

Circularity in Action - Plastics Management for Cities of the Future

Resource efficiency and circularity are pillars for shaping sustainable environment while envisioning cities of the future. Circular economy principles advocate for efficient resource consumption, emphasizing recycling, repurposing, and reutilization of materials. Embracing circular economy principles ensures that resources are streamed back into the loop, significantly reducing the stress on virgin resources and environment. In urban contexts, this approach means waste minimisation by reimagining its use as a secondary resource, promoting eco-friendly innovation, and fostering economic growth while lowering carbon emission. Circularity is also vital in cities for achieving Sustainable Development Goals, such as Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12) and Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11). Circular practices in the cities, align with Climate Action (SDG 13) by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, underscore the importance of CE in fostering an eco-friendly and inclusive world in line with the SDGs.

Over the last few years, India has taken positive steps in prioritising circularity and resource efficiency, shaping a sustainable development agenda for a greener and resilient future. LiFE- 'lifestyles for the environment' lays the foundation for imbibing and promoting circularity in our life by emphasizing eco-conscious choices and responsible consumption. Through awareness campaigns, eco-friendly practices, and community engagement, LiFE encourages citizens, globally, to adopt greener habits that have minimum impact on the environment. Through LiFE, India leads the way to sustainability by promoting environmental stewardship, emphasizing the importance of conserving resources, reducing waste, and safeguarding diverse ecosystems for a more sustainable future.

In today's day, plastics have become an integral part of our lives. This has not only made our lives easy but the disposal of single-use plastics have filled up our land, water and food web causing disruption to health and wellbeing. Being mindful of the hazards that plastic pollution creates, India under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister banned the use of single-use plastic from July 2022. In India there is a consciousness building up towards plastics management in urban and rural areas and the government local bodies, civil society organisations, institutions are working towards reducing the plastics in the environment. The private sector, though slow in their approach, since shifting practices takes time and resources, are also becoming aware of the same.

In the light of increased plastic consumption and escalating plastic waste pollution, fostering a sustainable future demands a profound shift in societal behaviors. Recognising the effort of various actors in the plastics management sector, and to catalyze this change, Development Alternatives is convening its annual event, ***trialogue 2047***, on the theme "**Circularity in Action - Plastics Management for Cities of the Future.**"

Efforts to combat plastic pollution involve multifaceted strategies, including empowering ULBs and communities. This empowerment can be achieved through various skill development and training programs. By fostering dialogue between policy-makers, state governments, ULBs, multilateral organisations, and think tanks, the discussion seeks to identify actionable solutions to curtail plastic pollution at the city level by making the case for the need for capacity development for local bodies and enabling behavior change in plastic value chain stakeholders. The discussion will delve into the importance of implementation of waste data collection-integration frameworks that will facilitate city-specific baseline assessments, forming the foundation for evidence-based system transformation.

Integrating circular economy principles into policies is paramount for sustainable development, fostering resource efficiency, minimizing waste, and promoting innovative, eco-friendly practices that pave the way for a resilient future. The deliberations will explore policy innovations in the plastics sector essential for the cities of tomorrow. The dialogue will deliberate upon the need for promoting eco-friendly practices, circular business models, and product redesign strategies aimed at minimizing plastic usage. Further, the emphasis will be placed on ways to ensure strong compliance with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations by PIBOs, fostering a collective commitment to reducing plastic pollution through informed policies and responsible practices.

The dialogue will highlight the importance of empowering communities in combating plastic pollution. This involves raising awareness through education about the adverse impact of mishandled plastic waste. Additionally, the need for enabling citizen-led initiatives focusing on reducing, reusing, and recycling plastic waste will be discussed. The discussion will also explore ways in which the informal sector can be integrated into the municipal waste system for social and economic benefits, and overall sustainable practices of the city. By fostering such initiatives, communities attain a sense of ownership and will display active participation in mitigating the adverse environmental impacts of plastic pollution.

The trialogue anticipates the formulation of **a comprehensive issue brief that discusses the need for capacity development of ULBs and behavior change in plastic value chain stakeholders** to enable system transformation for effective plastic waste management at city level.

About *trialogue 2047*

trialogue 2047 is a series of discussions focused at building consensus on directions and measures India must take to accelerate a transition towards a truly sustainable future. This platform aims to create a shared understanding on structural changes required in our economic, political, and social systems. It provides a forum for open debate and discussions challenging the current norms of development and channeling the focus on urgent issues of poverty alleviation, environment sustainability, inequity, social justice and building resilience amongst the poor and marginalized. Through *trialogue 2047*, we intend to move away from the conventional formats of debate, to a more challenging and inclusive dialogue endeavoring to find solutions leading to a pathway which balances the triple bottom line of economic growth, social equity and environmental sustainability. The ***trialogue 2047*** engages a large multidisciplinary audience, including youth, in conversation with eminent speakers who can provide a diverse set of views and insights bringing out a varied set of perspectives.