

INDIA MISSION PROCEEDING

2-9.4.2022

DAY 1 /4.4.2022/: PERCY delegation visited Auto Cluster and PCPA (Pimpri-Chinchwad Plastics Association) in the morning. Automotives being amongst the largest consumer of plastic, it was interesting to visit the cluster facility. The Auto Cluster is supported by PCMC (local municipal body) and MCCIA (the largest industry association in the region). They have a state-of-the-art facility, especially for use by SMEs. An MOU was signed by the PERCY delegation with the Auto Cluster, focusing on mutual cooperation in various domains. PCMC Commissioner joined the signing function.

A number of Small and medium-sized enterprises engaged in the plastic industry – members of PCPA - visited the event. Another MOU was signed with PCPA. This MOU focuses on concrete steps for cooperation between European plastic companies – members of the visiting clusters, and PCPA. Exchanging members' data, exchanging information on technologies, and undertaking joint initiatives related to polymers industry and recycling. The delegation subsequently visited two SMEs and one recycling facility within Chakan and Bhosari industrial areas.



Image 1: MoU ceremony with Autocluster, PCPA and PCMC commissioner

DAY 2 /5.4.2022/: EU's plastic recycling PERCY delegation visits university and start-ups in Pune

PERCY delegation visited MIT-World Peace University offering education in polymer engineering. The impressive campus of MIT-WPU was shown and also there was an interaction with the students and faculty of the polymer engineering department. The delegates acquainted themselves with the topics taught in the polymer engineering course, and how seriously students take recycling as a part of their course. There was also discussion about the effect product design has on reducing plastic consumption and hence waste. Students were curious to know about the higher education opportunities for polymers engineering in Europe. MIT-WPU's Director of R&D and Innovation and President-IPI - Dr. S Radhakrishnan and Dorte Walzl Baelum of the PERCY delegation signed an MOU with IPI – Indian Plastics Institute, about topics of common interest and undertaking projects related to education and training in polymer engineering.

The delegation visited the upcycling facility of ReCharkha which engages local tribals from Silvasa to make handwoven bags and other products from plastic waste. Amita Deshpande-Paranjape an IT professional who subsequently studied management in the USA has been the founder of this facility. She discussed her impressive journey from a corporate economy to a circular economy with the delegates.

In the evening, the delegates invited some more Start-Ups in order to understand how these Start-Ups are engaging with people in dealing with awareness and mindset issues. How they are creating an ecosystem for the collection and processing of plastic waste, and engaging youth, common people, government bodies, and industries in the process. It was an engaging discussion, and the delegation got a good impression of the activities taking place at ground level.



Image 2: MoU ceremony with MIT WPU Pune

DAY 3 /6.4.2022/: EU Plastic Recycling Clusters' delegation PERCY visits AIPMA, Mumbai
En route to Mumbai from Pune, the PERCY delegation made a detour to Belapur to visit AP Chemi – a company run by technocrats and headed by the dynamic CEO Suhas Dixit. This is a high-tech company from India – that holds many patents and uses pyrolysis technology to convert plastic waste into highly purified oil.

The next visit was to AIPMA INDIA (All India Plastic Manufacturers' Association). AIPMA, established in 1945, is the oldest and the largest apex body to promote the development and growth of the Indian Plastics Industry. Presently, it has nearly 2000 active, direct, and voting members and 22000 members through affiliated associations from over 175 cities in India. The majority of its members are from the MSME sector. 50 industrialists are forming the management - working honorary for the benefit of the industry as a whole and 80 employees on payroll. AIPMA is progressive and forward-looking, focused on trade fairs, networking, and advocacy, geographically representative of the width and breadth of the whole India, rooted in traditions and closely-knit. Also supporting futuristic topics like circular economy, start-ups, extended producer responsibility, and skills development. President Kishore Sampat, Directors General Deepak Ballani, and the mentor of AIPMA Arvind Mehta and their team make sure that the industry is in the right hands, and has a bright future. A tour of a training and skills development arm of AIPMA – AMTEC was given as well as a discussion with the Provost of PlastIndia International University –Dr. Dwarkanath Kale. AMTEC also provides various services to its members like Additive Manufacturing, Metrology, Design, Development, etc. There were discussions about a reduction in plastic wastage by better design.

Indeed a busy and demanding day in the humid Mumbai climate left promising impressions about the future of Indian plastics (and recycling).



Image 3: MoU meeting with AIPMA directors and affiliates

DAY 4 /7.4.2022/: PERCY Delegation's visit to waste collection facility

Today PERCY delegation visited MRAI – Material Recycling Association of India.

MRAI Started off in 2011. It is the apex organization of the sub-continent representing the rapidly growing recycling industry. MRAI has over 1200 members spanning over recycling and recyclable commodities. MRAI's collective strength comprises over 20,000 SMEs, directly and indirectly employing 2.5 million people.

One of the most impressive statements of MRAI's approach can be seen in their information video (<https://lnkd.in/db456TMk>): *"Scrap is a mine above earth...any wastage of scrap is a crime against future generations!"*.

MRAI's Pramod Shinde also organized a visit to the UNDP waste collection centre in Bandra, Mumbai. The originator of the centre is Haiderbhai of Aasra Welfare Association (an NGO for the rag-pickers). Thus, Aasra's primary objective is to help the community of the rag-pickers. And while doing it, they are helping the local governmental bodies. Haiderbhai is working with the rag-pickers, kabadiwallas and aggregators of scrap. Amazingly, more and more socially-oriented people are getting connected with the recycling problems, and delivering – more than just words. At this Bandra UNDP facility, we met two highly energized and inspiring young women – Alpita and Himali of UNDP and Aasra. Every day, they are coming to the waste collection depots, improving the procedures and SOPs, implementing systems, using technology – empathetically.

We had a first-hand experience with segregation of plastic waste in India and its challenges.



Image 4: Visit to waste segregation facility in Mumbai

DAY 5 /8.4.2022/: European Union's PERCY delegation in the Indian Capital

On the final leg of the PERCY delegation's visit to India, the delegates met Danish Royal Embassy staff in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. The Commercial Wing and Innovation Centre of the Embassy welcomed the delegates. We discussed with Paras Guptah and Søren Kibsgaard and their team from Trade Council about the ways in which the Embassy will support Danish companies planning to collaborate with India.

The Danish Government has also established Innovation Centres in strategically important countries. India happens to be one of them. Joseph Kurian from the Innovation Centre in Bangalore flew in specially to interact with the delegates. Joseph and Amrita Mukherjee accompanied us on a visit to IIT-New Delhi where we met Shipra Misra - CEO of DRIIV (Delhi Research Implementation and Innovation – city knowledge and innovation cluster) and a number of researchers and professors from various domains. DRIIV focuses on sustainability, circular economy and education effectiveness. While delegates heard of complaints about India's low focus on R&D, it was amazing to learn what kind of world-class applied research is being carried out at IIT-Delhi and other associate organisations. The MOU was signed with DRIIV.

The delegation signed another MOU with the Chairman of MSMECCII (MSME Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India). This happened at the Marwah Studio in the Film City – where the delegates were interviewed on television about the objectives of their visit and the results so far.

As the final programme of an intensive week of plastic industry and recycling-related meetings, the delegates visited the recycling facility of Uflex (<https://www.uflexltd.com/>) in Noida – India's largest multinational company in flexible packaging. Uflex is having factories/subsidiaries in over a dozen countries and providing end-to-end solutions to clients across 150 countries. Interesting interaction with the Joint President of the Packaging Division – Jeevaraj Pillai who showed the delegates recycling and recompounding line for PET and PP as well as their approach and upcycling of multi layer packaging.



Image 5: Meeting at Royal Danish Embassy with commerce and innovation body

NEXT STEPS: The further plans for the near future are meetings at K-Show fairgrounds in Düsseldorf Germany – the world’s largest plastic industry exhibition – in the month of October. Networking meeting between the EU clusters’ industry members and the Indian plastic industry will be organized with the support of AIPMA and PCPA of India, Indian Consulate in Frankfurt, Messe Düsseldorf and PERCY delegation.

This exploratory visit should be just the beginning of future collaborations between the European Union and India in plastics and circularity. And the delegates are committed to working PERCYstantly on this objective! 😊