

Press Release

Standardization, important for addressing the challenge of emerging contaminants : CPCB

Mr A Sudhakar, Director, Central Pollution Control Board, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Government of India, stressed on the need for standardization in the sampling process for emerging contaminants and setting up of more laboratories for rigorous analysis of these contaminants and their pathways into humans and environment. He was speaking at the CII Conference on Water Quality “Emerging Contaminants : Need for Action” organized today over virtual platform. According to him, given the high capital cost involved, a collaborative approach will be required for accelerating the pace of research on emerging contaminants. Collaboration between State and Centre led research institutes in generating & sharing database in developing standards for these contaminants also assumes importance. He also underlined on the need for a national action plan for dealing with the issue of emerging contaminants.

Ms Shubhanjali Umrao, Member Secretary, Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS), Government of India, emphasized on the essence of standardization to address the issue of emerging contaminants in water & wastewater. She stressed on the need for greater involvement of industry in developing Indian Standards on water quality parameters. Some proposals in pipeline include standardization of field test kits for surveillance of drinking water under Jal Jeevan Mission, determination of polyelectrolyte and free ammonia in water & wastewater for water quality management in the country. She also welcomed industry to share proposals on new work items to BIS.

Prof Shane Allen Snyder, Executive Director, Nanyang Technological University Singapore briefed on the various research work delineating the impacts of the emerging water pollutants on human and aquatic life. Briefing on the various types of contaminants, he pointed out that a mixture of chemicals is far more dangerous than the standalone chemicals. However, he expressed confidence on the current tools to characterize complex contaminant mixtures. According to him comprehensive screening; advanced analytical instrument for targeting & non-targeting analyses; and bio analytical method for workflow of toxicity assessment & pathogen detection are available for detection of many of the emerging contaminants.

Dr Ramesh Datla, Conference Chairman and Chairman & Managing Director Elico Ltd stressed on the need for rigorous evaluation and monitoring of emerging pollutants in all analytical methods. Lauding the Government 's thrust on establishment of drinking water quality testing laboratories at the state, district, block and sub-divisional levels besides mobile laboratories so as to ensure clean drinking water to every household under Jal Jeevan Mission, Dr Datla stressed on the need to focus on imparting training to personnel on the water quality treatment procedures and parameters.

Mr Rajesh Sharma, Chairman CII – National Committee on Water and Chairman & Managing Director Ion Exchange (India) Ltd while highlighting on the need for more research and innovation in the field on monitoring and analysis for the presence of emerging contaminants, stressed that going forward, it will be important to replace these contaminants with green or biodegradable chemicals.

Dr Kapil Kumar Narula, CEO & Executive Director, CII Water Institute, provided a brief on the four critical elements of managing emerging contaminants – variety, volume, velocity and veracity stressed on a need to evolve a collaborative framework to strengthen scientific knowledge and understanding of the characteristics and mechanisms of contamination and mitigating their potential risks by emerging contaminants.