

Responsibility (EPR) involving the State Urban Development Departments. The rules further mandate the Producers, Importers and Brand Owners including e-commerce companies to establish a system to collect used multi-layered plastic sachet or pouches or packaging, introduced by them in the market. The producer has to submit this plan of collection to the State Pollution Control Boards while applying for Consent to Establish/Operate. Ministry has conducted several meetings with the stakeholders for implementation of the provisions of EPR. Further, stakeholder consultation workshops were also conducted by the Ministry at Bangalore, Ranchi and in Chandigarh.

(b) Regarding adoption of biodegradable plastic, a committee has been constituted by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) with respect to research and development for biodegradable technology including oxo-biodegradable technology on plastic. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 defines the norms for compostable plastic as an ecologically sustainable and green alternative of plastics. Compostable plastics have to conform to the Indian Standard: IS 17088:2008 titled as Specifications for Compostable Plastics. Under the provisions of the Rules, certificates has been issued by CPCB to 68 compostable manufacturers/sellers having manufacturing capacity 1,08,263 TPA till date.

(c) Packaging companies are not directly incentivized for plastic free packaging. However, the producers, importers and brand owners have now initiated steps for setting up material recovery facilities on their own or through the Producers Responsibility Organizations (PRO) for collection of plastic waste and are tying up with the registered recyclers for the recycling of plastic waste. This EPR mechanism has created additional source of income for recyclers. Further, the producers,, importers and brand owners are switching towards alternate packaging to reduce the EPR cost.

Environment impact assessment study for exploratory drilling

2453. SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the oil and gas firms are mandated to conduct an environment impact assessment study before initiating exploratory drilling, both off-shore and onshore, if so, whether it will be in public domain;

(b) the steps taken by the Ministry to ensure safety of marine life, since the oil and gas firms, looking to conduct exploratory drilling have been exempted from obtaining environmental clearance; and

(c) whether any stakeholders comprising of environmental experts were consulted before notifying the above said exemptions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) The requirement of prior environmental clearance has not been exempted for on-shore and off shore exploratory drilling. Such projects or activities have only been re-categorized from category 'A' to category 'B2' and therefore, such projects require environmental clearance from the State Level Environmental Impact Assessment Authority. Further, the Ministry has issued standard environmental clearance conditions to be prescribed while granting the environmental clearances to address the environmental impacts.

(c) The proposal for the re-categorization of the on-shore and off-shore oil and gas exploration projects or activities from category 'A' to category 'B2' has been deliberated by the Expert Committee constituted for the purpose of streamlining of EC process as part of the comprehensive review of the EIA Notification, 2006.

Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems

2454. SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the norms under which industries are targeted to install Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS);

(b) number of independent audits done of industrial OCEMS operations to ensure there is no tampering of systems; and

(c) number of OCEMS installed in the districts of Faridabad, Gurgaon, Mewat, Rohtak, Sonapat, Rewari, Jhajjar, Panipat, Palwal, Bhiwani, Mahendragarh, Jind, Karnal, Meerut, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar, Bulandshahr, Baghpat, Hapur, Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Alwar and Bharatpur?