

DENR urges companies to register EPR programs for plastic packaging waste



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is calling on enterprises to register their respective extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs following the issuance of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 11898 or the EPR Act of 2022.

The call is pursuant to a provision in the EPR Act mandating large businesses to set up their EPR programs for plastic packaging within six months after the effectivity of the law.

Specifically, the private sector is expected to submit their registration as an obliged enterprise, as a collective, or as a producer responsibility organization, in compliance with the DENR Administrative Order No. 2023-02 signed by DENR Secretary Antonia Loyzaga, which serves as the EPR's IRR issued on January 24, 2023.

RA 11898, which amended RA 9003 and took effect on August 13, 2022, places responsibility for the entire life cycle of plastic waste on its producers through the development and implementation of its EPR programs that focus on waste reduction, recovery, and diversion.

Businesses that fail to register their EPR program will be fined according to the law.

While other policy instruments target a single point in the value chain, EPR seeks to integrate signals related to the environmental characteristics of the products and production processes throughout the product chain.

The EPR tasks obliged enterprises to develop and implement a program to effectively collect plastic packaging in the country.

The implementation of the EPR Act is seen to steer the Philippines to gradually develop and transition to a circular economy as it helps address the growth of the plastic industry and the mismanagement of plastic waste.

The celebration of Zero Waste Month and 22nd anniversary of the signing of RA 9003 is themed “Stepping Up Solid Waste Management through Efficient Extended Producers’ Responsibility.”

The first day of the event on February 9 gathered around 400 stakeholders in the private and public sectors, non-government organizations, and development partners, sharing their initiatives and best practices and learning to support the EPR approach.

Among the partners present at the event were the Plastic Credit Exchange, Basic Environmental Systems & Technologies Inc., Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines, Inc., PETValue Philippines Corporation and the Coalition of Solid Waste Management Providers, Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability (PARMS), Japan Embassy, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Development Programme and Save Philippine Seas.

The celebration also served as a venue to start future engagement and collaboration with various organizations to enhance their respective EPR programs and to strengthen awareness of the law.

National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) Vice Chairman and PARMS founding president Crispian Lao also led the ceremonial commitment to EPR compliance by the industry sector and best practices towards efficient EPR among private organizations.

On February 10, 2023, the event showcased private sector recycling initiatives, actions on the localization of the National Plan of Action on Marine Litter by Local Government Units, and Best Practices in solid waste management by barangays. ###