

## About CART

Established in 1983 as a small voluntary group of concerned citizens, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) expanded its activities and CUTS CART was set up in 1996 as a programme centre to pursue the cause of common consumers, initially being undertaken by CUTS as the mandate.

The programmes of the Centre are primarily aimed at generating awareness, creating a more responsible society and encouraging changes at the policy level by advocating with the government machinery and sensitising it to the issues of concern of the common man. The Centre has spearheaded several campaigns and pioneered consumer empowerment.

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## It is Unlikely for India to Achieve Targets of SDG 12



Five years into the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the assessment of the progress in India shows, it is doubtful that India will achieve any of the targets of SDG 12, which is Responsible Consumption and Production. In addition, the status of many of the indicators may further worsen by 2030, comparing with 2015, due to the negative impact of the pandemic and various other factors.

This was one of the major findings of a study conducted by CUTS International on SDG 12 titled “Sustainable Consumption and Production – A Consumer Perspective”. The study mainly looked at SDG 12 from a consumer perspective based on the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP).

The key findings of this study were discussed and deliberated in the National Consultation organised by CUTS International in partnership with the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) in New Delhi on March 18, 2021.

During the inaugural session, Rene Van Berkel, UNIDO Representative, Regional Office in India, said “SDGs are very interconnected. SDGs are like a dice with seventeen sides, we cannot move on any side without moving the other ones, so one cannot just pick out anyone’s goal without any action on others.”

In the opening address, George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International, expressed concern about how neglected SDG 12 is compared to all other goals. He claimed that SDG 12 is an orphan goal, as the goal itself is a mixed bag with many of its targets outside the control of the Ministry of Environment. For instance, Sustainable Tourism is the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism. Sustainable Public Procurement, if implemented, would become the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

Archana Datta, SWITCH-Asia RPAC Coordinator for India, UNEP, while referring to the finding of CUTS study that there is an absence of effective monitoring and data collection framework for SDG 12. She concluded by saying that while science and knowledge required for implementing the 2030 Agenda are already well advanced, what is needed is a creative will. The country should use the pandemic crisis to encourage greater action, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among stakeholders for the larger public good.

The consultation happened in three separate sessions, saw participation from various government departments, organisations working on sustainable consumption and consumer protection from Delhi and other states, including Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

## Tackling Plastic Pollution: World Consumer Rights Day 2021

Plastic waste is India's and the world's most formidable (difficult to deal with) environmental challenge today, and the COVID-19 pandemic has made matters worse. After steel and cement, which is used in the construction industry, plastic is the most significant produced material, said George Cheriyan, Director in the opening remarks in an event organised by CUTS to observe World Consumer Rights Day.

Globally, over 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic have been produced since 1950, and about 60 percent have ended up in landfills or the natural environment. Plastic waste generation in the Asia Pacific region is expected to reach 140 million tonnes by 2030. According to a recent Central Pollution

organisations mark the day by joining together to highlight and raise awareness of an important issue to consumers worldwide. The day has been chosen since it was on March 15, 1962, and then US President John F Kennedy addressed the US Congress defining and upholding consumer rights. Since 1995, Consumers International is responsible for coordinating this event at the international level. This year, the theme is 'Tackling Plastic Pollution.'

Along with World Consumer Rights Day observation, CUTS also earmarked this day as the State Level Stakeholder's consultation of its ongoing project ProOrganic in ten districts of Rajasthan. On this occasion, Rajdeep Pareek, Programme Officer, CUTS presented 2020-21 year's activities with key highlights and major outcomes and recommendations.

A S Baloda, Director, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute, reiterated the need for a constant campaign on organic farming. Farmers and consumers should also understand its importance in the longer run. Only joint effort can make this organic movement successful. Shailendra Chouhan, Assistant General Manager, National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD), appreciated CUTS efforts and shared some interesting facts about CUTS' work on Farmer

Producer Organisations supported by NABARD.

Padma Shree Awardee Jagdish Pareek made his presence felt by narrating some important tips on organic farming in his simple style and language. Deepika Saini, Quality Manager, Rajasthan State Organic Certification Agency, provided tips to participating farmers on organic certification.

On occasion, CUTS honoured some organic farmers, who switched from chemical to organic farming through its efforts. Rajdeep Pareek gave a vote of thanks and Nimisha Gaur moderated the event.



Control Board report, it is estimated that India generates approximately 9.46 million tonnes per annum of plastic waste (which amounts to 26,000 tonnes of waste per day). Out of this, approximately 5.6 million tonnes per annum plastic waste is recycled (i.e. 15,600 tonnes of waste per day) and 3.8 million tonnes (40 percent) per annum plastic waste is left uncollected or littered (9,400 tonnes of waste per day) and the rest is dumped at landfill sites. India has pledged to ban all single-use plastics by 2022.

In his introductory remarks, Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director, CUTS International, said that each year, consumer

### Stakeholders' Views on Front-of-Package Labels

George Cheriyan participated in the Stakeholder consultation on Front-of-Package Labels (FoPL) for High Fat, Salt or Sugar at Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on January 20, 2021 and March 17, 2021. Madhu Sudan Sharma attended the meeting on February 12, 2021. Cheriyan and Sharma strongly shared the views on FoPL from a consumer perspective. The finalised inputs on FoPL and response to industry suggestions were submitted to Sobhit Jain, Director, FSSAI, before each meeting. The FSSAI well appreciated the submissions. Cheriyan also met with Arun Singhal, CEO, FSSAI, after the meeting on January 20, 2021.

### Commemorating International Women's Day

International Women's Day was observed, along with an organic fair at KVK Dausa. Around 150 women participated in the event. Dharmendra Chaturvedi and Nimisha Gaur attended the event. Total of five stalls of organic products were displayed during the fair. B L Jat cut off the ribbon in the fair in the capacity of the chief guest.





## Green Action Week: Stakeholders' Consultation

This year's Green Action Week campaign in Rajasthan culminated with the final Stakeholders' Consultation organised on January



08, 2021. Sukhpreet Bansal, Ward Councillor, Ward no. 51 at Jaipur Municipal Corporation Greater, was the chief guest and Ravi Tiwari, Engineer, Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board was the special guest in the event.

George Cheriyan, delivered the opening address. Around 45 participants witnessed the event. In Jaipur, consumers were trained to imbibe the habit of sharing and 100 kitchen gardens were developed in four different communities of Jaipur. A 'Wall of Kindness' was set up in each community where people can put their used and unused household items, such as clothes, crockery items, books etc., to share with other community members.

## Ensuring Renewed Focus of Government on Road Safety in 2021

CUTS, in collaboration with the Centre for Environment and Development (CED), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, organised a webinar on 'Ensuring Renewed Focus of Government of Kerala on Road Safety in 2021: Opportunities and Challenges' on January 12, 2021.

Cheriyan moderated the webinar, whereas K R Jyotilal, Principal Secretary, Transport, Kerala, inaugurated it. Sibbu K Itty, Joint Transport Commissioner, T Elangovan, Former Executive Director, Kerala Road Safety Authority and B.G. Sreedevi, Former Director, National Transportation Planning and Research Centre were speakers. More than 70 participants participated.

CUTS, in collaboration with the Institute of Public Health (IPH), Bengaluru, organised a half-day webinar on 'Ensuring Renewed Focus of Government of Karnataka on Road Safety in 2021: Opportunities and Challenges' on March 03, 2021, on zoom platform.

Cheriyan gave the Introductory remarks. Bhaskar Rao, IPS, ADGP- Police, Railways, Government of Karnataka, J. Gyanendra Kumar, Director, Road Safety Authority, Government of Karnataka, M Narayana, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic East Division, Government of Karnataka and G Gururaj, Director, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bengaluru were the speakers.

## Capacity Building on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

A capacity-building workshop on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) was organised at Jaipur on February 01-02, 2021. Total 23 participants attended the training, including 13 from CUTS and 10 other CSOs from various states. Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay, Director, Participatory Research in Asia, and his colleague Yashvi Sharma facilitated the training programme and delivered various sessions. The training schedule was finalised in consultation with PRIA. Cheriyan highlighted the need for such training programmes in the future.



## Enhancing Road Safety Awareness

CUTS organised a district-level road safety workshop in Bhilwara on January 18, 2021, at the National Road Safety Month from January 18, 2021-February 17, 2021. Madhu Sudan Sharma, Satyapal Singh, Gauhar Mehmood and Gaurav Chaturvedi from CUTS facilitated the sessions in the workshop. The workshop was an official part of the road safety calendar of the district road safety events of the month. In the workshop, district transport officials and representatives, police officials, medical officials, NGO representatives, and around 60 participants participated. The local *dailies* well covered the event.



## Meeting with Lt. Gen. Alok Kler

Lt. Gen. Alok Kler, PVSM, VSM, is General Officer-Commanding in Chief, South Western Command, Indian Army headquartered in Jaipur. George Cheriyan and Amar Deep Singh had a meeting with him on January 11, 2021, to discuss the possibilities of collaboration for promoting cycle-friendly cities and road safety. He appreciated the efforts of CUTS to promote cycling not only as fitness but also as a mode of sustainable commute. He agreed to participate on CUTS platform and also suggested involving other concerned government authorities as well.



- Amar Deep Singh attended a Big Tobacco Tiny Targets: Study released by Voluntary Health Association of India and Consumer Voice on January 12, 2021
- Simi TB attended a Technical Webinar on the 7<sup>th</sup> Overview of trans fat, replacement options for partially hydrogenated vegetable oils and reformulation of packaged foods organised by the FSSAI and Eat Right India Movement on January 14, 2021.
- Simi TB attended “Why Think Tanks Matter In Times of Crisis” organised by Think Tanks & Civil Societies Programme, The Lauder Institute, The University of Pennsylvania, January 28, 2021.
- Amit Babu attended a webinar on the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) Safer Roads/Black Spots Symposium organised by MoRTH on February 03, 2021.
- George Cheriyan, Madhu Sudan Sharma, Satyapal Singh and Amit Babu attended a webinar on Road Safety in Tamil Nadu organised by Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) on February 18, 2021.
- Simi TB attended the National Consultative Roundtable Dialogue on Reporting and Monitoring of SDG 12 organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), through the European Union-funded SWITCH-Asia RPAC on March 02, 2021.
- Deepak Saxena and Amit Babu attended the online event “CSC Bridging the Digital Divide in Rural Areas” conducted by RO Jaipur on March 04, 2021.
- Amar Deep Singh attended a webinar on ‘Development sector: Adapting to the new ecosystem in the COVID-19 era’ organised by UN Global Compact Network India (UNGCI) on March 19, 2021.
- George Cheriyan participated in the webinar on grants programme for India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Bangladesh, BIGRS 2020-2025 hosted by IFRC held on March 09, 2021, and spoke briefly about the CUTS interventions in India under RoSA III project supported by Global Road Safety Programme.
- George Cheriyan, Satyapal Singh and Deepak Saxena attended the webinar on “front-of-pack labeling on packaged foods high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS)” hosted by Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) on March 04, 2021, wherein Cheriyan was one of the key panellists.
- George Cheriyan attended as a speaker in the webinar on “Commemorating World Consumer Rights Day 2021: Antibiotic Resistance and Consumers” organised by ReAct Asia-Pacific on March 15, 2021.
- George Cheriyan participated in the video chat “Discussion on Facebook Policy Initiative - HFSS Products” organised by Facebook’s Content Policy team on March 26, 2021.
- Satyapal Singh attended a Global Webinar Series on Communications on best practices for hosting journalism workshops, hosted by Global Health Advocacy Incubator on March 30, 2021.
- Deepak Saxena, Dharmendra Chaturvedi and Amit Babu attended an online Consumer Outreach Programme to create awareness among Telecom Consumers and Stakeholders organised by different Regional Offices.



CART IN MEDIA

The collage features several key articles and reports:

- Kisanoon ko Jeevik Kheti ke bare mein doo jnanakari**: A report on a knowledge sharing event for farmers.
- Prashiksha aur Amrusheerakam bhraman pur gaad 12 tahsil ke 50 kisaan**: A report on a training and awareness campaign for 50 farmers across 12 districts.
- Rajasthan: Green Action Campaign organised by CUTS concluded**: A report on the successful completion of a campaign in Rajasthan.
- It is very unlikely that India will achieve any of the targets of SDG12 - CUTS study**: A study report on the progress of India towards SDG 12 targets.
- Pragatishil Kisaan Kaitan Babu Kha Sammanit**: A report on the awarding of a title to a farmer for his contribution to sustainable agriculture.
- Jeevik Kheti ko badhawa देने पर bal**: A report on the impact of organic farming on farmers' income.