.5	21.4	+37.9%
39199090	Self-adhesive plates, sheets, film, foil, tape, strip and other flat shapes, of plastics, whether or not in rolls > 20 cm wide: Other	13.0	19.8	+52.4%
95030030	Toys of plastics	14.1	8.5	-39.9%
39241090	Tableware and kitchenware, of plastics: Other	15.8	15.6	-1.4%
39206919	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyesters, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, not worked or only surface-worked, or only cut to rectangular, incl. square, shapes: Other	15.1	18.3	+21.5%
96032100	Tooth brushes	14.0	16.4	+16.6%
39011090	Polyethylene with a specific gravity of < 0,94, in primary forms: Other	10.6	20.4	+92.1%
39011010	Linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE), in which ethylene monomer unit contributes 95% or more by weight of the total polymer content	14.2	5.5	-61.1%
39219096	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials: Flexible, laminated	13.0	17.0	+30.7%
39095000	Polyurethanes, in primary forms	12.8	16.7	+30.6%
39119090	Polysulphides, polysulphones and other polymers and prepolymers produced by chemical synthesis, n.e.s., in primary forms: Other	10.6	15.4	+45.6%
39140020	Ion-exchangers based on polymers of heading 3901 to 3913, in primary forms	11.6	11.4	-1.7%
39129090	Cellulose and chemical derivatives thereof, n.e.s., in primary forms: Other	11.1	13.8	+23.9%
39241010	Insulated tableware and kitchenware of plastics	10.3	10.7	+4.2%

39204900	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of vinyl chloride, containing by weight < 6% of plasticisers	10.1	13.2	+31.4%
59031090	Textile fabrics impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with polyvinyl chloride: Other	12.5	13.3	+6.6%
39181090	Floor coverings, whether or not self-adhesive, in rolls or in the form of tiles, and wall or ceiling coverings in rolls with a width of >= 45 cm, consisting of a layer of plastic fixed permanently on a backing of any material other than paper, the face side of which is grained, embossed, coloured, design-printed or otherwise decorated, of polymers of vinyl chloride: Other	9.1	11.9	+31.4%
39206929	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyesters, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, not worked or only surface-worked, or only cut to rectangular, incl. square, shapes: Other	11.0	11.8	+7.4%
39235010	Stoppers, lids, caps and other closures, of plastics	11.8	12.1	+2.5%
39191000	Self-adhesive plates, sheets, film, foil, tape, strip and other flat shapes, of plastics, in rolls <= 20 cm wide	8.8	14.7	+68.0%
39201019	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular plastics, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles: Other	9.4	13.7	+45.8%

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

The Plastics Export Promotion Council

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Mr. Chakravarthi AVPS

Managing Director, Ecobliss India

Empowering Patients through Packaging

The packaging of medicines is just as important as the medicine itself. Preservation and protection of the drugs are critical, making it imperative for packaging manufacturers to adhere to the standards set by the government or other regulatory bodies.

Pharmaceutical packaging has been around since the invention of the pharmaceutical industries. Initially, the pharmaceutical packaging was not available at a wider range but the increasing demand and increasing specifications made it possible. Modern-day healthcare professionals as well as the consumers are demanding convenient packaging, which is easy to use and dispose. This increasing requirement, in turn, drives the manufacturers towards the development of innovative packaging.

Today, consumers and drug manufacturers are more attentive towards clean-room and hygienic packaging environment to minimize risk of contaminations and degrading quality of drugs. Therefore, most of the key players are also trying to fulfil norms of ISO 14644-1 certification to ensure cleanliness while packaging drugs and medicines.

The major trend that drives the market for pharmaceutical packaging is the preference for single dose packaging format, which ensures consumption of prescribed quantity at one point of time and safeguarding the remaining medicine. Besides, the consumption of vials and ampoules significantly increased in 2020 and is estimated to increase in multiples in future. As manufacturers are gradually shifting to monodose packaging solutions, the sales of blisters, prefilled syringes, sachets, etc. are expected to increase.

Also, during the pandemic there was an increase in intake of dietary supplements and various other medications to enhance the immunity power that supplements the sales of pharmaceutical packaging. The rapidly growing e-Commerce vertical adds to the opportunity for the pharmaceutical packaging market.

Patient- centricity & Sustainability - a major Factor in Pharma Packaging

The efforts by the manufacturers to develop recyclable and recoverable packaging plays a major role on boosting market growth for pharmaceutical packaging. With growing awareness among healthcare professionals and consumers, manufacturers of pharmaceutical packaging are investing an ample amount in extensive research to address the challenges related to environmental and sustainable packaging products by increasing the recyclability rate.

There are also efforts by manufacturers to invest in developing recycling and recovery facilities to support the rising ecosystem for sustainable packaging solutions. Apart from glass and recycled plastic, manufacturers are focusing on thermoformed packaging that can be recycled and is also suitable for pharmaceutical products.

Patient-centered packaging is often associated with the intuitive and self-explanatory use of the medication by patients. Patient-centered packaging offers opportunities for the creation of better solutions for patients and learning for the teams involved.

In this issue, Plexconnect interviewed Mr. Chakravarthi AVPS, CEO & MD, Ecobliss India, an internationally renowned company for its packaging innovations, with core strengths in pharmaceutical landscape. He shares his insights and perspectives on pharma packaging, the role, function, importance & drivers for pharma packaging design and a lot more. Mr. Chakravarthi is a die-hard lover and an evangelist of packaging, recognised and awarded as most influential leader in the segment. He is also a Global Ambassador of World Packaging Organisation.

(Excerpts)

What does pharmaceutical packaging entail? What are the various types of packaging being used today?

Pharmaceutical packaging can be broadly categorised into Non-sterile formulations such as:

- Solid dosage forms
- Tablets, capsules (soft gelatin and hard gelatin)
- Powders/ granules/pellets
- Liquids
- Syrups, suspensions
- Ointments/ creams

and

Sterile formulations such as:

- Injectables (Parenterals)
- Single dose, multidose (liquids , suspensions, powder for injection)
- Eye and Ear drops

How do you differentiate between packaging for other products and packaging for pharma products?

Packaging usually has two purposes; a. to protect a product and b. to encourage customers to buy the product. However, Pharmaceutical Packaging has to not only accomplish these functions, but also has to address many more challenges or requirements, such as:

Protect sensitive medication from spoilage in whichever form (tablets, suspension, capsules, liquid and others) it may be.

- Minimise the risk of misuse by children.
- Warrant the safety of the medicine and patients.
- Enable user convenience to access and use the drug
- Guarantee drug authenticity.
- Educate patients on dosage instructions
- Ensure other patient adherence otherwise done by a physician.
- Most importantly comply with regulatory requirements for drug packaging. and so on…

What are the challenges to pharmaceutical packaging? And what are key design considerations?

Packaging challenges especially in pharmaceutical packaging are of multifolded nature. Following are the broad areas of challenge

a) Formulation challenges: now a days many drugs are complex in nature and they are highly sensitive to moisture, oxygen or both that in turn largely impact physical and chemical stability.

b) Regulatory challenges: whether it is a developed market, or an emerging market patient safety is of utmost importance and hence it is very critical to maintain data on packaging materials, MSDS, identification tests, pack development report, stability compatibility studies, DMF /EDMF access letters, Food grade certificate, Heavy metals content etc.

c) Operational challenges: process issues like leak test failure, ink lifting, delamination, pinhole formation, improper nitrogen flushing etc. are critical and they can impact heavily the stability of the product. In addition to the above there are challenges in pharma packaging with respect to Intellectual property protection, counterfeit menace etc. So, while designing packaging for a pharmaceutical product the above points must be considered invariably.

In your view, what is the main function of pharma packaging vis-à-vis the product?

Well, broadly speaking Packaging has to ensure patient convenience and easy accessibility keeping in view arthritic patients and senior citizens. Packaging must help patients differentiate the products by virtue of color codes or other means and it should provide child-resistant features wherever necessary.

Patient compliance is another big challenge. A few examples include dose packs, Calendar pack; Packs with visual cues to track medicine consumption and ensure dosage regimen adherence, etc

Of course, Design elements (fonts, sizes, graphics) must be consistent as far as possible.

Packaging is expected to do away the counterfeit menace too and it has to support the patient by way of smartphone scannable QR codes which provide digitized product information and patient advice etc.

Can you give a specific example where a packaging has to perform a dual function?

Consider a highly regulated market like USA where there is a requirement for child resistant packs both for unit dose as well as multidose packs.

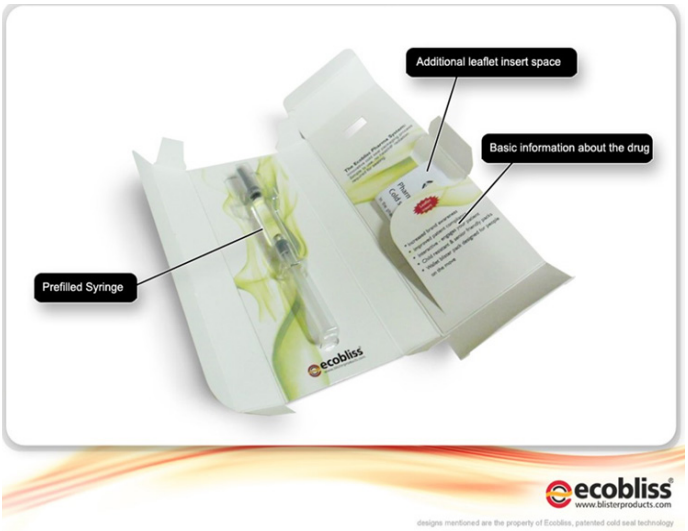
The container-closure System has to be child resistant, but it has to be senior friendly too. Elderly people or people with arthritic hands too should be able to access the medicines and to attain these features the packaging must be designed to ensure the compliance of both requirements and then it has to be evaluated and certified before introducing into the markets.

Covid has had a huge impact on the entire pharma/ medical value chain. What are the likely future trends in pharma packaging?

The future of pharma packaging will be driven by two major factors. The first one being 'User Centricity' and the other being 'Sustainability' at large. Every packaging development revolves around patient needs because it is the influencing factor that shape the market.

Under the current pandemic situation, consumer behaviour has completely changed in every aspect. Physical interactions between patients and doctors are declining rapidly. With advanced digital communication being easily available, consultations are happening remotely.

I would like you to recall my statement, "Packaging will be your second physician". It is really apt under today's situation. It is evident from the fact that ease of administration, dosage accuracy, dose monitoring, minimising (zeroing) medication errors have become the key factors, apart from safeguarding drug efficacy, providing product information while following regulatory framework in designing a pharmaceutical packaging. At the end of the day, I sincerely believe that every innovation has to help mankind to benefit at large.



You said Patient centricity will be the key driver for any business in long run. Can you elaborate on this?

Well, Patient centricity is key factor that must be considered in developing a product and its packaging. For a long time, packaging has been traditionally under manufacturing, sourcing or other main functions. The focus of packaging always used to be on stability of the product, cost incurred, and in some cases the maintainability too. The function of patient centricity was not in design purview those days and it is changing now.

Can you elaborate on design thinking in pharmaceutical packaging?

Designing pharmaceutical packaging is a tad different from doing it for other products. While sustainability, protecting the environment must be taken into, several other considerations like product safety and efficacy throughout the supply chain gamut, regulatory compliance, and patient convenience must be given priority while designing a packaging.

Well, if you think the drug for which you need to design the packaging is one of the most effective and efficacious, the packaging must not only safeguard those qualities but use all the factors that convey this message viz., the graphics, the colors, the text, and words in the labelling on the packaging and of course the material used for the packaging itself.

The design thinking in pharmaceuticals must facilitate a better connectivity and patient-centricity. The consumer must always have a feeling at the first instance that the product is well designed. If it's an OTC product, its more important to consider several aesthetic factors to give the FMT feel to the customer. One must not forget the fact that your customer may or may not see the promotions in print, electronic or even in digital media. Invariably all the customers will see what is there in and on packaging.

About the Author: *Mr. Chakravarthi AVPS, MD & CEO, Ecobliss India is the President of INBA H, an Indo Netherlands business association as well as a board member for Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council, Government of India. He is also Co Convener of Confederation of Indian industry Telangana life sciences.*

Given his strong penchant and deep knowledge in Pharmaceutical manufacturing & Packaging, he is also one of the longest serving board members of Indian Institute of Packaging and was chairman for its prestigious golden jubilee committee and for the Hyderabad center as well.

A Winner of various National, International awards that include Ameristars and Worldstars, he is now acting as Jury for various international competitions and award programmes.

He has also delivered keynote addresses, chaired and mentored various conclaves and programmes in packaging, food & pharma landscapes in more than 25 countries.
Some of the awards & accolades include:

- *UBM recognition award for contribution to Indian Pharma industry.*
- *Padma Mohana award for Industry leaders.*
- *Packaging Leadership Award from World Quality Congress*
- *TV 5 business leaders finalist.*
- *Chief jury/ jury for various National & International awards.*
- *Mentor for CPhI Innopack Pharma Worldwide*
- *Chairperson for PPL, an Indian Express initiative of pharma packaging & labelling, to name a few*

POLYMER PRICE TRACKER (DOMESTIC MARKET)
May 2022

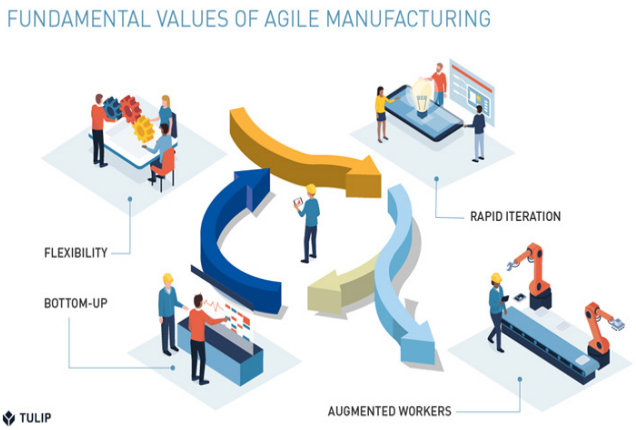
High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) ↑ ↑ ↑ Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22	• HDPE prices firmed up by Rs 1000 per MT in May 2022 after an increase of Rs 4000 per MT in April 2022 and Rs 14000 per MT in March 2022. • In May 2022, HDPE prices were increased by Rs 1000 per MT in the first week. Thereafter no price changes were announced.
Linear Low-Density Polyethylene (LLDPE) ↑ ↑ ↔ Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22	• LLDPE prices were unchanged in May 2022. Prices had increased by Rs 2000 per MT in April 2022 and Rs 14000 per MT in March 2022. • In May 2022, LLDPE did not witness any significant price change and remained rangebound.
Low Density Polyethylene(LDPE) ↑ ↓ ↓ Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22	• LDPE prices dropped by Rs 3500 per MT in May 2022 after a decline of Rs 1500 per MT in April 2022. Prices had moved up by Rs 12000 in March 2022. • In May 2022, LDPE prices were reduced by Rs 1000 per MT in the first week and by Rs 2500 per MT thereafter.
Polypropylene (PP) ↑ ↓ ↓ Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22	• PP prices fell by Rs 11000 per MT in May 2022 after a decline of Rs 3000 per MT in April 2022. Prices had moved up by Rs 6000 in March 2022. • In May 2022, PP prices were reduced by Rs 8000 per MT in the first two weeks and by Rs 3000 per MT thereafter.
Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) ↑ ↓ ↓ Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22	• PVC prices softened by Rs 10000 per MT in May 2022 after a decline of Rs 4000 per MT in April 2022. Prices had risen by Rs 7000 in March 2022. • In May 2022, PVC prices were reduced by Rs 10000 per MT around mid-month. Thereafter no price changes were announced.

Source: Industry, Plexconcil Research

Agile Manufacturing Guide: Operations in the Era of Acceleration

Manufacturing is changing. Quickly. Call it Industry 4.0, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, or the new status quo, but the fact remains the same: manufacturing is experiencing an era of acceleration.

To keep up, manufacturers need to adopt an approach that welcomes change. Increasingly, that approach has been Agile. Across industries and verticals, manufacturers apply Agile methods to access faster time to value and increase resilience in a time of disruption. Initially designed for software development, Agile allows manufacturers to harness a fast rate of change for competitive advantage. By emphasizing rapid iteration, operator augmentation, operational flexibility, and bottom-up innovation, Agile Manufacturing enables a fast response to customer demands while empowering workers to innovate.



The 4 core values of Agile Manufacturing: flexibility, rapid iteration, augmentation and bottom-up innovation.

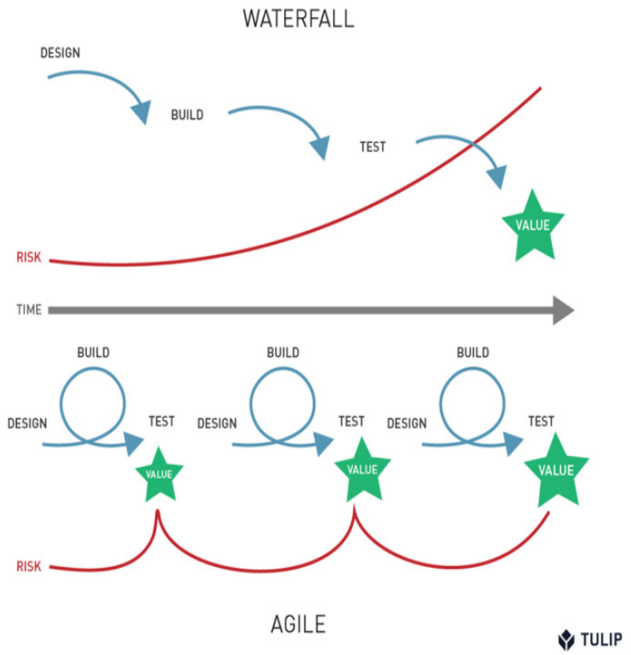
By incorporating Agile, manufacturers can survive these shifts and remain competitive. But too often, “agile” is a buzzword, dissociated from its real meaning and principles. Let’s go back in time and recall the development of the now-famous approach.

History of Agile

The Agile movement was born in 2001, when seventeen software developers gathered in a ski lodge in Utah. They all had at least one thing in common: a deep dissatisfaction with the Waterfall model.

The Waterfall model is a development method that is linear and sequential. Practitioners must complete each step of production before they start the next. Though structured and easy to follow, the Waterfall model has many pitfalls.

Primarily, the Waterfall model discourages changing course until the end of the development cycle. Because it privileges forward progress, the waterfall model delays incorporating feedback, makes it challenging to adapt to changing requirements, and slows production as engineers go to great lengths to avoid mistakes.



In the Waterfall model, production steps are followed one after the other, with no back-and-forth, until the final product is obtained. In the Agile model, multiple cycles of production take place.

Nestled in the Rocky Mountains, the software developers started contemplating an alternative, flexible model. They put on paper what would become known as the Agile Manifesto. Outlining four values and twelve principles, the manifesto would revolutionize the software engineering industry, and business as a whole.

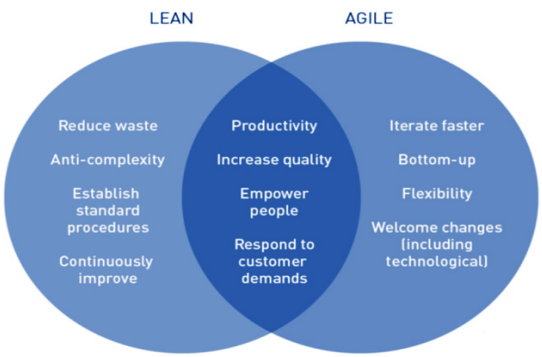
Some key takeaways from the Agile Manifesto laid the ground for the Agile Methodology.

- Organizations should highly value interactions between individuals.
- They should strive to have an ongoing conversation with customers.
- They should modify their product or service based on customer feedback.
- Teams should be self-organized.

The Agile Methodology was quickly adopted by development teams around the world for its capacity to reduce the time lag between business needs and technological developments. The Agile approach has proven its worth. It decreases costs and time to market. It also increases cross-functional collaboration, revenue growth, and customer satisfaction. Agile also mitigates risk because teams take multiple low-stakes decisions rather than a big, high-stakes one. Regularly delivering small pieces of value reduces the risk that the final product doesn't meet customer needs.

Agile Manufacturing Principles

The Lean and Agile approaches are both wildly popular. However, they should not be confused. On the one hand, Lean Manufacturing is focused on increasing efficiency by reducing waste. On the other hand, Agile Manufacturing aims to increase efficiency via flexible, parallel problem solving.While some of the ideas of Lean Manufacturing and Agile Manufacturing overlap, the fundamental principles are different.



Key principles of Agile Manufacturing

1. Iterate Faster

The idea of delivering smaller pieces of value more frequently is central to Agile Manufacturing. Rather than attempting to design a single, perfect product in one go, the objective is to rapidly produce multiple versions. Each iteration, with its flaws and strengths, reveals new insights that make it possible to improve the process. As the process improves, each new version of the product surpasses the previous.

Why does this incremental, iterative method result in a superior result? Because process engineers deal with many variables. Iterations allow them to test different solutions and gather data on individual variables. Without this data, it is difficult to determine which changes are necessary at a given stage to optimize production.

2. Flexibility

According to McKinsey, "Volatility is rising and taking its toll. Whether from increasing fluctuations in demand, labor rates and input prices, or from disruptive events like natural disasters and financial crises, volatility has damaged supply chains, increased costs and eroded profits. Companies are increasingly recognizing that they must alter their manufacturing strategies in the face of rising volatility."

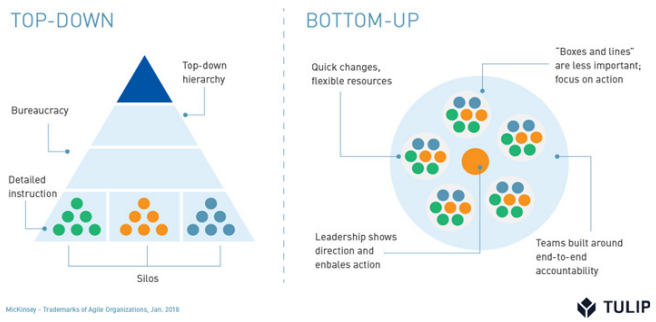
In order not to bend under external forces, manufacturing companies need to have flexible systems. Their internal structure needs to be dynamic enough to rebound quickly from external disruptions. Agile manufacturers are aware that environmental factors - economic, political, environmental, social, technological - require them to constantly stay on their toes. They make sure that every component of their system can grow organically and adapt to changes.

3. Bottom-Up

For decades, goals and directives have passed from the top of the organization to the bottom. The top-down approach has its advantages, such as the quick implementation of decisions taken by upper levels of a company. However, this comes at a cost. Employees at the bottom can feel disconnected and disengaged. Low engagement can discourage accountability and innovation.

Agile manufacturers favor a bottom-up approach, in which ideas and directives flow seamlessly between all layers of the company. With this approach, directors and managers give operators and shop floor workers a voice.

Agile Manufacturing supports the idea that those closest to manufacturing challenges understand them best. The more operators, engineers, managers, and business executives collaborate, the more effective operations will be as a whole. Collaboration across functions and seniority levels yields higher value products and processes.



Agile organizations abandon the hierarchical, top-down approach to adopt a flexible, bottom-up approach.

4. Augmentation

Augmentation is best understood in contrast to automation. Automation consists of automating workers' tasks - in other words, of replacing workers by machines. Augmentation, on the other hand, enhances workers' capabilities through technology.

For years, automation was considered the solution to high labor costs and human error in the factory. Yet automation is also expensive, difficult to maintain, and inflexible.

Agile manufacturing argues that humans will perform best if they have tools that enable them to evolve their work. From computer-vision assisted quality checks to error-proofing work instructions, Agile manufacturers use technology to help their people do more work, better.

Future of Agile Organizations

In order to successfully implement Agile Manufacturing, manufacturers need to apply its principles and encourage some changes to their organization. These changes will vary depending on the organization's size and structure, but some underlying features are common to most successful Agile organizations.

1. Culture and purpose

Agile culture puts people at the center. Agile organizations are structured in a way that team members have ownership over their work. Leaders in an Agile organization do not rule over their employees, but rather provide them with tools to achieve results on their own.

These autonomous Agile teams are goal-oriented. After setting their goals and deciding how to achieve them, teams are held accountable for their progress. Even if different teams work on different goals, there is an organization-wide cohesion: all goals fit into a greater purpose. Agile organizations understand that purpose is essential to give meaning to the short-term goals that teams work hard to meet. Purpose also increases productivity: when employees work with a sense of purpose, they are more engaged and motivated.

Agile organizations share their purpose with everyone so that every employee knows why they're doing what they're doing. A purpose-driven mindset fuels people and boosts motivation and engagement.

2. Network of teams

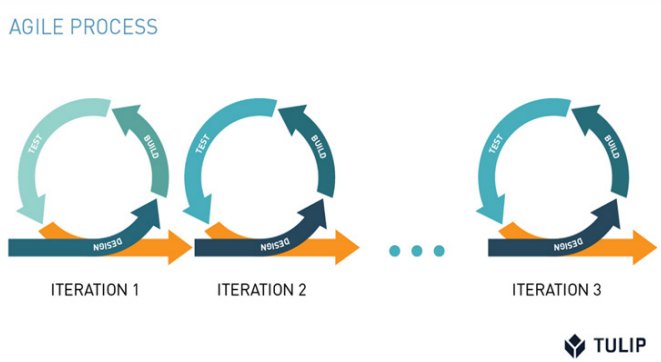
Teams hold great importance in Agile organizations. Accountability, transparency and collaboration are crucial within teams. Team members have clear roles, but they do not necessarily have a single role and roles can be shared among multiple people. The work environment should be open and safe. Finally, teams should be in touch with each other, so that members can source knowledge and insights from other teams.

3. Rapid cycles

The "Iterate Faster" principle of Agile Manufacturing encourages teams to quickly go through multiple versions of a process or product. The ability to implement this principle is a core feature of successful Agile organizations.

In order to iterate faster, Agile teams work on concrete goals over short, predetermined periods of time. Both the goals and the timeframe are critical to agility.

Goals should be realistic and measurable. Team members are held accountable for them. The timeframe should be fairly short - on the order of weeks - to keep teams iterating quickly.



An Agile process consists of multiple, quick cycles of iteration.

4. Technology

Technology is essential to all of the cornerstones of Agile Manufacturing. Without the right technologies, it is impossible for companies to deliver value at a fast enough pace to keep up with customer demands and market fluctuations.

Examples of enabling technologies include real-time communication and work management tools, to improve flow and organization; hackathons, to swiftly push out new solutions and products; and interactive digital work instructions, to easily keep employees' skill sets up to date.

But Agile isn't about adopting solve-it-all technologies. Rather, it is about finding the right technologies to improve their unique processes, workers, and products.

Conclusion

Manufacturers can bring agility to their organizations by adopting the right technologies.To iterate faster, Agile manufacturers turn to technologies that help them collect data. To become flexible, tools and software that enable quick turnovers are essential. To follow a bottom-up approach, Agile manufacturers award their workers more trust and power. To augment their workers, they equip them with the proper tools and training.

The Agile Methodology has been in the spotlight for almost two decades. 41% of the organizations surveyed by McKinsey say their companies have fully implemented or are in the progress of implementing a company-wide Agile transformation. However, it is only in recent years that technologies enabling agility in the manufacturing sector have emerged. Now, there is promising potential for manufacturing companies to join the digital revolution and leave the past behind.

Source: This article has been published on tulip.co

Carboys, Bottles, Flasks and Similar Articles of Plastics

Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics are used for storage and transportation of liquid and solid intermediates. These products are made through injection blow-moulding process. There has been an increasing preference for Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics as they are cheaper and easier to handle than those made of glass and metal. The product is classified under Subheading 392330 of the Harmonized System (HS) of Coding. World-wide import of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics is valued at USD 10.0 billion per year approximately.

- In 2021, top-5 exporting countries of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics were: China (18.9%), Germany (8.5%), United States of America (6.8%), Netherlands (4.8%), and France (4.6%).
- Likewise, top-5 importing countries of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics were: United States of America (13.0%), Germany (7.1%), France (6.7%), Canada (5.0%), and Netherlands (4.8%).

In 2021-22, India exported 12,388 tonnes of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics valued at USD 45.4 million to the world. While United States of America was the top export destination in terms of value, Nepal was the top destination in terms of volume.

Destination Country	Value (USD Mn)	Destination Country	Qty. (Tonnes)
United States of America	6.55	Nepal	1,528
United Arab Emirates	4.42	Bhutan	1,412
Nepal	3.71	United Arab Emirates	1,327
Saudi Arabia	3.62	United States of America	983
Bangladesh	2.16	Saudi Arabia	805
Belgium	1.50	Angola	663
United Kingdom	1.41	Bangladesh	362
China	1.27	Brazil	320
South Africa	1.08	South Africa	254
Kenya	0.96	China	248

Source: Department of Commerce, Govt. of India, Plexconcil Research

In 2021-22, India imported 5,111 tonnes of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics valued at USD 47.3 million from the world. China was the major supplier in terms of value, while Nepal was the top supplier in terms of volume.

Source Country	Value (USD Mn)	Source Country	Qty. (Tonnes)
China	10.82	Nepal	2,100
Netherlands	8.29	China	1,218
Germany	7.41	United States of America	440
United States of America	7.27	Germany	308
Nepal	3.04	Malaysia	230
Canada	1.57	Bhutan	135
France	1.33	Canada	62
Taiwan	0.98	Poland	60
Poland	0.97	Thailand	56
Malaysia	0.90	France	56

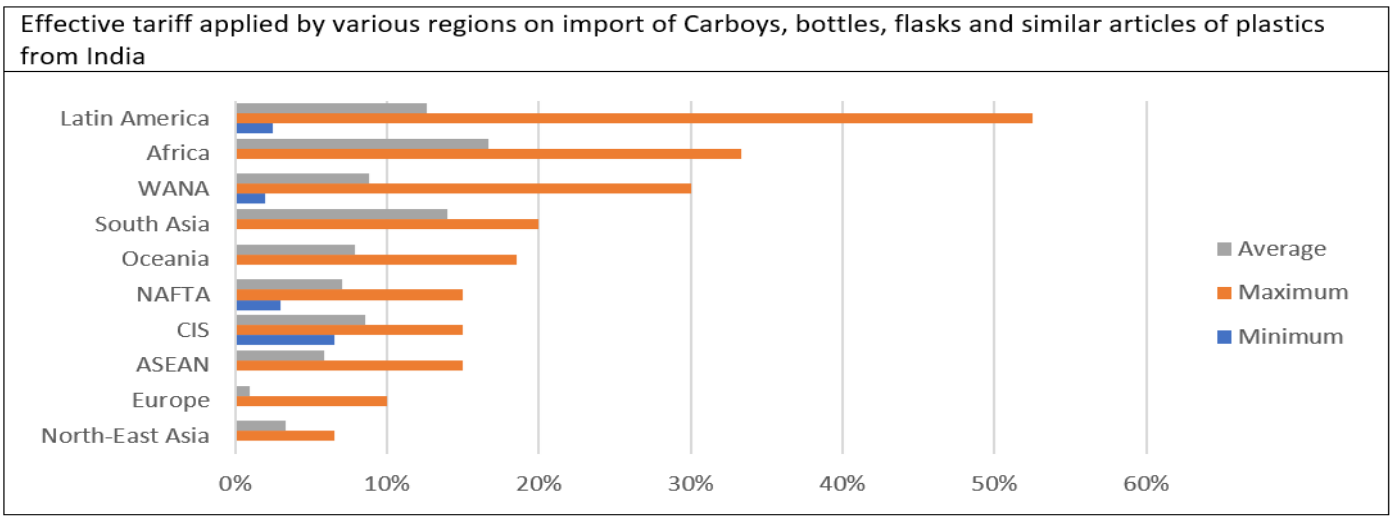
Source: Department of Commerce, Govt. of India, Plexconcil Research

Indian firms dealing in Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics, have immense potential to export to destinations like Kazakhstan, Romania, Slovakia, Russia, Finland, Ireland, Japan, Denmark, Australia, and Brazil.

Import of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics from India by the European Union countries, Japan and Netherlands is eligible for zero customs duty due to Generalised Scheme of Preferences Scheme. There is zero duty applicable on import of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics, from India in Republic of Korea under India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. In fact, few of the ASEAN countries like Myanmar and Vietnam also allow zero duty imports of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics under the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement. Import of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles is eligible for zero customs duty in Singapore, Brunei and Mauritius.

Unfortunately, several countries in Latin America, Africa, WANA, South Asia, CIS, and North America do not accord any preferential treatment to Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics exported from India due to which the average customs duty faced on this product is high.

Effective tariff applied by various regions on import of Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics from India



Source: Market Access Map, Plexconcil Research

Some of the key members of our council dealing in Carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles of plastics are M/s. Chemco Plastic Industries Private Limited, M/s. Shriji Polymers India Limited, M/s. Manjushree Technopack Limited, M/s. Annapurna Pet Private Limited, and M/s. Tarsons Limited.

The beginning of a new era for sustainable packaging in India

India is poised to become a leading nation on sustainable packaging, says Dr. R. Rangaprasad. Thanks to a longstanding experience in recycling and a flourishing technology sector, the Business Head at the knowledge sharing platform Packaging 360 is convinced that the country's packaging value chain stakeholders will make major advances in the coming years.

Dr. Rangaprasad sees his mission at Packaging 360 in facilitating dialogue in the Indian packaging industry: "We try to act as a bridge". He and his employers work with is correspondingly wide array of stakeholders: it includes start-ups trying to develop plastic alternatives, big brands trying to source sustainable materials, and recycling industry players trying to adapt their operations to a new environment. In turn, the service portfolio offered by the "knowledge sharing ecosystem" is equally large, ranging from consultancy services, event organisation and market research to news and information services, and training. Added to the holistic approach of his work comes Dr. Rangaprasad's in-depth experience of the sector: for more than a quarter of a century, he has followed the development of the Indian packaging value chain

Moving away from plastic is hard to do

Fostering this knowledge and cooperation is vitally significant to Dr. Rangaprasad. For, from his vantage point, there are still a number of challenges that the packaging sector must tackle in order to master the test of circularity – both at a global level and in India. In particular, there are two systemic hurdles that the industry must overcome in his view: "The biggest challenge is the collection and sorting of mixed waste streams. The second challenge is ensuring the quality of recyclates." The two are in his estimation related and particularly acute for flexible packaging: for one, it is composed of multiple materials and thus much harder to recycle. Secondly, due to the fact that it tends to be used for perishable and sensitive goods such as food and medicines, the quality of the alternative and recycled packaging materials must be very high.

This is where Dr. Rangaprasad sees one of the major problems facing the industry: "The development of plastic alternatives is not as easy as people thought." While he is encouraged to see novel solutions such as biodegradable packaging emerging, he considers them not yet mature enough to be used at the scale necessary for the industry. Furthermore, Dr. Rangaprasad also underlines that, in India, the packaging materials challenge is not just one of innovation, but a social issue: if using a more sustainable material raised the cost of packaging, it is likely price out vulnerable consumers. In this context, he cites recent market research underlining just how delicate a balance the industry has to strike: "Sachets for shampoo cost two rupees. If you raise the price by fifty paise or one rupee, brand owners will lose fifteen percent of their customers." For all of these reasons, he believes that plastic will continue to remain essential for certain parts of the industry: "When we talk about food, pharmaceuticals, and FMCG [Fast Moving Consumer Goods], you cannot do without polymers. That will take another decade."

India: the start of a recycling boom

However, Dr. Rangaprasad is confident that many of the other obstacles on the path to a circular economy can be overcome – and that India is in a prime position to be a leading light in this endeavour. For one, as he stresses, the mentality of politicians and industry players in approaching waste management has changed:

"Plastic waste is no longer seen as waste but a resource that should be efficiently utilized – there is a paradigm shift in thinking."

More practically speaking, Dr. Rangaprasad argues that the country is already able to act on this understanding thanks to its well-established and thriving recycling sector that is presently undergoing a major transformation: "Twenty to twenty-five years back, the recycling industry was mainly driven by the informal sector." In his experience, this is rapidly changing, as the sector is increasingly embracing new high-tech solutions developed by a plethora of new start-ups: "What we find today is that, as more and more engineers come in, AI and sorting systems are brought forward." The preeminent status of the recycling industry in India and its new "technology-driven" approach will, in Dr. Rangaprasad's view, also enable the sector as a whole to improve the quality of recyclates by building on existing recycling solutions: "The question is: what is available in conventional packaging and how can it be made sustainable?" This progress will, according to him, also benefit more challenging sectors. "On food and FMCG, we are seeing advancements towards easily recyclable materials," he stresses.

Beyond technology and innovation, Dr. Rangaprasad believes that other forces will be of increasing significance: regulation and consumer behaviour. From a legal standpoint, Dr. Rangaprasad emphasises that India is on the brink of another fundamental change in the coming months that will also greatly facilitate the transition towards a more circular packing value chain: a prohibition of single-use plastics. In his view, this new policy will bring greater certainty and predictability to the sector: "There will be a total ban on manufacturing. That framework is now very clear and there is no ambiguity." At the same time, he also underlines that for the circular economy transition to succeed, it needs grassroots support. Here again, Dr. Rangaprasad believes that India has a head start, pointing out that reusing and repurposing everyday items is already a highly popular practice in India. Similar efforts are now also being undertaken for recycling, he states, as local initiatives for collecting and sorting waste are growing in significance: "There is a community-driven aspect now." At the same time, with clear regulation set and increasing popular support for circular initiatives, he is very clear as to who the driving force of India's recycling boom will be: "The onus is now on the industry."

Dr. R. Rangaprasad, is currently Business Head, Packaging 360, *a Mumbai based knowledge service provider vertical under Catalyzing New Technology (CNT) Expositions & Services LLP. Packaging 360 is a comprehensive knowledge sharing ecosystem for the Indian packaging industry (www.packaging360.in). He is a chemical technologist by training having earned his Ph.D. (Tech) degree from UDCT (now ICT) in 1992.*

This article was originally published on Think Circle: https://www.huhtamaki.com/en/think-circle/articles/all/the-beginning-of-a-new-era-for-sustainable-packaging-in-india/

Why Bioplastics Will Not Solve the World's Plastics Problem

Bioplastics are being touted by industry marketers as the solution to plastics pollution. But the idea that bottles and packaging made of plant-based material can simply be discarded and then break down and disappear is false – recycling and reuse are the only strategies that can work.

Coca-Cola calls it the PlantBottle — a new kind of recyclable plastic container, 30 percent of which is made from sugar cane and other plants, with the remaining 70 percent made from traditional oil-based plastic. The company says that PlantBottle packaging now accounts for nearly a third of its North American bottle volume and seven percent globally.

Does the PlantBottle mean the giant soft drink company has cracked one of the world's most serious environmental problems, the choking of the world with oil-based plastics that never completely break down and disappear? Hardly. Though companies like Coca-Cola and Pepsi are under public pressure to solve the problem of plastic pollution, they have so far been unable to find a material or method as cheap and effective as single-use plastic.

Bioplastics, which make up part of Coke's PlantBottle, have been touted as an important solution to the world's plastic pollution problem. But despite a growing push in recent years to come up with an organic plastic that satisfies product needs and, after use, becomes part of nature again, making bioplastics that are both cheap and effective has posed a major challenge.

"The concept that we could use it, throw it away, and it doesn't matter where you throw it, and it's going to safely disappear, that does not exist," said Ramani Narayan, a professor at the School of Packaging at Michigan State University. "Nobody could engineer something like that, not even nature."

Instead, many experts believe the solution to plastic waste mainly lies not in developing better bioplastics, but in overhauling the world's economy to recycle far-greater quantities of plastic than currently are being reused. A just-released two-year study called Breaking the Plastic Wave by Pew Charitable Trusts and SYSTEMIQ, found that despite the efforts of industry, governments, and NGOs, the plastic problem is getting much worse.

"A key step, one expert says, is requiring companies that use packaging to play a lead role in its recycling and reuse."

Indeed, a recent study in the journal Science, authored by the researchers associated with the Pew report, estimated that some 11 million metric tons of plastic now find their way into the oceans each year — 3 million more than previous estimates. The study said that if the world continues on its current course of skyrocketing plastic consumption, the amount of plastic waste being produced will triple by 2040.

The only solution to this burgeoning problem, the Pew report concludes, is a massive $600 billion overhaul of the world's plastic system that reuses and recycles plastic in a circular economy, along with other, smaller-scale changes, including bioplastics. If its recommendations are adopted, the Pew report says, plastic waste could be reduced by 80 percent over the next two decades.

Among the remedies proposed in the report are the elimination of plastic packaging wherever possible, substituted with paper or compostable material; designing products for effective recycling; increasing mechanical recycling; scaling up collection and recycling efforts in moderate- and low-income countries, where the vast majority of ocean plastic originates; and an end to exports of waste plastic, which would force countries where the waste is generated to come up with solutions to the plastics problem.

Marian Chertow, an expert in industrial ecology at the Yale School of the Environment, says that a key step is taking the onus off governments for recycling and instead requiring companies that use the packaging to play a lead role in its recycling and reuse.

"It's called extended producer responsibility — product take-back," says Chertow. Governments "should say, 'We can't recycle all of this stuff. We can't pay for all the costs of recycling. We have to work with you, the producer.'"

Coca-Cola's new PlantBottle is made from 30 percent sugar cane and other plants, with the rest made from traditional oil-based plastic. COCA-COLA

The notion of industry bearing the financial burden for recycling the materials it produces is starting to gain some traction, with companies such as Nestle Waters vowing to support moves to implement extended producer responsibility in the beverage industry.

From the shores of the Arctic Ocean, to the beaches of the Mediterranean, to the rivers of India, plastic is accumulating in staggering quantities, especially in marine environments. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch has now grown so large that it is spread across an area four times the size of California, according to a study in the journal Scientific Reports. And this plastic, which eventually breaks down into nanoscale particles and is consumed by organisms from algae to whales, will never go away.

So why have bioplastics, touted as an important solution to the plastic problem, fallen far short of their promise?

Single-use plastic packaging made from oil — technically polyethylene terephthalate, or PET — is the kind most drinks and food are sold in. It is, in many ways, the perfect packaging — strong, light, versatile, clear, and inexpensive. It protects products extremely well, keeps them fresh, and can even stand up to the acid and pressurization of soft drinks without breaking down or becoming permeable over months or years.

Bioplastic needs to replicate these functions, and it does for some products. The two most commonly used bioplastics are PHA, short for polyhydroxyalkanoate, generally made from sugars that are grown from algae, and PLA, for polylactic acid, which is made from the sugar found in crops like corn and sugarcane. PLA is a tenth the cost of PHA and so is more widely used for disposable cutlery and a variety of packaging. PHA is used as a coating for the inside of paper cups and medical applications.

Neither of these bioplastics is widely used, however, because they simply don't compare to the strength and other properties of traditional plastic, and they cost substantially more. The global plastic market is worth $1.2 trillion, and bioplastics have a market share of $9 billion.

"If bioplastics end up in landfills, they can last for centuries and release methane, a potent greenhouse gas."

While both of the bioplastics now in use can be broken down by microorganisms and become part of the natural world again in a short period of time, this only happens if the plastic is collected and composted in carefully controlled, high-temperature industrial composting facilities — and there aren't many of those, especially in developing countries where the problem of plastic pol-

lution is most severe.

If bioplastics end up in landfills, as many do, without enough oxygen to break them down, they can last for centuries and release methane, a potent greenhouse gas. If thrown into the environment, they pose threats similar to PET plastic.

“They are basically the same as plastic and don’t decompose in the way most people think they do,” said Rebecca Burgess, CEO of City to Sea, a UK environmental nonprofit that was formed to reduce plastic in the oceans. “They often end up as rubbish littering our streets and oceans and killing marine life. Bioplastics are a ‘false solution’ as they are single use and there are limited options to compost them··· Reducing the amount of single-use packaging we use is the only solution.”

The drawbacks of bioplastics to date haven’t stopped marketers like Coca-Cola from implying the plastic pollution problem is being solved. They use the popular, if vague, terms “plant-based” or “bio-based” or “compostable,” for example. “Marketing is highly abusive in this area,” said Taylor Weiss, an assistant professor at Arizona State University who researches algae-based bioplastics.

Even a 100-percent plant-based bottle is not the solution it might seem. Not only can bioplastics find their way into the environment and take many years to break down, but because they are made from plants, they come with the environmental problems that large-scale agriculture causes. The sugars used to make bioplastic often come from transgenic crops sprayed with herbicides and pesticides, and these crops take land out of production that is needed to feed a growing global population. This mirrors the problems found in biofuels, which were similarly seen as an environmental solution. Experts say that using bioplastic and biofuels will greatly increase the land needed for agriculture.

Plastic waste lines the banks of the Makelele River in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

And because PLA’s are generally mechanically recycled — which means they are cleaned, shredded, melted down, and made into pellets to be used again — they can contaminate the waste stream of petroleum-based plastics that are chemically recycled.

On the other hand, PHAs can be made from sugars grown in algae and so there is no impact on food production. But using algae to produce bioplastic ingredients is expensive and it could take years before PHA plastics could be scaled up to a level that substantially decreases the cost.

Experts say that the challenges of introducing bioplastics on a massive scale show how hard it will be to replace the billions of plastic bottles polluting the planet. “There isn’t a silver bullet,” said Simon Reddy, who directs Pew’s ocean plastic program and was an author of the recent report. Instead, a variety of new approaches are needed to overhaul the current economy. “It’s about designing products for recycling,” he said. “Currently we don’t do that. The information on the label about plastics is vague and unintelligible. The recyclability should be first and foremost.”

In Europe about 42 percent of plastic packaging was recycled in 2017, while in the U.S. just 8.4 percent of plastic is recycled.

Some small recycled plastic successes are taking place. Evian, the spring water bottler, recently launched a bottle made from 100 percent recycled PET. The company says its goal is to become what is known as “fully circular” — to have all of its bottles made from 100 percent recycled plastic by 2025. And Coca-Cola has vowed to recycle one plastic bottle for every bottle it sells by 2030.

Deposits on plastic bottles have also helped raise recycling rates, especially in Europe, where 10 countries have implemented small deposits on plastic bottles and achieved impressive returns — including 97 percent in Norway.

Alternatives to traditional PET bottles are slowly being developed, though on a small scale. Carlsberg, the Danish beer brewer, says it has spent five years developing a paper bottle lined with bioplastic. The spirit maker Johnnie Walker says that next year it will release a plastic-free paper bottle for a limited-edition run of its whiskey.

And a leading Dutch sustainable chemistry company, Avantium, working with Coca-Cola, just announced the development of a 100-percent plant-based bottle made of PEF — polyethylene furanoate, which is produced from sugars. Avantium says its bottle is better than PET as a container for soda and other products and breaks down completely in a year in a composting facility, and in a few years in the natural environment. “It really is the next-generation material that people have been looking for,” Tom van Aken, CEO of Avantium told an industry magazine.

But some skeptics say Avantium needs to publish the specifics of its claim before its technology can be considered a viable solution. And even if this plastic technology proves to be as beneficial as the company claims, the company would need to scale up production to replace PET, which would take years.

Such developments so far represent small steps compared to the growth in demand for plastic containers, especially in the developing world, which uses billions of bottles every year. Recycling traditional plastic bottles is a huge challenge for low- and moderate-income countries, many of which have virtually no recycling systems in place. As much as 95 percent of the plastic that is transported by rivers into the world’s oceans comes from 10 rivers in Asia and Africa.

Inertia is also a factor. The massive global packaging system is still geared to use new plastic made from cheap oil, not recycled plastic, which is much more expensive. “As long as we continue to produce virgin resin, recycling will never happen,” said Michigan State’s Narayan. “Brand owners — Coca-Cola and Pepsi — need to say they will not sell water or juice in a bottle that does not contain recycled content, irrespective of the cost. The pop bottle of the future will still be the current PET bottle. It does a great job. But we need the ability to collect it and recycle it and recycle it. That is the future.”

Source: This article was originally published in Yale Environment 360, Yale School of Environment

'Districts as Export Hubs initiative by govt will give Indian MSMEs ammunition to beat China'

Trade, import and exports for MSMEs: Among the most robust calls to action in making districts as export hubs, were made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 2019 Independence Day speech. He lauded that each district's potential equals that of an entire country, given its diverse identity and potential for the global market.

With the intent to fructify an ambitious export target for FY23, The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has sought Rs 6,000 crores in funding for the 'Districts as Export Hubs' initiative. All eyes are already on India as it ups its ante to produce and export more in the wake of global supply chain disruption. Moreover, labor shortage, lack of raw materials, etc. due to covid-19 impact have severely dented China's potential to continue its global exports momentum, with many countries opting for the China +1 strategy being the icing on the cake for India. With all these factors at play, industry experts view the proposal as a step in the right direction, and the timing couldn't have been more appropriate.

In the project's first phase, work will begin on the 200 out of the 700-odd districts in India. The aim is to boost production in the remotest of towns and connect businesses to foreign buyers. This will be a shot in the arm for India's medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs), who are the backbone of the country's economy.

Tapping the Untapped Potential

Among the most robust calls to action in making districts as export hubs, were made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 2019 Independence Day speech. He lauded that each district's potential equals that of an entire country, given its diverse identity and potential for the global market.

The top six states in India- Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Harayana contribute 75 per cent of India's overall exports. This shows how exports are concentrated in only certain regions of the nation.

TOP EXPORTING STATES

State	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22*
Gujarat	4.50	4.48	8.37
Maharashtra	4.60	4.32	4.90
Tamil Nadu	2.13	1.93	2.34
Karnataka	1.18	1.13	1.69

Figures in ₹L crore. * till Feb-2022 (source: Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics)

Besides this, perhaps even more focus on promoting region-specific identified products to reach potential buyers outside India is an untapped area with incredible growth potential. For instance, consolidating the exports of gems and jewellery, garments, furniture, toys, and blue pottery from Jaipur, Rajasthan. And also, doing the same in Palghar (Maharashtra) for products related to chemicals, pharmaceuticals, engineering, plastics related, fisheries, and marine food processing may multiply the exportability of the whole country instead of focusing exports mainly from large export hubs.

Making Aatmanirbhar Bharat a Reality

If the district export hub scheme gets the Finance Ministry's approval, it will form a part of the new Foreign Trade Policy, set to be announced in September.

Self-sufficiency and self-reliance will be the first by-products of this move. Specific actions to support local exporters and manufacturers may be a boon in addressing challenges obstructing improved supply chains, market accessibility, and handholding for increasing exports. Among the four potential wins or benefits will include:-

- Heavy investments in the district will boost manufacturing and exports and provide the ecosystem for innovation and use of technology at the district level to make exports competitive.
- Reduction of transaction costs for the MSMEs at various stages of the export cycle and generating employment in the district.
- Providing platforms for the district's broad and global reach of products and services through e-commerce and digital marketing.
- Diversification of exports which is important to improve the stability of export earnings.
- Working towards a Flourishing Rural Economy

The focus on far-fledged areas of the country would fuel economic activity in the rural hinterland/small towns and prepare businesses for export, not to mention aid in employment generation at the grass-root level. Besides supporting MSMEs and local artisans, logistics and agricultural sectors will also see development, a critical factor that would help India meet global expectations of delivery and quality. Additionally, Niti Aayog believes improving the export competitiveness of states could further increase their wealth and standard of living, which in turn is expected to minimize the regional disparity across states.

Himalayan

State	Score	Rank
Uttarakhand	40.79	1
Himachal Pradesh	40.43	2
Tripura	27.46	3
Sikkim	27.41	4
Manipur	15.78	5

Coastal

State	Score	Rank
Gujarat	78.86	1
Maharashtra	77.14	2
Karnataka	61.72	3
Tamil Nadu	56.84	4
Andhra Pradesh	50.39	5

Landlocked

State	Score	Rank
Haryana	53.20	1
Uttar Pradesh	51.09	2
Madhya Pradesh	51.03	3
Punjab	50.99	4
Telangana	47.92	5

UT/City States

State	Score	Rank
Delhi	43.66	1
Goa	41.95	2
Jammu and Kashmir	30.06	3
Chandigarh	28.41	4
Puducherry	22.19	5

According to Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2021 Report, India hasn't completely leveraged the Lewis curve for low-skill manufacturing vis-a-vis more skill-intensive exports. Moreover, the report said India lags in tapping existing market potential compared to Vietnam, Bangladesh, and China, which continue to lead exports in this category. Since the nation has a comparative advantage in low-skilled exports, it must boost its manufacturing capacity to exploit this opportunity further. The focus on district hubs for export will likely address this gap.

Conclusion

With foreign trade constituting 45 per cent of India's GDP and 2021-22 being a bumper year for India's exports, marking a record-high of $419 billion, heightened emphasis on economy-building via districts as export hubs will prove pivotal in organizing the unorganized MSME sector. Moreover, an Aatmanirbhar Bharat focused on growing all that has been ignored for decades will set the ball rolling for India to supersede global peers in exports and have a decades-long impact.

Pushkar Mukewar is CEO & Co-Founder of Drip Capital. Views expressed are the author's own. This article was first published in financialexpress.com

'Design4Circularity' Launches for Plastic Personal Care Packaging

In a first and unique collaboration for the personal care industry, Clariant, Siegwerk, Borealis, and Beiersdorf are combining expertise to tackle the challenge of creating recyclable consumer packaging with a target of 100% recovery of plastic packaging waste. Named "Design-4Circularity", the pioneering initiative is yielding innovations and insights for the different design aspects to encourage others to join the design for circularity principles.

The goal of the cross-industry collaboration is to create a new circular packaging standard that supports reduced plastic waste, less use of new/virgin plastic material, and reduced climate impact.

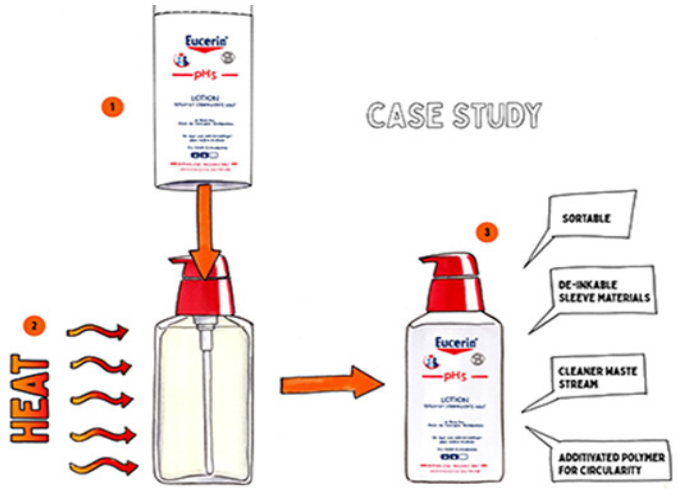
Clariant, Siegwerk, Borealis, and Beiersdorf recycling collaboration centers on a colorless and sleeved 100% PCR polyolefin bottle for cosmetics.

Richard Haldimann, Clariant's chief technology and sustainability officer, says "This collaboration was possible because all participants are dedicated to circular economy, with company-wide programs and holistic understanding of the systems involved. Achieving circularity needs a complete shift in designing product packaging and packaging raw materials, considering sortation, recycling, and packaging end-of-life."

Stefan Haep, Siegwerk's technology head brand owner collaboration, adds "Our initiative is a frontrunner in uniquely assessing circularity in every design parameter, from additives to bottle material to inks, mapping industry competencies, potential gaps, and feasibility proof points to open up viable, ultimately circular solutions."

In addition to creating a loop of high-value applications, the iniative should also allow for the high-quality visuals and distinctive shapes consumers associate with cosmetics packaging and brands.

The program is based on using a colorless polyolefin bottle with 100% post-consumer recycle (PCR) content, full-body shrink-sleeve labels using a printed, de-inkable sleeve. All materials are technically fully recyclable with the potential to be recovered and used for the same high-value application.



"We follow an ambitious Sustainability Agenda including the vision of fully circular resources," explains Beiersdorf packaging expert Stefan Rüster. "The Design4Circularity packaging solution is ground-breaking for future cosmetics applications. Through the hard work and innovation power of all collaboration partners involved, we have managed to combine the high design requirements of a cosmetic packaging with full circularity. We are very proud of this success and hope that this motivates our industry peers to follow."

Peter Voortmans, Borealis, global commercial director consumer product, adds "Transforming to a circular economy is a team effort. Only together with like-minded partners can we shape an 'ever mindful' tomorrow. It starts with packaging design in combination with the right sorting and recycling infrastructure, and through collaboration we reinvent essentials for sustainable living."

Designed to be recycled again and again.

To give packaging waste a second life, the packaging material needs to retain high-value through multiple lifecycles. Borealis brought its expertise in advanced, transformational mechanical recycling technology by offering high quality PCR based on proprietary Borcycle M technology.

Additionally, Clariant brought expertise in design for recycling additive solutions to ensure targeted additives protect PCR quality and protect against polymer chain breakdown at each recycling step. This delivered a suitable, high-value PCR material to repeatedly hit the high-end criteria of personal care-related consumer packaging. The circular solution additionally focuses on a colorless bottle option to increase PCR quality after recycling.

For the sleeve labels, Siegwerk was able to provide ink systems, which in collaboration with Beiersdorf and a sleeve manufacturer, allowed printing of the sleeve to realize a full body, colored and appealing cosmetic sleeve. Additionally, the new ink composition was designed to allow de-inking of the sleeve within a recycling process to increase the circularity of the packaging. The bottle/shrink sleeve combination is intended for removal at a materials recovery facility.

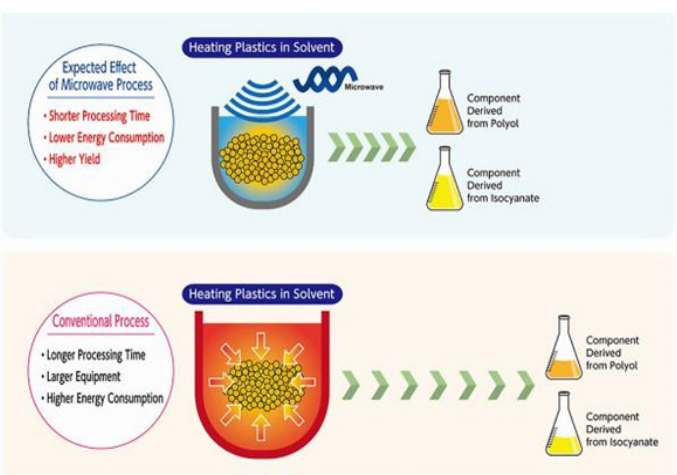
First sorting trials in existing recycling infrastructure proved the successful sortation of the full body sleeved high-density polyethylene (HDPE) bottle in achieving a high recovery of the bottle material. Additionally, the project team conducted trials with full body sleeved, transparent PET bottles and achieved similar results.

Further advancements in sorting technology are needed to achieve the final goal of circular economy to give colorless bottles a second life back in colorless applications that retaining superior value. Technologies such as digital watermarking or artificial intelligence could help such sustainability goals to be reached.

Source: Plastics Today

Japanese Project Aims to Recycle Polyurethane Foam Using Microwaves

Mitsui Chemicals and Microwave Chemical have launched a new initiative aimed at commercializing chemical recycling of flexible polyurethane (PU) foam via microwave technology. The project involves direct synthesis of PU raw materials by decomposing offcuts of the foam used to manufacture mattresses and similar items. Previously, the two firms had collaborated to develop recycling technology for automotive shredder residue (ASR). They are also working jointly to develop eco-friendly carbon-fiber manufacturing technology using microwaves.



Mitsui Chemicals and Microwave Chemical aim to commercialize technology for decomposing offcuts of foam used to manufacture car seats and mattresses.

Flexible polyurethane foam principally consists of polyols and isocyanates. Its softness and high resilience have led to a wide range of applications, from industrial goods and materials to daily necessities, including mattresses, car seats, chair cushions, and kitchen sponges. However, chemical recycling of flexible PU foam and other PU products has not yet been achieved at a commercial level in Japan. Therefore, the development and commercialization of such technology is a pressing issue from the perspective of contributing to a circular economy.

Using PlaWave microwave-based plastic decomposition technology developed by Microwave Chemical, the processing time for decomposing flexible PU foam is expected to be at least cut in half, and a substantial reduction in energy consumption compared with existing technologies is also anticipated. Microwave technology will also contribute to reducing CO2 emissions, as its efficiency will reduce costs and enable the process to be powered by electricity generated from renewable energy.

The PlaWave platform for decomposing plastic using microwaves is able to be applied both to pyrolysis and solvolysis. PlaWave enables faster reaction speeds and greater energy efficiency in a more compact device, according to the companies.

Since initial testing achieved positive results, the project will proceed to small-scale demos using Microwave Chemical's bench-scale demonstration device by March 2023 and move on to further examination, with the objective of commencing demonstration tests in March 2024 and commercializing the technology by March 2026. In tandem with demonstration tests, Mitsui Chemicals will build a business model that encompasses the whole value chain for the recycling of flexible polyurethane foam to realize a circular economy.

Source: Plastics Today

Engel Debuts Small-Footprint, AI-Driven Injection Molding Machine at K 2022

A new all-electric injection molding machine and accompanying AI-driven work cell from Engel reduces footprint on the production floor as well as energy consumption, while also doubling output.

The Engel e-motion 160 combi M will make its debut at the K show in Düsseldorf, Germany, in October. Featuring just 160 tons of clamping force and a horizontal indexing table, the combi M boasts two injection units — one fitted on the stationary platen, the second on the moving platen. Two molds can operate in parallel thanks to the indexing table dividing the mold closing area in the center.

The Engel e-motion 160 combi M will be molding medical diagnostic components under cleanroom conditions at the event in October.

One ideal application for the combi M is the molding of sample vessels for medical diagnostics under cleanroom conditions. These two-component parts will be demonstrated during the K at stand C58 in hall 15. First, primary parts with cylindrical cavities are injected using black-dyed polycarbonate. The cylinders are then sealed with transparent polycarbonate in a second molding step enabled by the indexing table rotating 180 degrees.

A medical diagnostic component will be molded live at the Engel stand during K 2022.

The process will be assisted by a pair of robots — an Engel viper 20 will remove the two-component parts and place them in trays, and an e pic robot will stack the trays in boxes, then discharge them via an integrated tray server.

Underlying the hardware is an array of "smart" systems from Engel's inject 4.0 suite, including:

iQ weight control, which detects fluctuations in the injection volume and material viscosity and automatically compensates for them within validated limits in the same cycle. iQ flow control, which ensures constant temperature control ratios by controlling temperature differences in the individual cooling circuits based on a set value. iQ process observer, which monitors the entire process. This AI platform analyzes hundreds of parameters simultaneously, displaying deviations and corrective measures.

The combi M takes up approximately 20% less space because of its horizontal indexing table. A comparable 32-cavity mold with a vertical rotary table would require a machine with at least 280 tons of clamping force, the company noted.

Source: Plastics Today

New Study Gives Most Fluoropolymers Clean Bill of Health

A new study gives 14 fluoropolymers and fluoroelastomers a clean bill of health as polymers of low concern (PLC) — materials posing insignificant threat to human health or the environment.

The study, conducted by the American Chemistry Council's Performance Fluoropolymer Partnership (PFP) and published June 14, advances research that identified four fluoropolymers as PLCs in 2018. The PFP's research focused on the diverse chemistries of these materials — concluding they should not be regulated "as one monolithic unit," the ACC said.

Image courtesy of Alamy/MIKEL BILBAO GOROSTIAGA
The materials, which make up about 96% of commercial fluoropolymers available globally, should be classified as polymers of low concern, according to ACC.

These 18 materials make up about 96% of commercial fluoropolymers available globally. They are among the essential ingredients in cutting-edge electronics, medical devices, transportation, telecommunications, and many more critical applications.

"The manuscript states that the environmental and health profiles for fluoropolymers are significantly unique among the majority of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance) chemistries, which illustrates that all PFAS are not the same," according to the ACC. "Therefore, attempts to group or regulate the wide universe of PFAS as one class of chemistries are neither scientifically appropriate nor accurate."

Researchers used 13 criteria — including low molecular weight leachables, reactive functional groups, and electrical charge — to assess these 14 fluoropolymers at their in-use phase. "This manuscript focuses on the 'middle cut' of the fluoropolymer lifecycle and as such, is an important contribution to our understanding of the safety profiles of these chemistries," the ACC said.

The fluoropolymers and fluoroelastomers assessed in the study are:

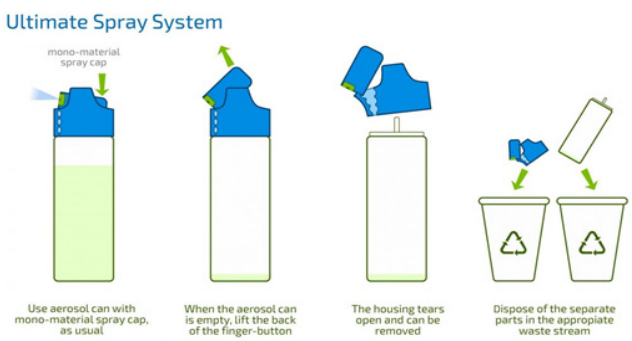
- Polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) homopolymer;
- PVDF copolymer;
- ethylene-chlorotrifluoroethylene (ECTFE) copolymer;
- ECTFE terpolymer;
- polychlorotrifluoroethylene (PCTFE);
- fluoroethylene-vinyl ether copolymer (FEVE);
- terpolymer of ethylene, tetrafluoroethylene, and hexafluoropropylene (EFEP);
- terpolymer of chlorotrifluoroethylene, tetrafluoroethene, and perfluoroalkyl-vinyl-ether (CPT);
- terpolymer of tetrafluoroethylene, hexafluoropropylene, and vinylidene fluoride (THV), as well as specialty fluoroplastics amorphous fluoropolymers and fluorinated ionomers;
- tetrafluoroethylene-propylene co-polymer (FEPM);
- hexafluoropropene-vinylidene fluoride co- and terpolymers (FKM);
- tetrafluoroethylene-perfluoromethyl vinyl ether perfluoroelastomer (FFKM).

The paper, "A Critical Review of the Application of Polymer of Low Concern Regulatory Criteria to Fluoropolymers II: Fluoroplastics and Fluoroelastomers" was published in the journal Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management.

Source: Plastics Today

First Ever 100% Recyclable Aerosol Spray Cap with Insert, Mono-material: The Sustainable Way to Realize a Fine Spray

Focusing on sustainability as well as functionality, Weener Plastics (WP) has developed a revolutionary spray system for aerosol spray caps with an insert: the Ultimate Spray System (USS). This patented two-piece product technology – the most sustainable option on the market today – offers the performance of familiar, proven conventional spray caps. This excellent performance and sustainability are the result of the material used for the insert as well as the smart design of the spray cap.



- Next-generation Aerosol Cap with Ultimate Spray System
- Most sustainable solution on the market today – fully recyclable
- Mono-material solution: aerosol spray cap and insert made of PP or recycled PP/PCR
- Spray cap can be separated from aerosol container before disposal
- Highly versatile, excellent spray performance

Mono-material: PP insert

To achieve refined spray patterns for specific application requirements, aerosols often use a spray cap with an insert. Traditionally, inserts are made of polymethyl methacrylate (POM), which cannot be recycled and disrupts waste streams. To solve this, WP has developed the unique USS with a polypropylene (PP) insert: a true mono-material product. The PP spray cap, including the PP insert, can be recycled 100% in standard waste streams. To increase circularity further, the spray cap is also available in recycled PP (rPP/PCR).

Smart design: removable spray cap

The USS offers a second novel feature: the spray cap can be easily and conveniently removed from the aerosol container before disposal. Thanks to an intuitive functionality, the finger-button can be lifted at which point the housing of the spray cap is torn open and can be removed. The separate spray cap and aerosol container can then be disposed of in the appropriate waste stream, ensuring effective recycling.

The USS is not only truly sustainable, but also highly functional. Extensive tests with a wide range of formulations show an excellent spray performance. Depending on the application, customers can choose the required spray characteristics – for example different orifices and spray patterns. Several global and local brands have shown serious interest in adopting USS for their personal care and home care products.

The system also offers great design freedom for the spray caps. As a result, a vast number of different designs and customization are feasible to boost brand recognition or distinguish from the competition. The insert and housing can both be given different colors. The caps fit standard aluminum and tinplate aerosol containers and can be processed on standard filling lines.

This new development is part of WP's circular economy program. Innovative technologies, low-carbon materials and smart product designs are key drivers to improve circularity and lower the footprint of our products. Thanks to this successful approach, we are enabling customers and consumers to contribute to a more sustainable future.

Source: Packaging 360

High-Resistance TPEs for Cosmetics Packaging

A new series of TPEs for cosmetic packaging from Kraiburg TPE is said to reliably meet standard requirements over the long term. The High Resistance TPO for Cosmetic series has enabled the company to expand its portfolio to include materials that withstand contact with particularly demanding ingredients, including isododecane. In the packaging sector, isododecane and similar substances are a challenge for TPEs. If a material has not been specifically developed for use in the field of cosmetics, there is a risk that modifications such as swelling or degradation of the material may occur. This particularly affects products that are based on water-resistant formulations.

For manufacturers, the requirements that cosmetic products have to meet are high, as product reliability has to be ensured at all times. But visual and haptic qualities, which have a direct influence on purchasing decisions, are also vitally important. Along with these criteria, mechanical properties also play a crucial role for processors. With its new TPE series, the company says it is now able to provide further solutions for the beauty market, including applications such as waterproof mascara, pipette lids, lip gloss applicators and cosmetics packaging.

This response for beauty applications is based on the company's established TPE product Copec, which was developed to meet the requirements for high resistance to sebum oils. Due to its velvety surface, it also meets the demand for high-quality haptics in the field of consumer electronics. According to the company, prospective clients will also benefit from the broad range of processing options available with the materials. High Resistance TPE for Cosmetics is available with hardness grades of 65, 75 and 85 Shore A and can be customized in many ways due to its opaque color. These compounds also boast good processing properties in injection molding and allow adhesion to selected plastics. The materials also meet the standards of the cosmetics industry in accordance with US FDA CFR 21 and Regulation (EC) No. 10/2011 and comply with REACH, RoHS, California Proposition 65 as well as Mercosur No. 39/19. The TPEs are free of animal ingredients, so that they can be used throughout the cosmetics market.
Source: ptonline

Covestro will showcase its circularity and sustainability commitments and collaborations at K 2022

At K 2022, Covestro will showcase the possibilities of sustainable plastics for the world and tomorrow's growth markets. To this end, the company will thus present new products and materials for many key areas that support the circular economy and climate neutrality.

Covestro will exhibit in a way that justifies its 'industry pioneer' reputation and will focus on future-oriented, creative partnerships.

During a Pre-K press conference in Düsseldorf, CEO Dr Markus Steilemann clarified: "Mankind is facing enormous challenges. In addition to acute crises, we need to overcome long-term challenges such as protecting the climate, nature and resources and thus safeguarding our livelihoods. This can be achieved if business and society consistently orient themselves towards the circular economy. Plastics are indispensable on this long journey, and Covestro is pleased to contribute particularly sustainable new products and materials to this end, tailored to the customer needs of today and tomorrow. Together with our partners, this is how we intend to seize the immense opportunities for sustainable growth."

Taking the theme "Crafting Connections With You", Covestro intends to establish new collaborations with customers and partners and strengthen existing ties at K 2022.

Having attended numerous pre-K press conferences already this year, I can confirm that many established names in the plastics industry are taking a similar focus, with Clariant's K show slogan 'For a greater between' reflecting its position on the value chain and its agility in collaborative projects, and LyondellBasell adopting the motto 'Advancing Possible' for the world's biggest plastics and rubber trade fair. During one such press conference hoisted by EMG in Rotterdam, LyondellBasell Director of Global Sustainability Andrea Brown concurred: "Collaboration is critical. We've been stepping up in terms of how we collaborate into value chain platforms that can help create scale and address this challenge."

Contrast that with Covestro's Global Head of the TPU Business Entity Dr Andrea Maier-Richter, who said: "Collaboration along key value chains in particular is of great importance for the vision of a full circular economy to succeed. With our more sustainable developments, we support our customers and partners in facilitating their transition to the circular economy and achieving their own climate goals."

Covestro recently announced a collaboration with Nesté and South Korean petrochemical company SK geo centric to supply mass-balanced benzene for its MDI production in China. MDI is required for rigid PU foam, which provides efficient insulation for buildings and the cold chain. Certified polycarbonate, in turn, plays a role in the automotive, electrical and electronics, and medical industries, among others. And TDI is a precursor for PU flexible foam, which is used to make mattresses and upholstered furniture.

Further collaborations include contracts with energy suppliers such as Ørsted, EnBW, ENGIE, Datang Wuzhong New Energy and others to supply sites in Germany, Belgium and China with electricity from renewable sources.

Covestro is also showcasing its co-ordination the EU project CIRCULAR FOAM with 22 partners from nine countries, which is dedicated to the chemical reprocessing of rigid polyurethane foam from building insulation materials and used refrigeration equipment. The products make an important contribution to saving emissions and reduced energy consumption, but recycling processes and systematic waste management have been lacking until now. The project aims to save up

to one million tons of waste and 2.9 million tons of CO2 emissions annually in Europe by 2040.

Source: Interplas Insights

Plastics Recycling Awards Europe 2022 Winners Announced at PRSE

Launched in 2017, the Plastics Recycling Awards Europe have witnessed a dramatic rise in the circular use of plastics through increased recycling and recyclability. The seven winners from the 2022 edition are: Grupo Antolin in the Automotive, Electrical or Electronic category for a modular headliner for vehicle interiors and downstream recycling solutions; Montello and WET/Ecopixel in the Building & Construction category for its SOLAR HEAT panels made from recycled plastic; Brabantia in the Household and Leisure category for its StepUp Pedal Bin; A collaborative effort between Freiberger Lebensmittel GmbH, alesco Folien GmbH & Co.KG, Ecoplast Kunststoffrecycling GmbH and Borealis AG in the Plastic Packaging Product category for a recyclable collation shrink film with outstanding PCR content; Procter & Gamble in the Product Technology Innovation category for its recyclable mono PE pouch; Pellenc ST in the Recycling Machinery Innovation category for its Mistral+-CONNECT sorting machine; and the new Plastics Recycling Ambassador, taking over form Avery Dennison's Flor Peña Herron, is Mik Van Gaever of Fost Plus.

Mik Van Gaever's track record at Fost Plus, combined with his passion for 'closing the materials loop' and tireless efforts to establish a circular economy for household packaging, were decisive factors in naming him as the deserved winner of this honour.

Plastics Recyclers Europe President Ton Emans said: "As the use of recycled plastic continues to grow, we've seen both the number and quality of the submissions to the Plastics Recycling Awards Europe steadily rise. It has not made the task of judging easy, but this year's winners represent yet another high point in our path towards the truly circular use of plastics throughout the entire value chain."

The winners each receive a trophy, with a 3D printed base made from 100 per cent recycled ABS plastic car dashboards and the multi-colour top which is laser cut from compressed HDPE beach clean-up bottle caps.

Joining Peña Herron on the judging panel for the Plastics Recycling Awards 2022 were other previous winners of the Ambassador Award Professor Kim Ragaert, Maastricht University; Gian de Belder, Procter & Gamble; and Searious Business CEO Willemijn Peeters.

The Plastics Recycling Awards Europe are organised jointly by Plastics Recyclers Europe and Crain Communications. The Plastics Recycling Show Europe is a free-to-attend exhibition and a conference designed specifically for plastics recycling professionals showcasing innovative technology.

The event will return to the RAI exhibition centre in Amsterdam in 2023.

Source: Interplas Insights

PM Gati Shakti to cut India's logistics cost: Sarbananda Sonowal

Logistics cost is considered to be 13% to 14% of India's GDP which is higher than countries such as the U.S., China and many others, according to Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal, the chief guest at Fortune India's The Next 500: Breaking New Frontiers event.

The PM Gati Shakti project is an attempt to reduce India's logistics costs and improve trade competitiveness, Sonowal says, adding that the national master plan for multi-modal connectivity is a platform to bring 16 ministries including railways, ports and roadways together for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects.

The multi-modal connectivity will provide integrated and seamless connectivity for movement of people, goods and services, Sonowal adds. Efficient transport infrastructure holds the key towards promoting sustainable development, the Union minister says, adding that the vision of the prime minister is to transform through transportation.

"Infrastructure sector is a key driver for the Indian economy. The sector plays a crucial role to propel new India's growth trajectory. Our government, under the leadership of prime minister Narendra Modi, is implementing policies that would enable time-bound creation of world-class infrastructure in the country. To power the vision of India becoming a $5 trillion economy by 2025, infrastructure development and upgrade will play a better role," he adds.

While talking about the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) programme launched by PM Modi during his Independence Day speech in 2019, Sonowal says the objective of this policy is to act as an enabler towards infusion of funds for infrastructure development by 2030. "To this effect, an outlay of ₹111 lakh crore has been announced for the period between 2019 and 2025. The NIP will enable more infrastructure projects, power business and job creation, improve ease of living and provide access to infrastructure for all, thereby making growth more inclusive," he says.

"The Union Budget for the current fiscal aims to strengthen the infrastructure... For this the Budget has allocated a total of ₹7.5 lakh crore towards capital expenditure. Without capex, we cannot develop infrastructure. There's a 35% increase in the allocation of funds with an aim to propel infrastructure in the country. The government's intent towards creating world-class infrastructure emanates from the fact that about 4.1% of GDP, i.e. ₹10.68 lakh crore under effective capital expenditure. The idea is to put the economy on a higher growth trajectory with the multiplier effect of infra investment boost in the economy," Sonowal adds.

"Various ministries are ensuring fast track implementation of infra projects. The spend on infrastructure is a huge business opportunity for the companies to become

partners with the government through contract and bagging of orders within the next three to four years. This will result in steady cash flow, revenue generation, production, asset creation and facilitating job creation in the country. The trickle-down effect will also empower ancillary sectors. Ultimately, this will also boost the consumption economy," the Union minister says.

Source: Fortune India

ITC's Packaging Innovations Help its Personal Care brands Migrate to Recyclable Packaging

Both Fiama and Vivel have been frontrunners in adopting sustainable packaging. The carton soap portfolio for both brands has fully migrated to recyclable paperboard cartons; Vivel wrapped soap portfolio has also been transitioned to recyclable packaging. Further, Fiama Shower Gel bottles are now made with 30% Post-Consumer Recycled (PCR) material. These innovative packaging solutions have been developed leveraging the synergistic capabilities of ITC's Packaging and Printing Business and Life Sciences and Technology Centre (LSTC) and are a testament to ITC's philosophy of embedding sustainability into its business value chains.

ITC's Paperboards and Specialty Paper Business fortified its clear leadership in the Value Added Paperboard (VAP) segment through the introduction of innovative new products customised for end-use industries and maintaining best-in-class service levels for key customers. The Business is also a leading player in the eco-labelled products segment as well as the premium recycled paperboards space.

ITC Packaging Innovations

ITC is actively engaged in developing and promoting suitable paper and paperboard substrates to replace single-use plastics. 'FiloPack' and 'FiloServe' under the 'Filo' series are certified as '100% Recyclable' by Central Pulp & Paper Research Institute (CPPRI), while 'OmegaBev' and 'OmegaBarr' under the 'Omega' series are certified as 'Bio-degradable under compostable environment' by Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET). These products, which serve as alternatives to plastic coated containers, cups and other deep freeze applications, registered robust growth during the year and continue to gain popularity with increasing awareness levels amongst customers. The portfolio was also augmented with the launch of a new range of Specialty Papers for e-Commerce/courier envelopes and paper tapes. The Business is stepping up investments in this fast-evolving space which holds immense growth potential supported by the R&D capabilities of ITC's Life Sciences and Technology Centre and through external collaborations with global specialists. To rapidly scale up its future-ready product portfolio through cutting-edge innovation, the Business has also set up a dedicated 'Nextgen Cell' which is actively engaged in building a robust innovation pipeline.

During the year, the Business delivered robust performance in the Specialty Papers segment. Market standing stood enhanced during the year driven by product mix enrichment, diversification of the customer base and launch of innovative products such as anti-viral and anti-bacterial Specialty Paper – 'NPP Pro' for use in pharmaceutical leaflets and packaging applications. The domestic industry continues to remain under pressure on account of cheap imports from China. The recent introduction of anti-dumping duty on Décor paper is expected to increase 'Make in India' opportunities and enable import substitution.

ITC's Printing & Packaging Business continues to craft innovative packaging solutions leveraging its deep understanding of end-user needs and the capabilities of ITC's Life Sciences and Technology Centre. Recognising the need for sustainable packaging and the resultant emerging demand for plastic substitutes, the Business

launched its flagship 'InnovPack' campaign and identified certain end-use segments with potential for rapid adoption of sustainable packaging and plastic substitution solutions. Further, a steady pipeline of pioneering solutions anchored on molecular science research is also in place such as 'Bioseal' (compostable packaging solution for Quick Service Restaurants, personal care and packaged foods industries), 'Oxyblock' (a recyclable coating solution with enhanced barrier properties for packaged foods, edible oils, etc.) and 'Germ free coating' (solution for microbial free packaging surface addressing the consumer consciousness towards hygiene and safety). These products continue to receive encouraging response; the portfolio is being augmented progressively with a range of solutions that are in various stages of commercialisation. Investments are being stepped up in this fast-evolving space which holds immense growth potential.

Source: Packaging 360

TekniPlex Consumer Products Expands Global Dip Tubing Capabilities to India for Dispensing Pump Markets

TekniPlex Consumer Products has introduced dip tubing capabilities to its manufacturing facility in Ahmedabad, India. This installation adds to TekniPlex's preexisting capacities in Belgium, China, and the U.S., allowing the company to better serve both regional and global customer and dispensing pump market needs.

TekniPlex Consumer Products' two facilities in India specialize in producing foamed liners, induction heat seals and gaskets, and other products serving closure and pump packaging markets. This new capability aligns with the growing need for pump packaging and related dip tubing needs in India. Additionally, this regional capability complements the ongoing need for local production and supply as the impact of importing challenges and subsequent global supply chain implications continues to grow.

"It is our mission as a global supplier to service our customers and markets where they are – and where they need us the most," said Johan Laureys, Managing Director. "Even above and beyond the pandemic's impact on the supply chain, we're continually looking for ways to prevent disruptions while enhancing security and redundancy of supply for our customers."

TekniPlex Consumer Products is committed to globally consistent formulas and processes, enabling customers to expect the new dip tubing produced in the Ahmedabad facility to maintain the same high-quality product solutions they have come to expect.

"Preserving identical tight tolerances and material properties across all of our facilities not only ensures that the dip tubing will function seamlessly, but also will be optimally compatible with our customers' highly automated assembly lines. This also helps customers safeguard scrap rates on their machines," said Laureys.

With these new extrusion lines, TekniPlex's Ahmedabad facility can produce dip tubing on spools or precut to custom length for a variety of sectors, including pharmaceuticals, personal care and household products. Production has begun, with supply to both regional and international customers.

"We have invested in state-of-the-art machinery, talented materials science experts, and quality lab testing to bring this new service to fruition," continued Laureys. "Our focus is to further improve service to our global customers, expand our set of local customers and, in time, export to neighboring countries in South and Southeast Asia such as Thailand and Malaysia."

Source: Packaging 360

PM Narendra Modi exhorts exporters to set long-term export targets, says work being done at grassroot level

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday (June 23, 2022) inaugurated the new Vanijya Bhawan in the national capital and appealed to exporters and the industry to fix long-term export targets for themselves and suggest ways for the government to achieve those goals. PM Modi said that the government has removed over 32,000 unnecessary compliances to help the exporters with the process. Speaking at the event, the prime minister said that exports play a critical role in the transition of a country from developing to developed status.

During the event, PM Modi highlighted that in the last fiscal year despite the historic global disruptions, India's exports stood at a total (goods and services) of USD 670 billion (Rs 50 lakh crore). He added that India's merchandise exports in 2021-22 crossed USD 418 billion (Rs 31 lakh crore), as against the target of USD 400 billion (Rs 30 lakh crore).

"Encouraged by this success of the past years, we have now increased our export targets and have doubled our efforts to achieve them. Collective effort of everyone is very necessary to achieve these new goals? Industry, exporters and export promotion councils are here. I will urge them to set not only short-term but also long-term export targets for themselves," he said.

The prime minister said that the new Bhawan will significantly benefit people associated with trade, commerce and the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector.

At the event, PM Modi also launched the NIRYAT (National Import-Export Record for Yearly Analysis of Trade) portal - which is developed as a one-stop platform for stakeholders to get all necessary information related to India's foreign trade. The government is working to promote ease of doing business and boost exports, Modi said adding new domestic products like handlooms are reaching new markets.

Better policies to increase exports, easing of the process, and taking products to new markets, have helped a lot in this direction, he said adding today, every department of the government is giving priority to increasing exports with a 'whole of government' approach.

"Exports from new areas are increasing. Even from many aspirational districts, exports have now increased manifold. The increase in exports of cotton and handloom products by 55 per cent shows how the work is being done at the grassroot level," he said.

He also referred to trade deals signed with the UAE and Australia last year and informed that there has been a lot of progress on talks for similar pacts with other countries as well.

Source: Zee News

US becomes India's largest trade partner, is India-China trade decoupling?

India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry latest data shows that the US has become India's largest trading partner, exceeding China with bilateral trade reaching USD 119.42 billion. From the breakdown data, India's trade exports to the US increased from about USD 51.62 billion in the previous fiscal year to USD 76.11 billion, while imports increased from about USD 29 billion to about USD 43.31 billion.

India's major exports to the US include polished diamonds, pharmaceutical products, jewellery, light oil and petroleum, frozen shrimp, cosmetics and more. India's imports from the United States are mainly oil, liquefied natural gas, gold, coal, recycled products and scrap iron, large almonds, etc.

The data also shows that the bilateral trade volume between India and China in the 2021-2022 fiscal year is about USD 115.42 billion, an increase of about 1/3 from the USD 86.4 billion in the previous fiscal year.

Among them, India's exports to China are about USD 21.25 billion, and its imports to China are about USD 94.16 billion. It is reported that the trade volume of imported goods from China is increasing, and the top 100 imported items each have an import value of more than USD 100 million. Indian experts believe that India's dependence on China for imports of manufactured goods shows no sign of easing.

The statistical data of China and India are different, which leads to differences in the trade volume figures announced by each of them. Chinese data shows that China is India's largest trading partner from 2013-2014 to 2017-2018 and 2020-2021. In addition to China, the US and the UAE were once India's largest trading partners.

China has not always been India's largest trading partner, and this is not the first time that the US has become India's largest trading partner. For a long time, China and India have maintained a relatively large trade deficit, while India has maintained a trade surplus with the US. Therefore, India has always regarded the US as an important export market.

India imports items ranging from small screws to large TVs, refrigerators and mobile phones are mostly Chinese products. These Chinese products are of high quality and low price and are almost unmatched by other countries. They are very popular among Indian consumers, and even the utensils for Indians to worship gods and various decorative flowers, bags, shoes and hats, etc. come from China.

China is often used by the Indian media to illustrate the way Chinese goods "invade" India. In particular, mobile phones and consumer electronics are the most obvious because of their cost-effectiveness and affordability.

Whereas, most of the US exports to India are energy products and agricultural products, China's exports to India are mostly manufacturing products, giving the impression that Chinese products are occupying the Indian market.

The continuous strengthening of US-India trade relations is due to both the epidemic and India's attempt to "decouple" from China. However, the security factor occupies a critical position, that is, with the help of the "China fear" mentality at home and abroad, India has accelerated the substitution of Chinese industries.

India wants to leave China aside, attract capital from the US and other countries, undertake high-tech enterprises, and deeply participate in the global supply chain to promote the great development of India's domestic manufacturing industry. However, at present, the fundamentals of China-India economic and trade cooperation have not changed.

Source: ET

India-EU FTA Negotiations to Restart June 27

The first round of India-EU FTA negotiations will take place in New Delhi between June 27 and July 1. Talks to reach an investor protection agreement and a geographical indications agreement will be held in parallel.

India and the European Union (EU) look ready to restart their free trade agreement (FTA) talks on Monday, after a nine-year gap. The first round of negotiations will take place in New Delhi between June 27 and July 1.

EU is India's second largest trade partner

An FTA would be a big win for New Delhi as the EU is India's second largest trading partner. India-EU merchandise trade reached US$116.36 billion in 2021-22 as per latest government data, showing a year-on-year growth of 43.5 percent. Moreover, India enjoys a trade surplus with the EU. Indian exports to the EU jumped 57 percent to reach US$65 billion in FY 2021-22.

In addition to FTA negotiations, India and EU will also discuss a stand-alone investment protection agreement (IPA) and a geographical indicators (GIs) agreement. The decision was taken during the India and EU Leaders' Meeting, held at Porto in early May 2021.

After an almost decade long pause, efforts were made to resume negotiations to secure a trade deal that is balanced, ambitious, comprehensive, and mutually beneficial. The proposed IPA will provide a legal framework for cross-border investments to enhance investor confidence while the GI pact aims to establish a transparent and predictable regulatory environment and to facilitate trade of GI products, including handicrafts and agricultural commodities. All three agreements will be negotiated in parallel and concluded simultaneously.

High-level support gives India-EU trade deal much needed momentum

A visit by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to New Delhi in April this year was followed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's three-country visit to Europe (Denmark, Germany, France) in May. Together, the high-level bilateral and summit interactions have helped accelerate India-EU FTA discussions and define clear goals on the FTA roadmap.

Previous efforts for an FTA had been frustrated due to differences in the scope and expectations from a trade deal. This included disagreements on custom duties on automobiles and liquor and the movement of professionals.

Now, as the world continues to combat a pandemic and is dealing with outcomes of a sudden Eurasian war, shocks to the global supply chain are becoming more frequent. It is thus likely that such bilateral and multilateral trade deals get pursued more aggressively among key markets – to widen liberal and uninterrupted access to goods and services, with renewed emphasis on fairer and more transparent terms.

For instance, India's current economic position, targeted investments in developing public infrastructure alongside digital integration, and incentives for export-oriented manufacturing capacity – make it a stronger trade partner to the EU than even a decade prior. Meanwhile Brexit and shifting geopolitical realities have hastened EU interest in the timely culmination of a constructive trade deal.

Sector-wise opportunities under India-EU trade pact

The India-EU FTA could boost market prospects for domestic industries, such as textiles, leather, and sports goods, for export-oriented production targeting the EU market as per the federal commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal.

We have our teams in place…It will further strengthen our relations. Our bilateral trade has grown significantly in the last few months…There is a significant untapped potential which we will hope to unleash with the execution of these three agreements — trade, investment, and GIs. – Piyush Goyal, India's Commerce and Industry Minister.

Meanwhile, findings from the EU's statistical body, Eurostat, show that in 2021 India was the tenth largest partner for EU goods exports (1.9 percent) and tenth largest partner for EU goods imports (2.2 percent). That year, Germany led EU states as the largest importer of goods from India and largest exporter of goods to India. Eurostat notes that in 2021, EU goods exports were dominated by manufactured goods (84 percent) over primary goods (nine percent). Top manufactured goods exports were machinery & vehicles (41 percent), followed by other manufactured goods (27 percent) and chemicals (16 percent). That year, the EU also imported more manufactured goods (86 percent) than primary goods (14 percent). Top most imported manufactured goods were other manufactured goods (47 percent), followed by machinery & vehicles (19 percent) and chemicals (19 percent).

Finally, the EU recorded trade surpluses in machinery & vehicles (€8 billion), other goods (€3 billion), and raw materials (€1 billion). The EU had trade deficits in energy (€2 billion), chemicals (€2 billion), food & drink (€2 billion) and other manufactured goods (€10 billion) (see Eurostat data here).

Source: India Briefing

An export overhaul could see SEZs shifting from Videsh to DESH

India is proposing to transform its narrow export-focused special economic zones (SEZs) into comprehensive economic hubs through several concessions and the easing of restrictions to attract more investment in these areas.

Industrial units located in these hubs, which will be called Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs (DESH), may be allowed to sell in the domestic market, and contract manufacture for those outside these zones as well, according to a draft circulated for consultation. Some fiscal incentives and measures to improve the ease of doing business are also likely to be part of the package to transform SEZs into comprehensive economic zones. These hubs may be established by the Centre or a state or jointly by them, or any person for the manufacture of goods or rendering services or for both.

An 'equalisation levy' may be imposed on goods or services supplied to the domestic tariff area to bring taxes on them at par with those provided by units outside the zones. Currently, units in SEZs are export focussed and face certain restrictions on sales to domestic market.

Appropriate legislation is likely to be introduced in the upcoming monsoon session of parliament once the draft is finalised after stakeholder consultations, said people aware of the deliberations. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her February budget speech that the SEZ Act will be replaced with new legislation that would enable states to become partners in development.

States looking to set up such zones will be able to set up boards that will be responsible for oversight. It is also proposed to relax the mandatory foreign exchange payment for domestic tariff area supplies and permit subcontracting both for goods and services for DTA units.

"The plan is to make the new SEZ scheme compliant with the WTO rules and doing away with the Net Foreign Exchange clause is the first step in that direction," said one official. Many proposals in the draft are from the 2019 report of an expert committee headed by Bharat Forge chairman Baba Kalyani. The committee had suggested SEZs be converted into employment and economic enclaves (3Es) with the extension of tax sunset clauses, simplification of processes, tax benefits for the services sector, and extension of MSME schemes to these zones. Experts said the draft proposes to change the focus from exports to economic activity, investment, and global value chain interlinkage among others, apart from the greater involvement of states.

Shukla said additional fiscal and non-fiscal benefits, including industrial estates being notified as hubs, will hopefully lead to greater benefits. "However, the rules and clarity on the proposed equalisation levy is something trade will be looking at, including greater guidance on the hubs framework," he said.

Industry has already raised its concerns about the proposed equalisation levy, saying that it will lead to instability and has suggested a single hub director for each DESH instead of multiple directors as proposed in the draft.

Source: ET

National MSME Award 2022: Odisha bags first prize for Outstanding Development of Sector

MSME Awards 2022 list: Odisha has been awarded the first prize in the category 'National MSME Award 2022 to States/UTs for outstanding contribution in the Promotion and Development of MSME Sector'.

MSME Awards India: The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Department, Government of Odisha has been awarded the first prize in the category 'National MSME Award 2022 to States/UTs for outstanding contribution in the Promotion and Development of MSME Sector'. The state has won the award by the virtue of various developmental initiatives taken up for the development of MSMEs.

MSME Department along with the Aspirational districts of the State participated in the National MSME Award 2022 in a relevant category. Similarly, the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises filed the online applications in the appropriate category of award. The Government of India had received as many as 2785 applications against 44 categories for the scrutiny and finalization of the National MSME Award 2022.

National MSME Award 2022: Odisha bags first prize

1. In National MSME Award 2022, Kalahandi has been awarded the third prize in the category 'National MSME Award 2022 to Aspirational districts for outstanding contribution in the promotion and development of MSME Sector' as the sectoral development was in the line of the MSME Award parameters.

2. Similarly, Sumeet Mohanty M/s Saferisk Insurance Brokers Private Limited, Bhubaneshwar has been awarded the first prize in the category- "Award for Service Entrepreneurship- Service Small Enterpirse (Overall)."

3. Sibabrata Rout M/s Amarnath Pest Management Technology, Cuttack has also been awarded the third prize in the category "Award for Service Entrepreneurship- Service Micro Enterprise (Overall)".

National MSME Award 2022

The Government of India came up with the National MSME Award 2022 comprising of altogether 44 categories including Manufacturing Entrepreneurship (12 awards), Service Entrepreneurship (09 awards), Special Category Enterprises (14 awards), and the institutional support to MSMEs (09 Awards). The application in these categories for the selection of winners was evaluated by the Selection Committee at the Government of India level.

Source: Jagran Josh

Why become a Plexconcil Member?

Established since 1955, the Plastics Export Promotion Council, PLEXCONCIL, is sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India. PLEXCONCIL is a non-profit organization representing exporters from the Indian plastics industry and is engaged in promoting the industry exports.

The Council is focused on achieving excellence in exports by undertaking various activities and initiatives to promote the industry. The Council undertakes activities such as participation at international trade fairs, sponsoring delegations to target markets, inviting foreign business delegations to India, organising buyer-seller meets both in India and the overseas etc.,

The Council also routinely undertakes research and surveys, organizes the Annual Awards to recognize top performing exporters, monitors the development of new technology and shares the same with members, facilitates joint ventures and collaboration with foreign companies and trade associations as well as represents the issues and concerns to the relevant Government bodies.

The Council represents a wide variety of plastics products including – Plastics Raw Materials, Packaging Materials, Films, Consumer Goods, Writing Instruments, Travel ware, Plastic Sheets, Leather Cloth, Vinyl Floor Coverings, Pipes and Fittings, Water Storage Tanks, Custom made plastic Items from a range of plastic materials including Engineered Plastics, Electrical Accessories, FRP/GRP Products, Sanitary Fittings, Tarpaulins, Laminates, Fishing Lines/Fishnets, Cordage/ Ropes/Twines, Laboratory Ware; Eye Ware, Surgical/ Medical Disposables.

Membership Benefits

- Discounted fees at International Trade Fairs and Exhibitions
- Financial benefits to exporters, as available through Government of India
- Disseminating trade enquiries/trade leads
- Instituting Export Awards in recognition of outstanding export performance
- Assistance on export financing with various institutions and banks
- Networking opportunities within the plastics industry
- Listing in PLEXCONCIL member's directory
- Special price for Dun & Bradstreet's D-U-N-S® REGISTERED™ SOLUTION (Plus Variant)
- Basic Website Development Assistance *

*Nominal Charges Applicable

The Plastics Export Promotion Council added the following companies/firms as new members during May 2022. We would like to welcome them aboard!

Sr. No	Name Of The Company	Address	City	Pin	State	Director Name	Email
1	Dhuni Polymers Private Limited	1-123, 8th Floor, 3rd Block, My Home Hub Hitec City, Madhapr,	Hyderabad	500081	Telengana	Jupally Madhu Bala	sekhar.katiki@dhunipolymers.com
2	Elkins Exim Llp	C - 608, Imperial Heights 150 Feet Ring Road	Rajkot	360005	Gujarat	Dhaval Fadadu	dhaval@elkinsexim.com
3	Enerlite Solar Films India Private Limited	Plot No 12, Sector B-1, Local Shopping Complex, Vasant Kunj , South West ,	New Delhi	110070	Delhi	C S Sundharam	import_liaison@jindalgroup. com
4	Essen International	183, Udyog Vihar Phase Vi Sector 37	Gurugram	122004	Haryana	Praful Jain	info@essenin.com
5	Excellent Fixable Drapes	Plotno.4, Thai Moogambigai Nagar K.Pudur,	Madurai	625007	Tamil Nadu	Krishnan Nair Usha Devi	excellentfixabled@hotmail.com
6	Harra Polytech Private Limited	Sr No.543, 547,548,Near Lohar Eps Ggs; Kadi-Khoda Road, Manipur	Manipur	382787	Gujarat	Hareshkumar Jayantibhai Patel	msppillai1@gmail.com
7	Insta Polypack	H-725,Sitapura, Industrial Area	Jaipur	302022	Rajasthan	Pradep Kumar Jain	instapolypack@gmail.com
8	Jpfl Films Private Limited	Plot No.12, Sector B-1, Local Shopping Complex, Vasant Kunj, South West,	Delhi	110070	Delhi	Shailendra Sinha	cstrainee.jpfl@jindalgroup.com
9	Kamath Plastics Private Limited	Plot No.112p Road No.4 Jigani Indl Area 2nd Phase Bangalore 560105 Bengaluru Rural Karnataka	Bangalore	560105	Karnataka	Narasimha Kamath Mulki	
10	M.L. Industries	Plot No. E-360,Sector-5,Dsiidc, Industrial Area, Bawana North West,	Delhi	110039	Delhi	Dinesh Aggarwal	ml.industries@yahoo.co.in
11	Navakeralam Footwear Private Limited	V/567, Parammal, Perumanna P.O.., Perumanna, Kozhikode	Perumanna	673019	Kerala	Mappla Kandy Feroz	navakeralamfinance@gmail.com
12	Nobtech Enterprise	129-C Government Industrial Estate, Charkop Kandivali (West)	Mumbai	400067	Maharashtra	Kaushik Mahendra Kamdar	accounts@nobtech.in
13	Polarplas India Private Limited	B212-213, Ratnakar Nine Square, Opp.Keshvabaug Party Plot, Vastrapur	Ahmadabad	380015	Gujarat	Santosh Kumar Gopi	divakar.thakar@seaplastindia.com
14	R Square Industries	Gorund Floor, Unit 4, Andheri Universal Estate Jai Prakash Road, Andheri West	Mumbai	400058	Maharashtra	Rohit V. Gupta	mktg.rvg@gmail.com
15	Radiant Impex	Ground Floor & 2nd Floor, No 42, T.V.K. Second Link Road, Thiruvalluvar Nagar, Erukkancharry,	Chennai	600118	Tamil Nadu	Gulab Punwani	radiantimpex@hotmail.com
16	Rajni Bhagwat & Company	Survey No 14/P1/14 Plot No.10, Damanganga Industrial Estate Gate No.2 Karwad Vapi Valsad	Vapi	396195	Gujarat	Ramesh Bhagwat	rameshbhagwat52@gmail.com
17	Shabanesa	Shabanesa B 20 Prince Towers 94/113 Purasawalkam High Road Chennai	Chennai	600010	Tamil Nadu	Vijay Kumar	shabanesa@gmail.com

18	Srsk Industries Private Limited	Vill & P.O-Takipur, P.S.-Rejinagar, Murshidabad,	Baharampore	742189	West Bengal	Sahabul Sk	pvtltdsrskindustries@gmail.com
19	Sunshine Plasmacrafts	No 47, Sidco Industrial Estate Ambatt	Chennai	600098	Tamil Nadu	Rajesh Kumar Jain	abhishek@sunshineproducts.in
20	Sv Eco Industries	Plot No 8,Plastic Park, Mankhal, Maheshwaram Mandal,,R R Dist,Telangana,Rangareddy,501359	Rangareddy	501359	Telengana	Bussu Manjeera	
21	Tandhan Polyplast Private Limited	J.L No-15,Mouza Kashyabpor, Uluberia Kulgachia Howrah	Howrah	711303	West Bengal	Ankit Jalan	export@tandhanpolyplast.com
22	Tpac Skypet India Private Limited	405 Acme Industrial Park Off I B Patel Road Goregaon East,	Mumbai	400063	Maharashtra	Shrinath Ramachandra Kasi	kamlesh.mishra@sunpet.in
23	Uline Pack Llp	Ff 101 B Tawer Mangal Kir, Beh Well Come Hotel Racec	Vadodara	390007	Gujarat	Shishir Vallabhdas Vachhani	pratik@swisspac.net
24	Usha Export	Station Para, Word 4, Beldanga, Baharampore, Murshidabad	Murshidabad	742133	West Bengal	Jahirul Rahaman	ushaexport2@gmail.com
25	Vasu Met Plast Private Limited	6/31, Rani Ghat, Kanpur Nagar ,	Kanpur	208001	Uttar Pradesh	Ashok Kumar	vasumetplastknp@gmail.com

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