HEALTHY NEWS

Canada Declares Plastics Toxic & Opens the Way for Its Restrictions

By bestfolkmedicine · 12/08/2021 · 3 min read



Under the primary environmental law of Canada, plastic is now considered toxic. Under the CEPA, this law was announced by Trudeau's government recently.

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This decision came after months of lobbying by the $28 billion plastics industry of Canada and it opened the way for a possible ban on single-use plastics.

There was a continuous push by food and plastic industries to not link plastics with the word "toxic" or anything similar to it. But, the government stayed firm and established the ground for other measures

necessary to lower plastic waste.

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Plastics Shouldn't Have a Place in Our Lives

According to Ashley Wallis, a plastics campaigner for Oceana Canada, this declaration is a key for unlocking possibilities that will be essential in the fight against the plastic pollution crisis.

Unfortunately, approximately 3.3 million metric tons of plastics are thrown away in Canada every year and less than 10 percent of it is recycled. The rest of it goes into incineration, landfills, lakes, oceans, and rivers, found a study from 2019 that was commissioned by the ECCC.

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The industry is also poised to drive oil and gas extraction, with some petrochemical companies expecting it to account for around 90 percent of their growth in their future, said a 2020 report done by the Carbon Tracker Initiative.

There's Ample Evidence that Plastic Injures Our Planet

According to a 2020 government science assessment, plastic is damaging the environment, choking seabirds and other wildlife.

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These findings are the basis of the decision that the Canadian government made since substances can be considered toxic under CEPA if they harm biodiversity, the environment, and human health.

In 2020, ECCC released a proposal that deals with the issue.

Hence, under these proposed rules, Canada will prohibit six single-use plastics such as six-pack rings and straws. This will further motivate companies to opt for recycled plastics and to make plastic producers pay for the recycling.

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None of this Is Possible If Plastic Hadn't Been Declared Toxic

None of these measures would've happened unless plastics is on the list of toxic substances under CEPA's Schedule 1.

When something's added to this list, Wallis explained, the government is required to act and address the problem. It's possible that they choose not to implement regulations and only go with the voluntary agreements, but Wallis believes they're firm on moving ahead with the ban.

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Moira Kelly, the press secretary to the Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson, said that adding the plastic items to the Schedule 1 is helpful so that they can proceed with their plan to keep plastics in the economy and out of the planet.

Canada's Plastic Industry Opposes this Ban

The Chemistry Industry Association of Canada which is also the largest plastic lobby group in Canada expressed their worries about this approach.

They've been loud about the listing of plastics as toxic. They've spent months lobbying the government to avert this decision and instead promoted an industry-led approach that would focus on recycling.

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However, Max Liboiron, an expert on plastic waste and a professor at Memorial University, claims that plastic recycling was created by the plastics industry back in the 70s to mitigate the environment-related worries without actually reducing plastic consumption.

He added it's never worked and despite decades of effort, only nine percent of the plastic waste in Canada is recycled, said the 2019 ECCC study.

Sources:

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