



Toxics Link

# FOR A TOXICS-FREE WORLD

## TOXICS LINK'S 2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT

*A toxics-free world with  
environmental justice for all*







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for a toxics free world

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We are very proud to share with you our Annual report for 2018-19. It has been an outcome of dedicated team effort.

As per our mission, for over the past 25 years Toxics Link has been steadfastly pursuing the goal of a toxics-free world, through specific and researched interventions. Our motive is to help reduce, eliminate or manage such chemical contaminants which cause harm to us and the environment. Our focus is on the most impacted and vulnerable communities, which have little agency to protect themselves or even be informed of these toxics. This year, besides our ongoing and continuing work, we also have carried out important work on microplastics. Alongside in the new discussions on circular economy, the toxicity of and in materials has been focused upon – which is important since it creates barriers for recycling and reuse and we have attempted to contribute to these. We have extended our work in the State of Goa, on biomedical and electronic waste, and formed new partnerships and collaborations, as has been our way of working for a long time now.

We hope you will find this report useful and that it will help you to understand better the tireless work of the team to advance our goals.

Sincerely  
**Ravi Agarwal**  
Director



# MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

It has been an extremely satisfying year for us at Toxics Link since we were able to maintain continuity and take forward our ongoing campaigns on chemicals and waste. This year we also identified and initiated work on a couple of new issues like Nonylphenol and Microplastics that are significantly critical for environmental wellbeing. Chemical issues are perceived to be highly technical hence less understood by citizens thereby limiting their participation in any meaningful debate around health and safety issues surrounding them. Toxics Link has been persistent in its effort of generating researched data, both primary and secondary and simplifying this information for it to be absorbed and understood well by citizens. Our reports on Mercury and on-ground intervention in the healthcare and lighting industry helped prepare the ground for the country to proceed ahead and ratify the Minamata Convention in the larger interest of public health issues. The organisation has created simple but extremely valuable information on Endocrine Disruptive Chemicals and has been anchoring critical debates in the country leading to policy shifts. Our engagement with Nonylphenol in products is opening up new conversations across sectors and a new journey to embark upon towards issues of product safety.

Issues of waste throw up another set of challenges of implementation to regulations and most of our current interventions have been aimed at improving compliance and environmental governance mechanisms. I feel highly satisfied that on most waste issues we are recognised for our expertise and looked up as solution providers. Most stakeholders on e-waste look up to us and are keen to be part of any discussion and debate led by us that improves compliance. We have also

been very consistent in locating hazardous process hotspots across the country that are responsible for larger pollution issues. Most of our reports on battery recycling or electronic waste are viewed with credibility and has on most occasions contributed to larger action and impacts. The issue of plastics and Microplastics was taken up by Toxics Link and it has been responsible for kindling interest among all stakeholders. It has certainly raised the level of debate on plastics in the country. Another important achievement has been the call from the government of Goa to provide technical support to the state in setting up both e-waste and bio-medical waste facilities in the state.

It's been hugely satisfying to see the organisation grow in strength and evolve as a knowledge base for both chemicals and waste issues. I must thank the media for the constant support they have given us in our campaigns and in raising issues of national and global concern.



# about The Toxics Link team

We are a group of people working together for environmental justice and freedom from toxins. We have taken it upon ourselves to collect and share information about the sources and dangers of poisons in our environment and bodies, as well as about clean and sustainable alternatives for India and the rest of the world.

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Toxics Link emerged from a critical need to address knowledge gaps relating to issues of toxicity and waste, their impact on the environment and human health, especially on vulnerable and marginalised citizens. The organisation came into existence in 1994 with a desire and ambition to work towards influencing and advocating policy that addressed this growing concern in the country. In the years that have followed, the organisation has been instrumental in impacting various environmental policies, standards and other government instructions to improve environment management in the country. Toxics Link is currently headquartered in New Delhi, the Indian capital and has a project office in Goa.

Unlike many non-profit organisations that work on a project-to-project basis, Toxics Link works in a programme mode on subjects relating to 'toxicity' and how it can be minimised. The key focus is to involve people in toxicity and waste issues, and to find solutions which are appropriate and safe. Starting from research and lab work to influencing policies and facilitating in compliance, each subject relating to

environment, toxicity and solutions, is a programme by itself.

Programmes are initiated with a need and situation analysis bringing out issues and concerns on toxics, pollutants, municipal and hazardous waste management, food safety, etc. This is done using participatory methods and state-of-the-art researches to establish facts. These facts are then brought to the public domain by advocacy and campaigning, community level outreach, training and capacity building, information communication technology, policy analysis, environment-friendly policy designing, programme development, providing solutions platform and influencing change. Thus, Toxics Link's programmes are people-driven, need-based and implementable.

Toxics-related information is brought to the public domain through a qualified team of experts and staff, who undertake exhaustive research studies based on scientific testing and standard research tools, undertake the challenges of policy advocacy, and provide their expertise in an endeavour to build capacities of stakeholders around such issues for better compliance on the ground.

The operational area of Toxics Link although is the entire country, it is also a part of international forums as change makers. It has a network of over 5,000 members from different streams from across the nation. In the coming years, Toxics Link plans to expand activities by also including measures, solutions and frameworks for ensuring producer responsibility and compliance, leverage Corporate Social Responsibility for minimizing risk from toxics, for a safer environment, and for influencing society at large to be more responsible, aware and participative.

Toxics Link is a non-government organisation registered under the Societies Act of 1860 in the year 1996 in New Delhi. The founder and director of the organisation is Ravi Agarwal, an environmentalist of international repute. The Board of Directors include – Ravi Agarwal, Ashok Khetan (Sr Chartered Accountant, Khetan and Company), Krishnendu Bose (Founder, Earth Care Productions) and Nanni Singh (Social Activist). Satish Sinha is an Associate Director at Toxics Link and is a well-known environmentalist.



# our approach

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Research  
and generate  
new data and  
information

build  
campaigns

initiate policy  
dialogues

create pilots  
and models

build  
capacity  
of  
stakeholders

strengthen  
compliance  
mechanism

# OUR MILESTONES

## WATCHDOG

On-ground assessments  
Product testing for compliance  
Engagement with stakeholders



## OUTREACH

Training and capacity building of stakeholders  
Create pilots and models  
Environmental film festivals  
School Education Programmes  
Public Lectures  
Information material/ Films

## PIONEERING RESEARCH

Lead in Paints  
E-waste  
Microplastics  
EDCs  
Mercury  
Batteries

## POLICY AND CHANGE ON GROUND

- Since 1996, Toxics Link's research, policy, advocacy and awareness raising initiatives have notably led to issuance of Rules and standards on Biomedical waste, solid waste, e-waste, plastics, hazardous waste, battery, mercury, EDCs and Lead in Paints
- Valuable contribution towards setting norms for heavy metal standards for toys in children, BPA in baby feeding bottles and sippy cups, Lead in Paint, Mercury dosing in lamps
- Played a role in Cabinet's approval of India's ratification of Minamata Convention
- Toxics Link played a critical role in the declaration of Delhi Ridge as a Reserve Forest
- Was instrumental in getting the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility in the E-waste Rules
- Recognition of Informal sector in waste rules
- Wide coverage of these issues in Media

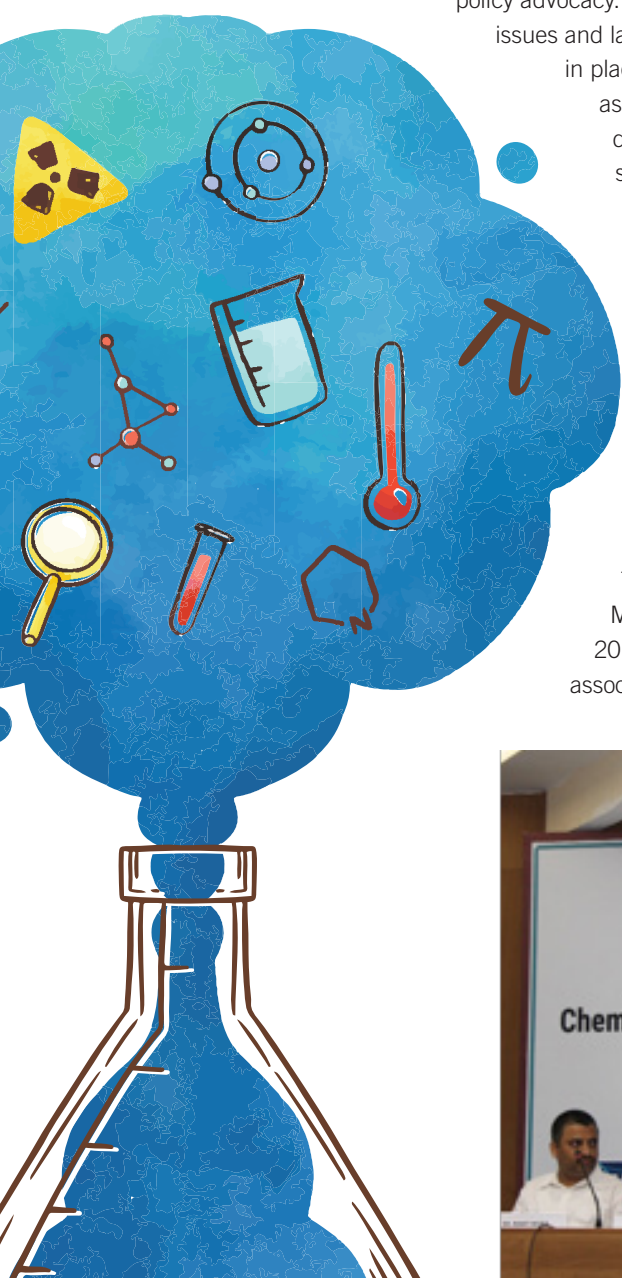
# CHEMICALS AND HEALTH

Though globally, there is huge movement towards circular economy and resource efficiency, India still primarily works on a linear model of produce, use and throw. Life cycle approach, which could look at upstream and downstream concerns and thus mitigate some of those risks, is not yet integrated in the thought process, resulting in rampant usage of harmful chemicals in all walks of life.

Chemicals are complex issues and bring number of challenges, especially in research and policy advocacy. It is always difficult to find credible information on chemical safety issues and lack of data has created bottlenecks for sound chemical management in place. Role of a civil society organisation is key in these conditions, as there is not just a need to bring reliable information in the public domain and push for sustainable growth, but also push different stakeholders to contribute towards this.

During the project year, Toxics Link continued its work on the issues of EDCs, POPs and heavy metals such as Lead in paints and mercury-contaminated sites to understand the impact on the chemicals management in the country considering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To achieve the desired results, Toxics Link undertook primary research, created information materials and organized meetings as well as participated in the policy decision process on issues of POPs, Mercury and SAICM.

Toxics Link organized a National conference titled “Chemical Management and Sustainable Development Goals” on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019 in the backdrop of the SAICM OEWG meeting in Uruguay in association with UNEP and WHO. The stakeholders from Chemical



Ministry, Health Ministry, NGOs, research institutions and industries participated in the meeting and laid emphasis on the need of a comprehensive strategy on chemicals management in the country to promote the sustainable development goals and minimize the impacts on human health. Toxics Link is the South Asian hub of the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), and it catalyses efforts of civil society organisations to drive some key issues on chemicals in the region. It also plays a critical role in dissemination of knowledge and information among partner organisations and building their capacities on specific issues. Some of the major interventions of the Chemicals and Health team during 2018-19 were as follows:

## Lead in Paints

To improve compliance of Lead in paints in India, primary research on lead in enamel paints was conducted with specific focus on paints manufactured by SMEs. A report titled **‘Lead in Paints: Concerns and Challenges in India’** was released during the International Lead Poisoning and Prevention Week of Action (ILLPWA2018). The study not only pointed out the gaps in the implementation of Lead in Paint rule by most of the SMEs but also highlighted the low awareness levels in consumers and paint retailers. The report was covered extensively by the mainstream media. Also, a stakeholder meeting was organized in Kolkata in February 2018 which was well attended by CPCB, SPCB, paint manufacturers, paint consultants, the medical fraternity, consumer awareness groups etc and the issue of Lead in paints was well-captured by the local media.



### Lead in Paints in India Concerns and Challenges 2018



[http://toxicslink.org/docs/Lead%20in%20Paints%202%20\(4\).pdf](http://toxicslink.org/docs/Lead%20in%20Paints%202%20(4).pdf)

## Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)

To step up its campaign on EDCs, Toxics Link is working on a project on EDCs in food in association with Norwegian Institute of Water Research (NIVA). The project aims to create a policy framework on EDCs in food. Toxics Link has also developed a compendium on the various aspects of EDCs in food in India and identified the regulatory gaps.

In the campaign to phase out Bisphenol A (BPA), a well-known EDC and to check the level of compliance of BPA regulation in baby feeding bottles and sippy cups, Toxics Link undertook a research study on migration of BPA in baby feeding bottles and sippy cups. The study was conducted in association with The department of Chemical Engineering of Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. The report has been released to the media and has been widely covered in the mainstream media. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPR) the apex quasi judiciary body to look into child protection in India has taken suo motu cognizance of the report based on the news coverage to take appropriate action.

Toxics Link also initiated a study on Nonylphenol, which is a harmful chemical as well as an EDC. The detailed study was undertaken in collaboration with the Department of Chemical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati which is one of the premier research institutes in the country. The research study has been completed and varied levels of Nonylphenol was detected in many detergent samples as well as in the river water samples. This is the first-of-its-kind study conducted in India which brings out the presence of NP in detergents and water bodies and its subsequent health hazards to the forefront. The study found alarming levels of the toxic chemical “Nonylphenol “ in detergents as well as in river water in India. The detergent samples were taken from the local markets of Delhi and water from six rivers i.e. Garh Ganga and Hindon in Uttar Pradesh, Krishnan in Andhra Pradesh, Tapti in Gujarat, Bandi in Rajasthan, Mahanadi in Odisha and Ambazari lake in Nagpur. Nonylphenol was detected in high quantity in all the samples of detergent, river and lake water.

Nonylphenol is known to be an endocrine disrupting chemical which is hazardous to the environment and human health besides also posing a threat to aquatic life and other fauna. The chemical has also been found to have a number of adverse reproductive and hormonal effects on human beings and can cause carcinogenic effects on the human body.

## Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

To strengthen information and knowledge on the issue of POPs, Toxics Link released the “POPs Country Situation Report” in 2018 which was well-received by the national and international stakeholders. In this context Toxics Link organized a national stakeholder conference on POPs to discuss the current management of POPs in India which was attended by The Ministry of Environment and Forest and Climate Change, Government of India and other concerned agencies including NGOs.

Studies were also done on two candidate POPs, Dicofof and PFAs use in India considering the COP meeting of Stockholm convention. The Dicofof report was prepared based on the primary assessment of its use by the farmers. The findings of the report were shared with the concerned officials of MoEFCC. The PFAs report has outlined the present status of the chemical in India. Toxics Link conducted a preliminary study on PFOA in non-stick cookware and has plans for an in-depth study in future.

## Mercury

India has ratified the Minamata Convention on mercury and is working on the strategies to reduce the environmental and health impacts of mercury. To supplement the efforts, Toxics Link carried out the research-based on primary research to explore the possible mercury-contaminated sites in India. Four sites have been shortlisted for this study and one of the sites has been already designated as a mercury-contaminated site. Mercury has been found to be significantly high in the soil of some of the locations. The report was shared with The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

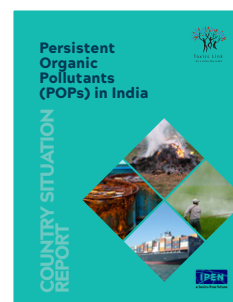
Secondly, Toxics Link has been continuing with its legal battle in The Delhi High Court against the lamp industries for safe disposal of mercury in lamps.

In the context of the Minamata Convention to supplement the mercury initial assessment project (MIA) of Government of India, Toxics link initiated a project in collaboration with the European Environmental Bureau (EEB). The project is aimed at research on alternative use of mercury in India and has proposed a regulation to phase out the mercury products in India. The project also further aims to build the capacity of the stakeholders on the issue of mercury use in the products and its alternative.

To implement the project Toxics Link set up an informal committee and organized a round table meeting to discuss the strategies to carry out the assessment of mercury-free alternative products sold in India. The draft report was prepared after getting information from the field. Moreover, Toxics Link was also part of the global study to assess mercury in skin lightening creams sold in India. The study found high content of mercury above the prescribed standards and the report was also extensively covered by the media.



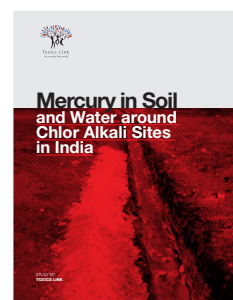
### POPs country situation report



[http://toxicslink.org/docs/Lead%20in%20Paints%202%20\(4\).pdf](http://toxicslink.org/docs/Lead%20in%20Paints%202%20(4).pdf)



### Mercury in soil and water around Chlor Alkali sites in India



<http://toxicslink.org/docs/Endocrine-Disruptive-Chemicals-REPORT-2016.pdf>





## Other Publications



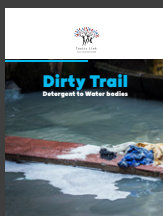
Bottles can be toxic-Part II



Status of Dicofof-PoPs under Elimination



EDC-Review of Indian Research



Dirty trail Detergent to water bodies

## Major highlights

- ▶ The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPR) the apex quasi-judiciary body to look into child protection in India has taken suo moto cognizance on Toxics Link's report on BPA in baby feeding bottles.
- ▶ The compendium on Indian research studies on EDCs is the first-of-its-kind compiled report which was quite appreciated by Indian research communities.
- ▶ Ratification of Minamata Convention by the Government of India was followed by Mercury initial assessment (MIA) to get the status of mercury use in India
- ▶ Toxics Link has been associated with the UNEP-supported POPs and chemical management project initiated by National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur
- ▶ Our organisation participated and provided important inputs to Govt of India for the forthcoming conference of parties (COP) meetings on Stockholm Convention and Minamata Convention

# WASTE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Global production and consumption patterns are changing rapidly, with countries like China and India at the centre of it. One important development has been that the government of India has placed a ban on import of plastic waste which was posing serious threats in view of China having banned import of similar waste.

In the preceding year Toxics Link's intervention was mainly towards strengthening the legal framework related to Batteries management and pushing for better disposal and management practices for batteries in the country, improving e-waste management with EPR in focus, focusing on the issue of microplastics in India, increasing capacity in parts of the country through our partnership project on wastes issues, improving compliance of bio-medical waste management in two states, connecting youth with nature through educational interventions amongst others. Our research work is usually quite widely circulated and reaches out to different stakeholders.

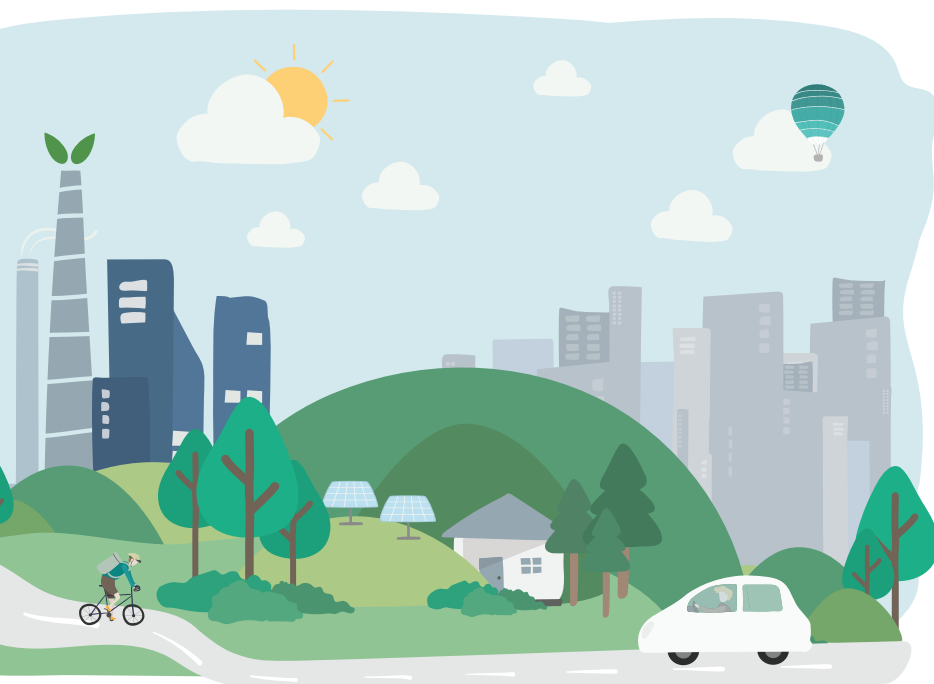
Few of the major highlights of the activities of the Waste and Sustainability team during the project year 2018-19 were:

## E-waste

New E-waste management rules were notified in 2016 and were meant to change many things on ground. With the extended producer responsibility(EPR) framework, the industry was supposed to set up takeback system for consumers and the waste was to shift to formal recycling structures. Though the regulatory agencies are meant to monitor these, enforcement is a big challenge in India and a civil society organisation like ours has to play the watchdog role. In 2018 we carried out a study on the extended producer responsibility (EPR) performances of the major electrical and electronic equipment brands of the Indian market. Under Extended producer responsibility producers are made responsible for handling and recycling end-of-

life products. The study was a ranking assessment of 54 brands considering their collection target achievements, take back policies, awareness initiatives, authorisation status, recycling status, RoHS compliance, availability and access of information, etc. in line with the provisions of the rules. During our study the brands were rated according to their performances on EPR, from both regulatory and consumer perspectives. Third in the **'Time To Reboot'** series, the brand assessment report was released in February 2018 and managed to trigger debates and start the discussion among stakeholders especially the producers. The report also garnered lot of attention in the media and had been covered widely.

Also, our study on the situation in the informal e-waste processing sector in Delhi – the biggest informal e-waste market of the



country was also completed and the findings were shared with key stakeholders including policy makers, producers and recyclers. The study has tracked down all the major e-waste recycling hubs (15) in Delhi functioning without any health or environmental safeguards and looked at the waste sources, change in business volume, reasons for any shift in the business and processes followed in these hubs with photo documentation. E-waste Rules ban informal dismantling and recycling of e-waste and the report tries to assess the ground reality in Delhi, known as one of Asia's biggest e-waste markets. The findings of the report have been shared with the media. Also a strong advocacy campaign is in the pipeline.



## Hazardous Waste

A report on the management of lead acid batteries on ground and the regulatory implementation gaps had been released during the project period. Over 90% of the lead-acid batteries are ending up with the informal sector in India triggering pollution. The Toxics Link study which exposed the failure of Battery Rules was done in collaboration with 3 regional CSOs/NGOs. The report brought to the fore interesting findings in four states, viz., Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan on the prevailing informal management practices of lead acid batteries on ground even after 17 years of its rules and EPR being in place. The findings show that the transportation of LABs to the informal recycling sector are in direct contravention of the Batteries Management and Handling Rules (2001) under which, either battery manufacturing companies should take the LABs for recycling, or they should be recycled by registered recycling units. Aiming to bring sustainable changes in battery waste management, the study findings were also shared in a high level roundtable meeting in Ranchi with relevant stakeholders and a plan of action was also developed to push for regulatory reforms and more stringent compliance measures on the issue.



Though Batteries Management and Handling has been in force since 2001, it only addresses lead acid batteries and does not apply to the small or dry-cell household batteries, used in massive quantities in the country. Small batteries are only addressed as domestic hazardous waste in the solid waste management rules, 2016. Toxics Link published a report on the small batteries waste management in the country with primary study findings on their usage, disposal, informal processing status and secondary research on the current landfills load, recovery potentials, existing regulatory provisions and best practices across the globe. Being the first of its kind on end-of-use household batteries management, the findings of this report have been shared with policy makers, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders which helped the discussions

to begin on the issue. Also, the report had been widely covered in national media and social media updates too have been able to garner much attention. For a continued policy campaign, a factsheet was published on the same, a policy brief was prepared and a day-long workshop was organised on e-waste and small batteries waste management bringing together the policy makers, regulatory implementing bodies, producers, municipalities, consumers, recyclers, PROs, media, etc. The

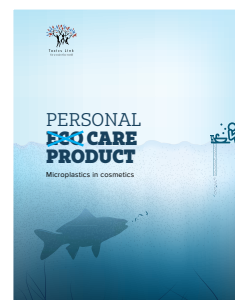
workshop aimed to evaluate the status of implementation of Batteries (Handling and Management) Rules and discuss the road ahead with various stakeholders in attendance.

## Microplastics

As far as carrying forward our research and organisational capacitation on the new and emerging global concern of microplastics goes, in early 2018 we had launched a media campaign with the release of our first microplastics study findings with a factsheet and a report. The study investigated national and international information on the types, sources, impacts, regulations and campaigns of microplastics put together for better policy-making. Also we carried out primary research on the presence of microplastics rinse-off and live-on products of major brands. Subsequent to these findings further research was carried out on the presence of microplastics in water in 8 different cities of the country in collaboration with CIPET (Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology).



### Microplastics in Cosmetics Report



[http://toxicslink.org/docs/Lead%20in%20Paints%202%20\(4\).pdf](http://toxicslink.org/docs/Lead%20in%20Paints%202%20(4).pdf)

## PERC

A review research on PERC, a dry cleaning chemical used in India was also undertaken with the purpose of documenting any new information post our work on the previous year on the same theme. The test results however did not provide major evidence of the chemicals being found in garments post drycleaning, hence we decided to pause and get our facts right.

## Bio-medical waste

In 2018, we have also continued to play the watchdog role on biomedical waste management in the country. After the revised bio-medical waste management rules in 2016 and its subsequent amendment in 2018, we carried out gap analysis studies in two states, namely Delhi and Jharkhand. The Jharkhand BMW assessment report was done in collaboration with a local CSO and the findings were shared with the regional stakeholders through a state-level roundtable. The study assesses the knowledge, attitude, practice and generation of bio-medical waste in the two states. The report and roundtable has been covered by regional media and an action plan had been prepared in the roundtable to take the issue forward with the policy makers for stringent implementation of Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules in Jharkhand. We are also part of the district level monitoring committee on bio medical waste in several districts in Delhi and have assessed various healthcare facilities in the national capital along with the regulatory agencies and other key stakeholders. The Delhi report is in the process of finalisation and we plan to share the findings of the report in a state-specific meeting soon. The current reports do suggest that the issue requires some critical engagements and also some rethink on effluent and incinerator technology.

## Mercury in dentistry

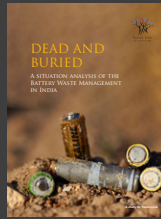
Toxics Link continued its campaign to phase down mercury usage in dentistry. Formal discussions were held with The Ministry of Health and Dental Council of India to bring in changes to the dentistry course curriculum, as well as to get a framework in India to reduce mercury-based amalgam fillings amongst the vulnerable population. We also involved different chapters of The Indian Dental Association to educate practicing dentists on mercury hazards as well as the need to phase out mercury amalgam.



## Other Publications



**Loaded Batteries:**  
Mapping The  
Toxic Waste Trail



**Dead and Buried:** A  
situation  
analysis of the  
battery waste  
management  
in India, 2019



**Time to Reboot III**  
E-waste rules:  
Assessing  
EPR  
compliance



**Informal e-waste  
recycling in  
Delhi**



**Factsheet  
58 on End-  
of-Life Small  
Batteries, 2019**



**Factsheet  
56 on  
Microplastics;  
2018**

## Major highlights

- Our revelation on non-compliance of EPR (E-waste Rules) by Producers, through our report 'Time to Reboot III', resulted in further investigations which led to suspension of import licenses of some big EEE brands.
- Toxics Link collaborated with the State Government of Goa on Bio-medical waste and E-waste management projects in the state.
- Toxics Link is part of various district level monitoring committees on Bio medical waste management in Delhi
- Department of Health Jharkhand government commits to look into the issue related to bio-medical waste compliance and violations in Jharkhand
- Discussion on microplastics have begun in government agencies
- Increased capacity in parts of the country through our partnership project on wastes issues
- Approached by different agencies/groups to work/collaborate on some of the environmental issues
- Wide coverage of some of our reports and issues in popular media



# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Communication strategies implemented through a mix of approaches, channels and aimed at different participants and stakeholders can inform, influence, motivate, engage and empower

The primary aim of the information and communication programme is to broaden outreach and effectively disseminate any new facts to a bigger audience through an array of knowledge products and new communication tools. Also, maintaining an integrated database and online data that will enhance outreach in a cost-effective manner are

amongst its other goals. Maintaining good rapport with the media for reaching out to the maximum number of people and thereby creating public awareness on various environmental issues and challenges is critical.

Toxics Link's Information and Communication programme tries to bridge the gender divide by engaging women in public debate and discourse through its outreach programs like its film festivals, workshops, public lectures etc.

In the past year as proposed, we have successfully circulated environmental news, reports and updates with greater gusto, regionally, nationally and globally via our several outreach activities and media vehicles. The good news is that we have managed



to improve outreach of our research reports and publications significantly. Our consistent updates on the website have also resulted in greater website traffic and more report downloads too.

We can safely say that we have been able to increase our target audience as well as their proactive participation in contemporary environmental issues. Owing to our strong and good ties with the media we receive regular coverage in print, online and electronic media. Some of the reputed media organisations that have carried news stories on Toxics Link's interventions and research reports are: Press Trust of India, Down To Earth, Times of India, The New Indian Express, The Statesman, WION, Governance Now, Business Standard, Hindustan Times, Economic Times, First post, Millennium Post, Yale Environment 360, Mongabay, Zee Business, Indian Express, Tribune India, CNBC Awaaz and News 18 among others.



*Inaugural function of Quotes From The Earth 2018*

Various schools and educational institutions have also approached us for giving guest lectures on diverse environmental topics.



*Quotes From The Earth 2018*

etc on the themes of biodiversity, climate change, water, mining and toxic chemicals were screened.

Some of the major highlights of the Information and Communication Programme during 2018-19 are:

## Quotes From The Earth

In 2018, Toxics Link received funding from the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation to organise the eighth edition of the biennial film festival called 'Quotes from the Earth' from December 6-8 in collaboration with India International Centre in New Delhi. A total of 27 films by renowned Indian and international filmmakers like Gautam Pandey and Doel Trivedy, Aparnaa Singh, Subbiah Nallamuthu

etc on the themes of biodiversity, climate change, water, mining and toxic chemicals were screened. Films from all over the country, from northeast India to Goa and from Kashmir to Kerala were showcased. There were also films from Canada, Poland, Indonesia, The Dominican Republic etc. The three-day film festival saw an overwhelming response and was attended by over 500 people including school children, environment-conscious people, academics, activists, researchers, and youngsters – who are agents of change in the country. Most of the films were very well-received by the audiences and many critical issues were discussed in the Q&A sessions with the filmmakers.

The film festival was covered by media houses like Press Trust of India, Economic Times, Paryavaran Post, Outlook India, India Water Portal, Millennium Post, Dainik Jagran etc.

Since its inception in 2004, the festival has attracted films and filmmakers. The organisation's work plan was towards fulfilling the wider objectives of using the visual and creative medium of films to highlight environmental issues at the global and the



*National Media Workshop in New Delhi*

international level, and strengthen dialogue around environment preservation at public discourses and policy making circles and it was successful in accomplishing the desired outcome as over the years the festival has grown bigger and more popular.

Yet, some of the screenings in the post-lunch session saw a thin audience. This can be attributed to the fact that since it was a three-day long event, many schools could not send their children for longer duration, and since Day one and Day two were working days, many professionals could not turn up during the daytime.

## Media Workshop

In this modern knowledge-based society, media not only plays the role of disseminator of information but also a facilitator of development. Since the media plays such an important link, it becomes vital that their understandings of these environmental issues are comprehensive. This will not only help them in bringing environment into the hub of debates and discussions, but also augment their ability to become agents of change.

To help the media understand some of the emerging environmental issues and equip them with necessary information to better deal with the issues of high complexity, Toxics Link organised a National MediaPartnership Workshop during the project period with an objective to engage with media professionals and discuss some of the key environmental issues that are of concern to the country. Experts discussed on some key issues such as microplastics, Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) and SDGs and a range of inter-related topics. Media professionals from print, electronic, online media and representatives from some media houses participated in large numbers in the daylong workshop organised in Delhi.

## Public Lectures

Toxics Link organised three public lectures in collaboration with India International Centre during the reporting period on food safety, plastic pollution and India's rivers respectively which were well-attended and managed to draw different stakeholders including intellectuals, environmentalists, policy makers, activists and the general public.

The purpose of the public lecture titled **'How safe is our food?'** was to discuss the serious issue of food safety, its detrimental effects on our health & well-being and the need to raise awareness on the impact of excessive unhygienic and toxic food. It also tried to examine the existing rules & regulations and the role of enforcing agencies in proper implementation of food safety laws. The speakers were: Mohd. Amir, Technical Officer, FSSAI; Kajal Debnath, DGM, Head of Regulatory Affairs, Mother Dairy Pvt Ltd and Ashim Sanyal, COO of Consumer Voice.

The public lecture on **'Plastic pollution: Is the crisis deeper than you know and how can India combat it?'** brought to the fore the causes, challenges and adverse effects of plastics on our health & the environment with the objective of raising awareness amongst the public about the looming threat we are all facing. It also tried to examine the existing policies, regulations, the role



of enforcing agencies in tackling the problem and the way forward on India's green future. The lecture also looked at beating plastic pollution through civic engagement and the initiatives taken by civil society organisations with regard to the problem too. The speakers were Ravi Kumar Aggarwal, President of All India Plastic Industries Association (AIPIA), Dr Shyamala Mani, Professor (Retd.), National Institute of Urban Affairs, Dr Suneel Pandey, Senior Fellow and Director, Environment & Waste Management Division, TERI and Priti Mahesh, Chief Program Coordinator from Toxics Link.

The objective of the Public Lecture titled **'Are India's rivers dying a slow death?'** was to discuss the dangerous scenario vis-a-vis our rivers and to raise awareness amongst the public about the looming threat we are all facing. Over-damming and diversion of rivers has adversely affected people and the landscape across the globe. Conservationists say that if interlinking of rivers is executed in India it will only spell disaster and alter vast swathes of estuarine habitat along with the lives of people in and around the region. What is needed is awareness about what we are bequeathing to our rivers and what we ought to do instead. Governments need to implement river-friendly policies. Manu Bhatnagar, Principle Director, Natural Heritage Division, INTACH, Suresh Babu SV, Director River Basins & Water Policy, World Wide Fund and Neeraj Gahlawat, Project Officer-Technical, National Mission For Clean Ganga were the speakers.

## News Media

Toxics Link issued 6 press releases on waste, chemicals and the film festival. The press releases were extensively reported by the print media. In addition, the press was in regular touch with us seeking our views and quotes while writing stories on these issues all year through. Toxics Link was mentioned in several news stories in mainstream media. Senior Toxics Link staff also featured on several television and radio discussions and interviews.

## Newsletter (Toxics Dispatch)

Three volumes of 'Toxics Dispatch', a 12- page printed newsletter and the Annual Report 2017-18 was published in the project period. Toxics Dispatch is very well-received by the small and regional NGOs and various stakeholders and we get around 8-10 subscription requests every month. There has been a demand for increasing the frequency of the newsletter. Our subscribers list has also grown by around 8% in the last financial year.

## Website and social media

The Toxics Link web portal ([www.toxicslink.org](http://www.toxicslink.org)) has been one of our oft-used outreach mediums. The user-friendly portal is maintained and updated on a regular basis and is a vital resource for researchers, policy makers, consultants, CSOs and the general public seeking latest data, research and work on waste and chemicals. Over 75 thousand hits were recorded on the website during the reporting period. Besides we have been trying to use our social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for maximal dispersal of information and accelerated outreach. We have tried to increase our impact and the number of our followers on social media through consistent and regular updates, including visuals with every post, being responsive to our followers, tagging all our posts and using the right hashtags, composing compelling captions, retweets and using Facebook and Instagram stories.

## Resource Centre

Toxics Link has an automated in-house library that helps in dispersal of knowledge among the readers drawn from diverse backgrounds-researchers, academicians, experts, civil society professionals, among others- who play a vital role in fomenting public opinion and influencing policy amendments. The library houses a collection of around 580 documentary films from India and abroad, over 5268 books and research-based reports; books, magazines and periodicals are added from time to time. It also maintains a big database of our stakeholders: a photo bank comprising transparencies, slides and digital photographs on all the issues Toxics Link works on. A first-hand compilation of questions on issues of environment raised in Parliament sessions are also stocked in the library. The resource centre is open to all.

# Thank you to our supporters!

Toxics Link is committed to changing the way we deal with sustainability, waste and toxicity issues. We thank our innumerable supporters who help us in many ways and make it possible for us to continue working on raising public awareness, policy-level changes, creating safer livelihoods and finding innovative solutions for a safer and sustainable environment.

We thank our main funders Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Consumer for Dental Choice, European Environmental Bureau (EEB), International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN) and Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA) for their support.





# LEADERSHIP

## Board of Directors

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**Ravi Agarwal**

Founder-Director

**Ashok Khetan**

Sr Chartered Accountant, Khetan and Company

**Krishnendu Bose**

Filmmaker

**Nanni Singh**

Social Activist

## Executive Team

---

**Ravi Agarwal**

Founder-Director

**Satish Sinha**

Associate Director

## Chemicals and Health

---

**Piyush Mohapatra**

Senior Programme Coordinator

**Tripti Arora**

Coordinator, IPEN South Asia Hub

**Dr Prashant Rajankar**

Programme Coordinator

**Bikash Chetry**

Programme Officer

## Waste and Sustainability

---

**Priti Mahesh**

Chief Programme Coordinator

**Kopal Dixit**

Programme Officer

**Manjusha Mukherjee**

Programme Coordinator

**Rashmi Srivastav**

Programme Officer

**Dr Kavita Yadav**

Programme Coordinator

**Vinod Kumar**

Programme Officer

## Information and Communication

---

**Ipsita Baishya**

Communications Coordinator

**Praveen Sharma**

Programme Officer

**Ruby Rani**

Senior Programme Officer

**Naresh Khator**

IT & System Officer

## Finance and Accounts

---

**Pooja Gupta**

Finance Manager

**Soma Mitra**

Accounts Officer

# Administration

---

**RS Sharma**  
Admin Manager

**Snigdha Sinha**  
Logistics Officer

**Gajender Pal Singh**  
Receptionist

**Shriram**  
Programme Assistant

**Dinesh Kumar**  
Driver

# FINANCIALS

**The Just Environment Charitable Trust**  
H-2, Jangpura Extension, New Delhi -14

**Balance Sheet As on 31.03.2019**

Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Liabilities	Current Year Amount (Rs.)	Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Assets	Current Year Amount (Rs.)
257,206.90	<b>Corpus Fund</b>	257,206.90	719,601.30	<b>Fixed Assets</b> (Annexure C)	
	Opening Balance		118,980.00	Opening Balance :-	662,112.32
32,641,176.19	<b>Income and Expenditure Account</b>	35,500,609.06	15,966.08	Add:- Additions	588,270.00
	Opening Balance		160,502.90	Less: Deletion	-
2,859,432.88	Add:-	1,816,291.53	662,112.32	Less:- Depreciation	227,318.82
35,757,815.97	Excess of Income Over Expenditure	37,574,107.49			1,023,063.50
719,601.29	<b>Fixed Asset Equilisation Reserve</b>		291,688.00	<b>Investments</b>	
118,980.00	Opening Balance	662,112.32	1,131.00	Accrued Interest on FDR's (FC)	835,462.00
	Add:- Additions	534,454.00	33,933,412.00	Accrued Interest on FDR's (Local)	15,811.00
838,581.29		1,196,566.32	3,607,337.00	Fixed Deposit- Bank(FC)	33,388,442.00
15,966.08	Less Deletion	-		Fixed Deposit- Bank(Local)	2,712,453.00
160,502.90	Less Depreciation	217,287.22		<b>Current Assets &amp; Loan &amp; Advances</b>	
662,112.31		979,279.10	1,920,950.01	S. Advances (Annexure D)	565,347.22
183,375.00	<b>Current Liabilities</b>		-	Security Deposit	45,000.00
	Interest on Revolving Funds	300,160.00	1,014,296.00	TDS Recoverable (Annexure E)	1,208,571.00
				GST Input (Annexure F)	43,665.80
157,906.00	Cheques Issued but not presented for payment	-	705,494.95	<b>Cash in Bank</b>	
5,259,235.00	Unutilised Grant (Annexure A)	3,261,037.86	3,660.00	Cash in Bank (Annexure G)	2,833,307.93
119,637.00	Expenses Payable (Annexure B)	606,870.00		<b>Cash in Hand</b>	
				Cash in Hand (Annexure H)	50,331.00
<b>42,140,081.28</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>42,721,454.45</b>	<b>42,140,081.28</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>42,721,454.45</b>

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts- Annexure -I

As per our audit report of even date  
**For S N M G & CO.**  
**Chartered Accountants**  
ICAI FRN. 004921N

**For THE JUST ENVIRONMENT CHARITABLE TRUST**

**CA. D.C.GARG**  
Partner  
Membership No: 076117  
Place: New Delhi  
Date: 20.09.2019

**RAVI AGARWAL**  
Trustee

**CA. ASHOK K. KHETAN**  
Trustee

**The Just Environment Charitable Trust**  
H-2, Jangpura Extension, New Delhi -14

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on 31.03.2019**

Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Expenditure	Current Year Amount (Rs.)	Previous Year Amount (Rs.)	Income	Current Year Amount (Rs.)
17,580,234.52	To Total Expenditure (Annexure A)	19,122,730.26	1,605,329.30	By Opening Unutilised Funds b/f	5,259,235.00
			21,238,768.50	Add:- Received during the year	17,120,049.27
			22,844,097.80		22,379,284.27
311.00	To TDS/GST Interest	560.00	5,259,235.00	Less: Unutilised Funds c/f (Annexure A)	3,261,037.86
46,610.00	To Legal Charges	-	17,584,862.80		19,118,246.41
13,000.00	To Tender Processing Fees	6,500.00	9,500.00	By Donation	5,000.00
86,866.00	To Tour and Travels	454,142.20	-	By Interest on I T Refund	32,979.00
35.40	To Bank Charges	35,799.09	16,389.00	By Interest From Bank (SB A/c)	33,139.00
-	To Building Maintenance	32,929.00	2,670,604.00	By Interest on FDR's (FC)	1,684,533.00
-	To Computer Maintenance	14,552.00	286,626.00	By Interest on FDR's (Local)	178,185.00
-	To Conveyance	87,639.00	18,508.00	By Misc Income	5,494.00
-	To Communication Expense	3,470.00	-	By Consultancy Income	3,067,920.00
-	To Legal & Professional Charges	992,117.00			
-	To Depreciation	10,031.60			
-	To Electricity and Water Charges	57,085.00			
-	To Equipment Maintenance	750.00			
-	To Misc Expenses	29,628.73			
-	To Medical to Staff	155,235.00			
-	To Office Maintenance	37,983.00			
-	To Photostat	894.00			
-	To Printing and Stationary Charges	34,771.00			
-	To Program	470,154.00			
-	To Rent	135,000.00			
-	To Salary	623,247.00			
-	To Staff Welfare	3,987.00			
2,859,432.88	To Excess of Income Over Expenditure transferred to Balance Sheet	1,816,291.53			
<b>20,586,489.80</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>24,125,496.41</b>	<b>20,586,489.80</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>24,125,496.41</b>

Significant Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts- Annexure -I

As per our audit report of even date attached

**For S N M G & CO.**  
**Chartered Accountants**  
ICAI FRN. 004921N

**For THE JUST ENVIRONMENT CHARITABLE TRUST**

**CA. D.C.GARG**  
Partner  
Membership No: 076117

**RAVI AGARWAL**  
Trustee

**CA. ASHOK K. KHETAN**  
Trustee

Place: New Delhi  
Date: 20.09.2019









Toxics Link  
for a toxics-free world

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 <https://www.youtube.com/user/toxicslink2012>