

THE
HIMALAYAN
CLEANUP 2024
May 25 - June 5
OUR MOUNTAINS DESERVE BETTER



THE HIMALAYAN CLEANUP 2024



CONTENT

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE / ZERO WASTE HIMALAYA, AUGUST 2024

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ZERO WASTE HIMALAYA

TADONG, GANGTOK, SIKKIM
LADENLA ROAD, DARJEELING

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REFLECT SWITCH DEMAND

TENZING
ROCK
HMI

Maggi

2-Minute
noodles

TRULY
GOOD

Maggi

2-Minute
noodles

Musali



BACKGROUND

The Himalayan Cleanup (THC), the annual campaign organised by Zero Waste Himalaya (ZWH) and Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) has become one of the biggest movements against plastic pollution in the Indian Himalayan Region. It was conceived in 2018 to highlight the waste crisis in the Himalaya, through a process of voluntary cleanups of key sites followed by a waste and brand audit of the waste collected. This was in response to the global call by India for World Environment Day, 2018 with #BeatPlasticPollution as the theme.

The waste and brand results of the THC2018 were presented at the World Environment Day event of MoEFCC, New Delhi. THC has continued and grown since its inception, influencing individuals and communities to go zero waste and informing institutions and companies to address the waste crisis with a systemic lens.

THC has become an important part of IMI and ZWH work in highlighting the region specific challenges of waste management. The waste crisis in the Himalaya has been exacerbated with the rapidly changing production and consumption patterns along with increase in tourist footfalls. Even the most remote and far-fetched villages in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) do not remain immune to plastic pollution. Solid waste is predominantly dumped unsegregated in landfills, down the hills, streams and rivers and in many instances burnt, contributing to our ill-health. Collection of waste and linkages to recycling units is limited, thus most plastic ends up in the environment polluting the planet.

The Himalayan Cleanup is made possible through the stewardship of many organisations and individuals with their deep passion, commitment and volunteerism.



OBJECTIVES

THC recognises that cleanups are never a complete solution to the waste crisis, but it is surely a good place to start on a sustainable zero waste pathway at an individual as well as at an institutional level. The Himalayan Cleanup is a rallying point for voices from the mountains to be heard as well as align with ongoing national and global movements on waste.

THC is grounded on the principle that waste results from design flaws, and that producers taking responsibility for their products is extremely crucial to resolve the plastic waste crisis. So more than just cleaning up, THC aims at gathering granular data to demand for better systems, products and policies for the mountains. Thus, waste and brand audit with global protocols is integral to THC.

THC is equally an exercise to look inwards, reflect on our own lifestyles and make sustainable choices. THC is a call to action to everyone to rise up against plastic pollution and make individual and institutional lifestyle changes while demanding for systemic changes too.

THC contributes to the much needed change in the waste narrative, challenges the notions of a clean, pristine Himalaya and advocates for systemic changes that goes beyond the bin, broom, burning and rolling down the hill.

THC THEME

'Reflect, Switch and Demand' is the theme for THC conducted between 26 to 30 May each year that motivates participants to -

 **Reflect**
on their waste footprint,

 **Switch**
to adopt sustainable lifestyles to reduce their waste and

 **Demand**
raise their collective voices against plastic pollution.

THC is undertaken with stewards who select key sites and mobilises volunteers for a cleanup and then undertakes a waste and brand audit using global protocols.

THC THROUGH THE YEARS

THC has been undertaken across the mountain states of India with the participation of individuals, community-based, faith-based, civil society organisations, educational institutions, Government Departments and other stakeholders. These stewards choose a key site based on socio-ecological importance and undertake a cleanup along with a waste and brand audit with the active engagement of volunteers. THC has cleaned up important protected areas, sacred sites, tourism sites, wetlands, parks, villages, highways and school/college neighbourhoods

2018

15000+ Volunteers
250+ sites
200+ organisations

2019

5000+ Volunteers
100+ sites
70+ organisations

2020

PANDEMIC
35+ Peer Educators trained

2021

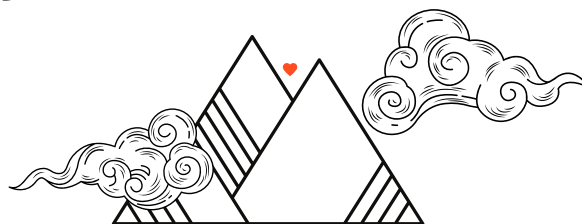
350+ Volunteers
HOME BASED AUDITS

2022

5000+ Volunteers
150+ sites
49 organisations / 100+
Schools/Colleges

2023

11000+ Volunteers
350+ sites
300+ organisations / institutions



2024

15000+ Volunteers
450+ sites
350+ organisations / institutions

THE HIMALAYAN CLEANUP PROCESS

The Himalayan Cleanup is conducted between May 26 - 30 with a comprehensive waste and brand audit of the waste cleaned up using a uniform global protocol adapted to the Himalaya. This year, 2024, the dates were extended up to June 5, World Environment Day, so as to enable groups to also make it part of their WED activities.



The call for THC is given online through social media platforms. Partners and organisations are also contacted by volunteers to participate and collaborations are sought with Government agencies.

Lead organisations select a site for cleanup that is important (A popular tourist spot, a famous landmark, key social space, ecological sensitive areas, sacred sites, campuses), and register their cleanups using an online form.

THC team organises online training on the waste and brand audit protocols for all the registered participants.



Volunteers clean up, segregate and audit the various plastic types and other non biodegradables. Every piece is counted and weighed.



The data is noted down and entered using mobile-based app which collates all the data.



The collated data is analysed. The plastic waste is further audited brand wise, which quantifies and names the companies who are polluting the mountains and calls on them to take responsibility for their waste.

THC is a zero waste event where no plastic waste is generated by the participants. Local unpackaged food is promoted, no plastic bottled water is used and all materials used are biodegradable or reusable. THC is taken forward in coordination with the official waste management departments as well as with informal waste workers so that post audit, the waste is taken for recycling and ultimate discards to the designated landfills.

CLEANUP DETAILS ACROSS THE STATES

The Himalayan Cleanup 2024 had the participation of over 15000 volunteers across 9 mountain states, UTs and districts who cleaned up over 350 sites. The waste and brand audit data comes from 151 sites cleaned up across 9 mountain states.

Sikkim had the highest numbers of cleanup sites as THC was officially taken up by the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), Rural Development Department. The Education Department also issued a notification for all schools to participate in the campaign, which brought in many more participants. Thus, the highest number of cleanups and waste collected was from Sikkim. Zero Waste Himalaya, WWF India, Green Circle and Friends of Chongey also undertook cleanups in various locations. Important sites that were cleaned up were Ridge Park, Hurlhurey Dara in Gangtok, Seven Sister's Waterfall, Chongay area, etc. within the premises and neighbourhood of many schools.



Darjeeling and Kalimpong, West Bengal had the second highest amount of waste cleaned up with many schools, colleges and organisations taking part in THC2024. Main organisations taking the lead were DLR Prerna, WWF India, Biruwa, Darjeeling Himalaya Initiative, Trinity Yuwa Jhund, and Anugyalaya DDSSS . Important sites that were cleaned up were Mahakal Dara, Chowrasta and Mall Road, Tiger Hill, Jorepokhari, Tenzing Rock, Bokar Monastery and Changey Falls in Kalimpong.



In Ladakh, Little Green World championed the campaign roping in schools and the Army to conduct the cleanup at various locations in Leh and Kargil. The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council also organised several cleanups, however these were done without any waste and brand audits.



Gadiara Panchayat Mahila Mandal and Palampur Welfare & Environment Protection Forum cleaned up a kilometer of an irrigation channel in Gadiara, Himachal of which 25% plastic producers was unidentifiable.





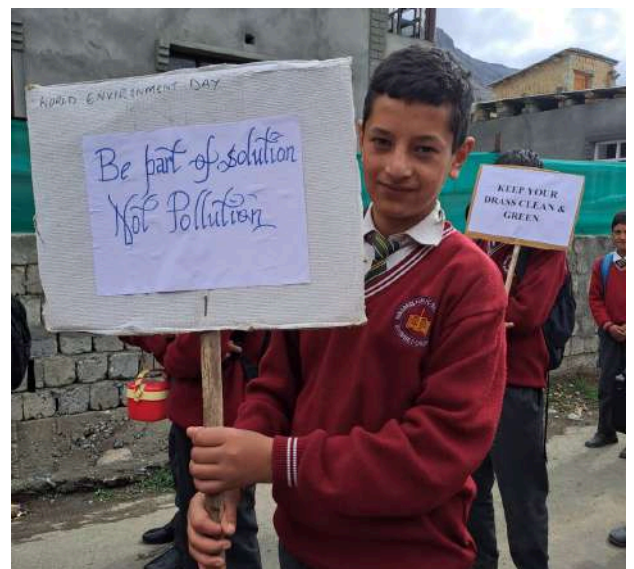
In Arunachal Pradesh, North East Waste Collective conducted a massive cleanup in their area of work in Sangti Valley where they had collaboration with the community as well as the Indo Tibetan Border Police. This cleanup had over 130 volunteers participating from young children to village seniors and the Tibetan Border Police.

Amyaa, another NGO from Arunachal Pradesh conducted their cleanup in Roing with their members and volunteers.

The Chizami Student's Union undertook THC in Chizami, Nagaland. A set of dedicated volunteers also championed the cleanup by enrolling schools and clubs. The sites that were cleaned up were the Nagaland Zoological Park, North East Institute of Social Sciences and Research.

India Hikes partnered for THC in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and conducted the cleanup in sites through their volunteer groups in Shimla. Waste Warriors also partnered for the cleanup in Uttarakhand and cleaned up sites in Dehradun. In Uttarakhand, many Local Bodies also officially participated in cleaning up, however waste and brand audits were not conducted.

ENFOGAL took the lead in Ukhrul, Manipur while the Mizoram Sustainable Development Forum (MSDF) organised the cleanup with college students. Youth for Integration Trust supported by the State Pollution Control Board also participated in the campaign.





SONGTSEN



Waste and brand audit

The waste picked up from the Himalayan Cleanup sites, is brought to an open space for further sorting and segregation. All volunteers are involved to segregate the waste as per the material type for the waste audit. All plastic waste is categorised into 7 types based on the resin code. Each item is also recorded according to the product type (food packaging, packing material, smoking, personal care, household products, etc.) The waste items under each category are counted and recorded and entered into the data sheet.

The objective of undertaking the waste audit is to inform what are the top trashed items. It also helps in identifying the items that could be reduced or banned altogether such as single use plastic items and junk food that were mostly eaten by school students. It also enables recovery for recycling such as PET bottles, metal and glass items, cardboard, etc.

Waste audit is followed by a brand audit by segregating the plastic trash according to the brands and counting the pieces to name the brands and companies in THC. The brand audit is done with the objective of compiling data on producers which enables advocating corporate responsibility of their waste and demand in implementing Extended Producer Responsibility for their products and packaging.

Waste disposal

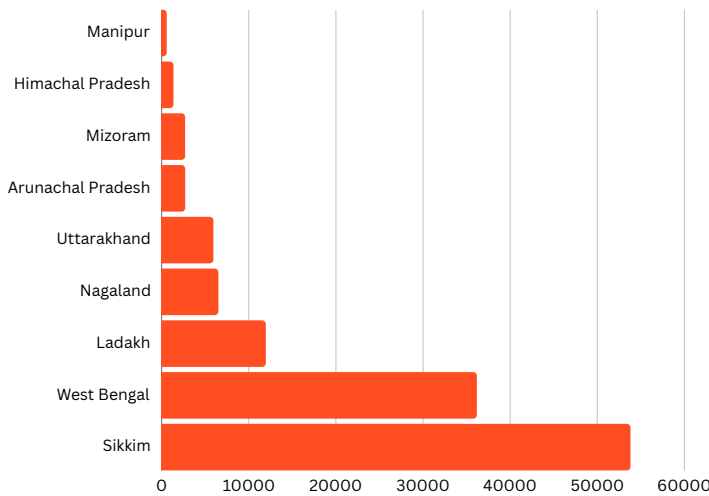
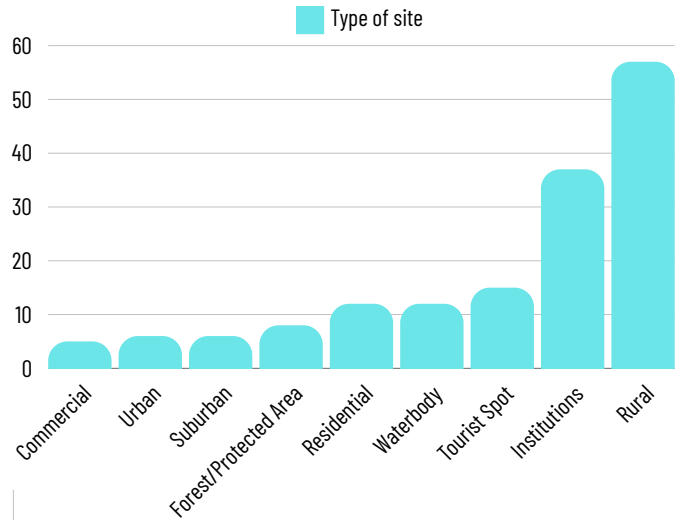
Recyclables such as PET, glass, metals, cardboard items, etc. are directly given to kabadiwalas and waste aggregators. The ultimate discards are packed and handed over to official waste managers or even sent back to the companies.



Appy - 40	Paper cups- 59
Frooti - 55	Plastic spoons - 44
Sting- 70	Aquafina - 30
Bingo - 40	kinleys - 45
Centerfresh - 70	
dairy milk - 10	
waiwai- 103	
Maggi - 83	

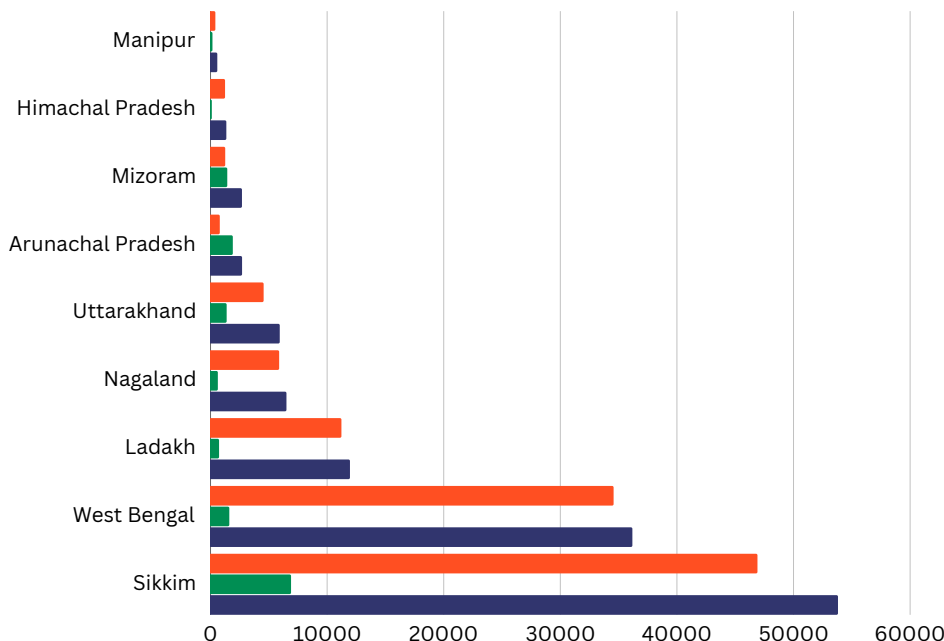
THC2024 FINDINGS

The Himalayan Cleanup focused on cleaning up diverse types of sites. With many Gram Panchayats taking part, most of the sites were in rural areas, followed by institutional premises being cleaned up by schools. Tourist spots were the third category of sites cleaned up along with waterbodies and rivers. Protected area cleanups were also conducted as part of THC 2024.



Among the 9 states, Sikkim collected the most items of trash. A total of 53814 (44% of total) pieces of litter were audited across 86 sites. This was followed by Darjeeling with 36180 items audited across 37 sites.

The cleanup in Ladakh across 18 sites picked up and audited 11958 pieces of trash.



Across all sites, the plastic waste picked up was higher than the non plastic waste.

Waste picked up per state

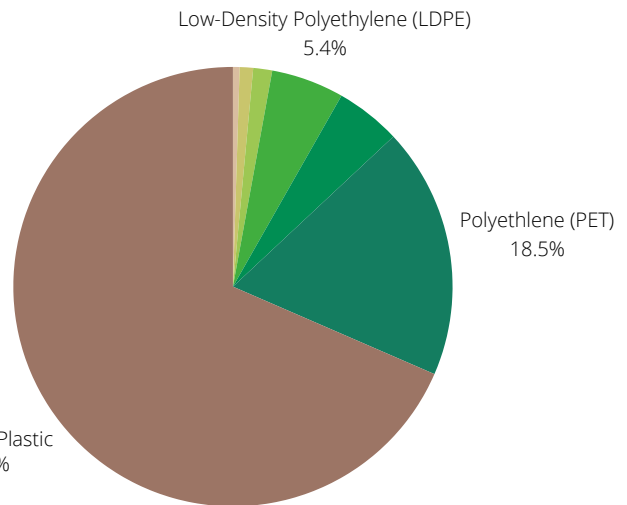
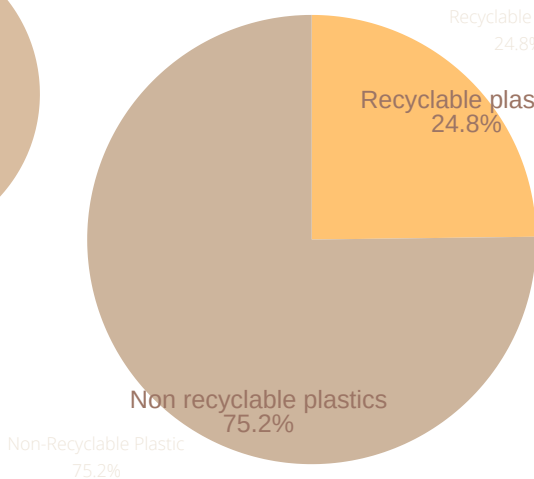
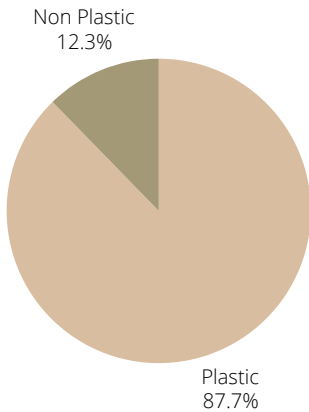


PLASTIC WASTE- TYPES AND NUMBERS

**Total waste
picked up**



Total plastics



2022



2023



2024



**NON RECYCLABLE
PLASTIC TREND**

Types of plastic

Over 75 % of plastic waste collected was non recyclable with only around 25 % being recyclable plastics (PET 18.5% / HDPE 1% / LDPE 5.4%). Mountains have several limitations for collection, transport and linkages thus even recyclables such as PET bottles end up littering the mountains.

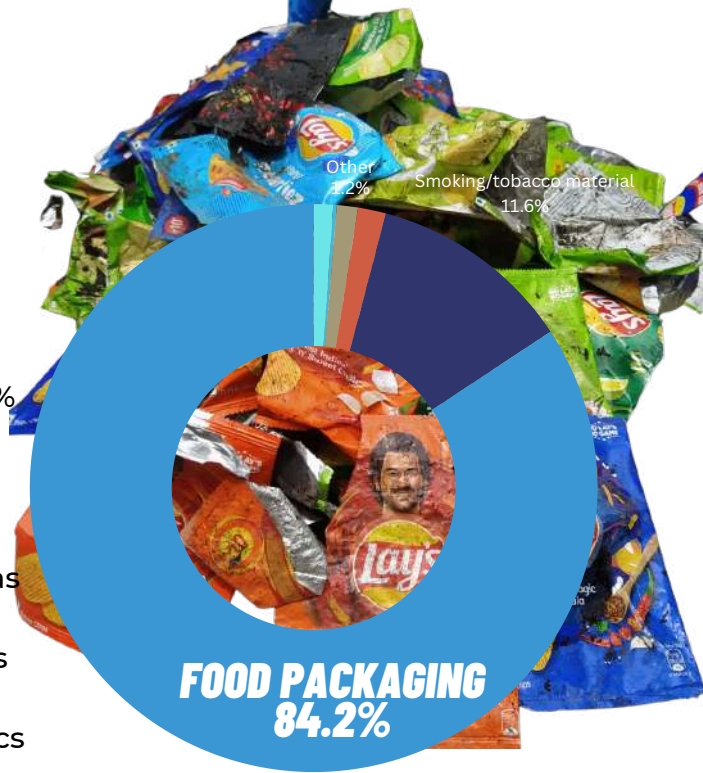
A multilayered dilemma

The plastic waste was categorised products wise into 6 categories - Food packaging, household products, personal care products, smoking material, and packing material. and others. 84.2 % was found to be food packaging.

Within food packaging, 71% of plastic waste was non-recyclable. THC2022 and 2023 respectively showed 72% and 77.4 % of all plastic collected was non-recyclable, mainly, multilayered plastics and tetrapak. This is indicative of what the mountains are facing, flooded with non- recyclable plastics, that have no solutions. These problematic plastics are not collected by any waste pickers and scrap dealers and are found littering mountain landscapes, choking waterways and filling up landfill sites. Thus, there is a need to look at solutions beyond the recycling lens.

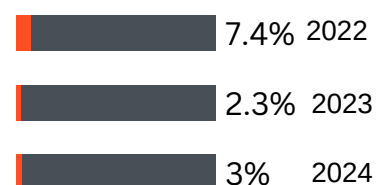
The scourge for waste managers, these kinds of plastics (MLPs) are the main reason why mountains are burdened with a huge waste crisis. The mountains are already struggling with collecting and linking recyclable plastics for processing and to top it all, these multilayered plastics add more challenges as they have no solutions and value for collection.

Extended producer responsibility rules calls on plastic producers to take responsibility of their plastic waste but the rules have negligible implementation in the IHR thus MLP waste still remains in the Himalayan environment. There is a strong push for MLPs to be linked to nearest cement kilns to be burnt as 'refuse derived fuel', but for many mountain states there are challenges of collection, aggregation and transportation cost.



SUPs -Banned but not gone

India promulgated the single use plastic ban from 1 July 2022, and THC 2024 found that banned items made 3% of plastic waste collected which shows gaps in the implementation of the ban. There is however a decline in the single use plastics that was collected when compared to 2022 but at the same time it also shows that the ban has not been completely implemented. The list of banned items had been created using the utility index and environmental impact and the 19 listed banned items had least utility and very high environmental impact thus should have been easy to phase out. It is critical to note that the SUP ban addresses a miniscule amount of plastic produced and allows big players and companies scott free of their plastic production.



WASTE AND FOOD INTERSECT

Plastic waste has a clear intersect with packaged food and beverage that are consumed, and this emerges clearly from the THC 2024 data. Food packaging made up for an alarming 84.2% of all plastic waste collected. This is a disturbing trend as packaged food and drinks made up for 82% (2022) and 81.8% (2023) of all plastic waste collected.

There has been a steady increase every year in food packaging that are collected in THC, and is an indication of the junk and processed food culture that is overtaking the diverse local food cultures of the Himalaya. WaiWai, Lays, Uncle Chips, Bingo, Kurkure, Center Fresh/Fruit, Maggi are the top food brands of THC2024 and span edibles that are instant noodles, chips, chewing gum, etc. In the light of multiple recent studies that highlight the clear link between processed foods that are high in salt, sugar and fat to non-communicable diseases, this increased consumption of ultra-processed and hyper packaged food is alarming for mountain communities wellbeing.



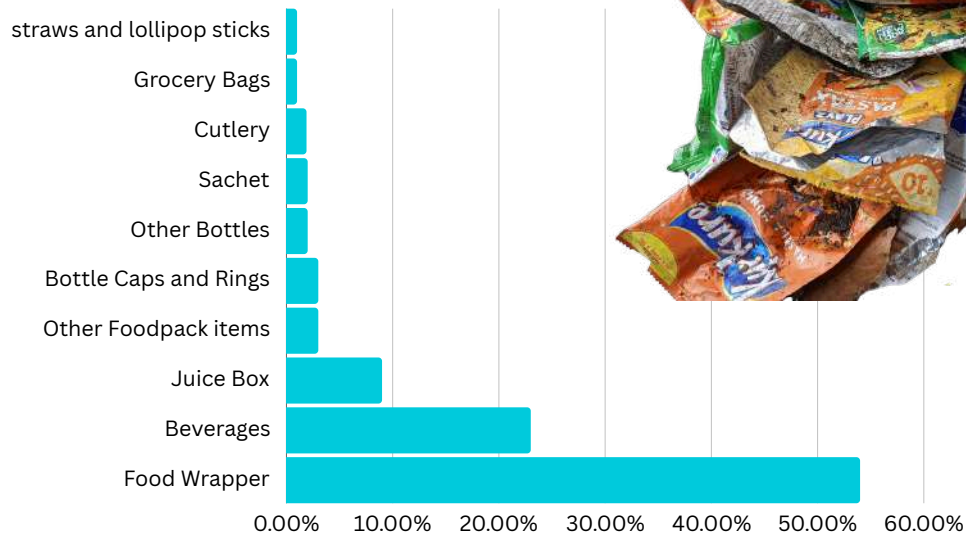
Even before the packaging is trashed, it is already a threat to the well-being of communities. How we eat and what we eat has become one of the biggest contributions to the waste pile. 77% (2024) of food packaging was non-recyclable multilayered plastics, showing how a change in eating habits is contributing to the waste crisis.



Recyclable plastic
29%

NON RECYCLABLE
71%

Recyclable plastic
29%



Within food packaging, MLP food wrappers were collected in the highest numbers (47993) followed by PET beverage and water bottles (22574) and then tetrapak juice boxes (7594). Other food pack items (mainly tetrapak milk cartons), bottle caps, sachets (toffee wrappers), cutlery items, bags, and straws and lollipop sticks were also counted in decreasing numbers.

THE SUGAR TRAP

Sting, Appy, Frooti, Cocacola, Pepsi, Bislari, Amul are the top beverages of THC2024. Some packaging were distressingly small as 65 ml. Ironically, many had compostable straws in plastic packaging. High amount of sugar in all these drinks is definitely a contributor to ill-health and one has not factored in toxic chemicals leaching and micro-plastics.



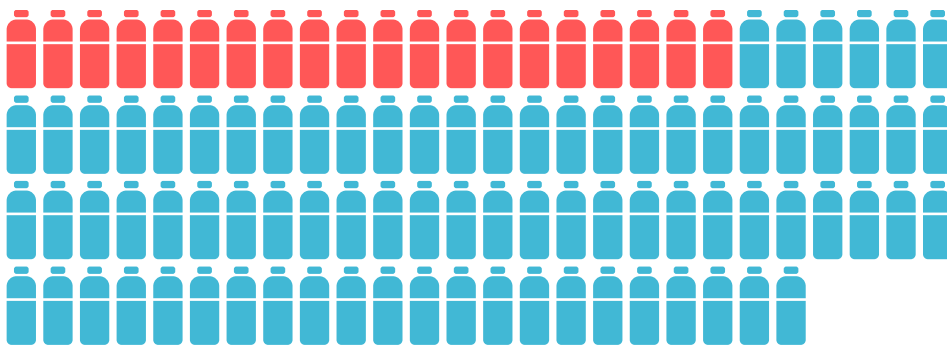
Though companies now have to directly label the total sugar per package which was not the case earlier, there is still limited awareness on the sugar content of these drinks. They are also masked behind misleading labels that give the impression of these drinks being healthy, nutritious and the real deal.

Information on sugar is still not a front of label warning yet, which would be more appropriate to the levels of sugar these drinks contain irrespective of the various green and healthy sounding names.

There also seemed to be regional preferences of these drinks like Mountain Dew in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh and Sting in Sikkim and Darjeeling Himalaya.



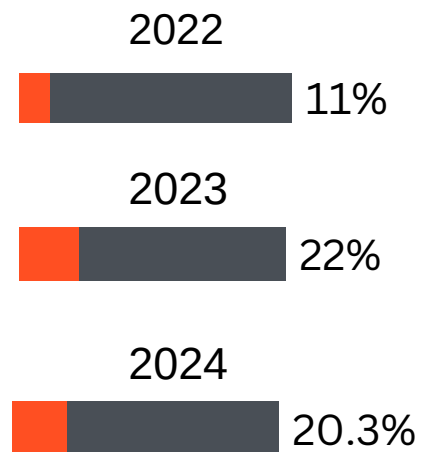
IT STINGS!



Pepsico’s Sting, an energy drink with caffeine and synthetic sugar, is THC 2024's 3rd most polluting brand. 20.3% of all beverage bottles was empty Sting bottles. This high number has been consistent for the last 3 years, especially for Sikkim and Darjeeling.

THC 2023 data has recorded a huge surge in ‘Sting’ from 11% in 2022 to 20.3% this year. There are other variants of energy drinks, but Sting reigns supreme. It is particularly frightening, given the warning label on Sting is “*not recommended for children, pregnant or lactating mothers*”. Most often it is children who are drinking Sting as it is sold to them despite the label.

The jump shows how popular Sting has become and throws additional challenges to the well-being of communities and children besides the waste issue.



A large section of THC 2023 was taken forward by educational institutions within the neighbourhood of their campus which shows that students, including primary school students, in the IHR are consuming plastic packaged food and drinks , including Sting, on a regular basis.

The example of ‘Sting’, shows the need for stronger front of label packaging policies that warn consumers of the dangers of these products as well as regulating their active portrayal in the media with targeted advertisements without sufficient warning of its content.

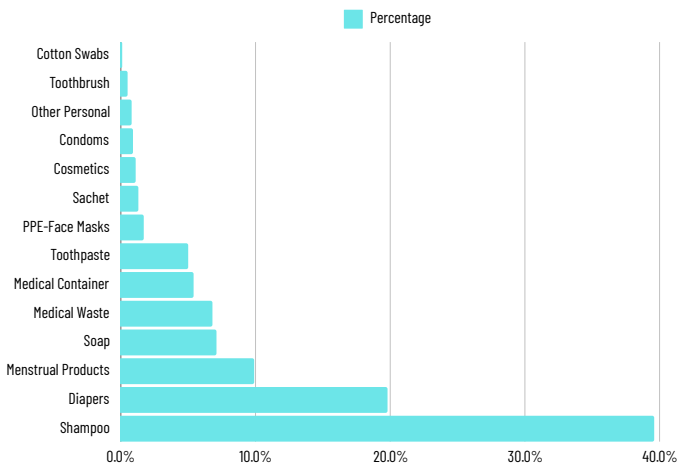
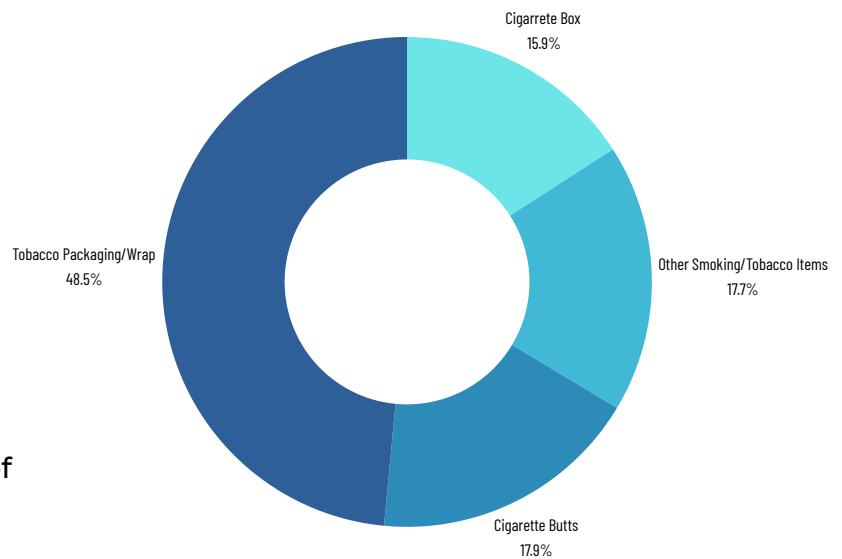
It also calls on polices that limit access to these problematic products especially to children.

SMOKING MATERIALS

After food packaging, smoking materials were the second highest collected waste items. Cigarette packets and butts, gutka, tobacco packets, etc, were categorised under this.

Tobacco packaging or wrap was collected in the highest numbers followed by cigarette butts, and other tobacco items. Cigarette boxes were also collected which consisted 15.9 % of the total items.

This shows that tobacco impacts go beyond human health.



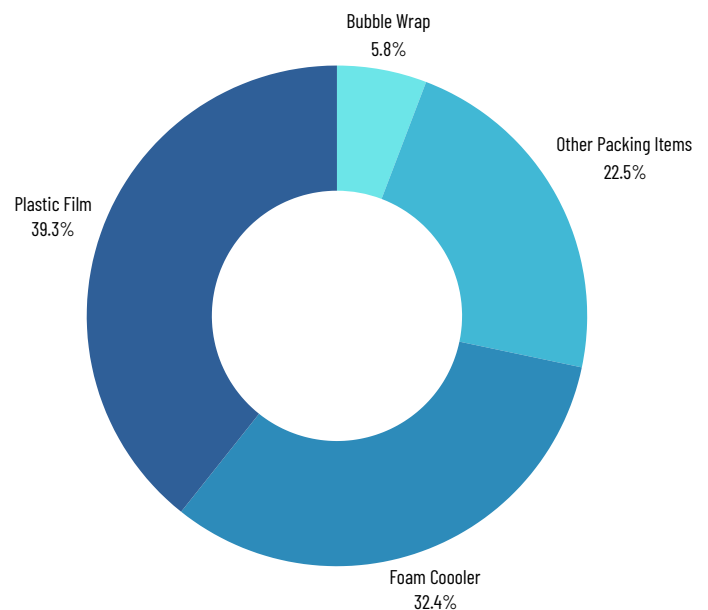
PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

In personal care products, shampoo sachets were found in the largest numbers. Shampoo sachets are tiny in size, invariably MLP and found near waterbodies.

A good number of sanitary napkins and diapers were also found in the littered items and present a challenge of collection as they contain blood, urine and faeces. They are also MLP.

PACKING MATERIAL

Packaging materials mainly from online shopping purchasing were also collected in the trash. Plastic film was found in the highest percentage followed by foam coolers, other packing items and bubble wrap.



TOP POLLUTERS

For far too long, the burden of cleaning up has been seen as a responsibility of consumers and waste managers alone, while the actual producers of waste - the companies have shirked theirs. It is now imperative that companies take responsibility for their waste and design out waste at a systemic level as well as make arrangements for managing it immediately.

The Himalayan Cleanup has been naming the companies that are the top polluters of the mountains since 2018. This is the narrative shift required to redress the Himalayan waste crisis whereby the plastic tap is closed.

The promulgation of the Extended Producer Responsibility, 2022 (EPR) under the Plastic Waste Management Rules brought about an important narrative shift of including producers of waste and addressing waste beyond an end of the pipeline management issue only. But, for mountain landscapes, there are gaps that do not acknowledge the importance, fragility and challenges of the mountain socio-ecological systems; reducing its implementation to a negligible amount in the IHR.

The lack of appropriate resources and targets allocated for the mountains has meant that even in mountain spaces where EPR is being implemented, it has not been effective and successful. Thus, at an intermediary level, naming the top polluters of the Himalaya demands of them to take forward the EPR responsibility with specific focus in the IHR.



TOP POLLUTERS OF THE HIMALAYA 2024

THC 2024 BRAND AUDIT RESULTS



10

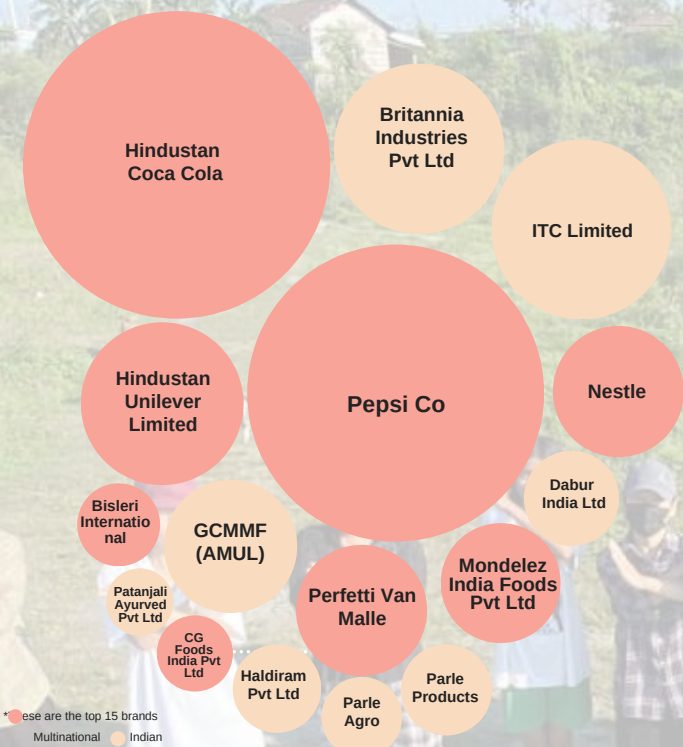
R R

- 11. Surya Nepal
- 12. Trimurti Fragrances
- 13. Parle Products
- 14. Dharampal Satyapal (DS) Group
- 15. Britannia
- 16. Hindustan Unilever Ltd.
- 17. Haldiram's Snacks Pvt. Ltd.
- 18. Dabur India Ltd
- 19. Som pan Products Pvt. Ltd.
- 20. Asian Thai Foods India Pvt. Ltd

BRAND WISE
DISTRIBUTION
OF TRASH
COLLECTED



Top Polluters of the Himalaya 2018 The Himalayan Cleanup, 2018 Brand Audit Results



Top Polluters of the Himalaya 2021 The Himalayan Cleanup, 2021 Brand Audit Results



5121
Pieces audited

1068
Unbranded plastic

- Hindustan Unilever
- Nestle India
- PepsiCo India
- Asian Thai Foods
- CG Feeds
- Hindustan Coca Cola
- Parle Products
- ITC
- Parle Agro

Top Polluters of the Himalaya 2022 The Himalayan Cleanup, 2022 Brand Audit Results



Top Polluters of the Himalaya 2023 The Himalayan Cleanup, 2023 Brand Audit Results





REFLECT

ON YOUR WASTE FOOTPRINT

WHAT ARE YOU BUYING?
WHAT ARE YOU EATING?
WHY ARE YOU BUYING?
HOW MUCH ARE YOU BUYING?

WHAT ARE YOU TRASHING?
WHERE IS YOUR WASTE GOING?



NOT CREATING WASTE IS THE BEST WAY TO
MANAGE IT. THIS IS THE ZERO WASTE WAY,
AND EVERYONE CAN DO IT.

AS INDIVIDUALS WE CAN ALL REFLECT
ON OUR LIFESTYLE CHOICES

AS SCHOOLS & EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WE
CAN REFLECT ON OUR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT
AND POLICIES THAT PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY
EDUCATION & AWARENESS.

AS GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND INSTITUTIONS,
WE CAN LEAD THE WAY BY SETTING EXAMPLES
FOR CORRECT IMPLEMENTATION OF RULES.

AS COMMUNITY LEADERS WE CAN REFLECT ON
OUR ACTIONS THAT INFLUENCE COMMUNITY
BEHAVIOUR AND ACTION



“There is no such thing as away,
whenever we throw anything away,
it has to go somewhere”

• Annie Leonard



SWITCH

TO SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly.

• -Anne Marie Bonneau-



NO TO SINGLE USE PLASTICS

- USE AND PROMOTE RESUABLES, REFILLABLES AND REPAIRABLE
- GARBAGE BAGS, PLASTIC SACHETS ARE ALL SINGLE USE AND CAN EASILY BE AVOIDED.



ZERO WASTE EVENTS

- PLASTIC FREE DECORATIONS & GIFTS
- NO BALLOONS
- REUSABLE CUTLERY ITEMS ONLY



RETHINK FOOD CHOICES

- BUY, PROMOTE AND EAT LOCAL
- REDUCE JUNK PROCESSED FOOD
- BUY UNPACKAGED AND IN BULK
- COMPOST & GROW FOOD



SUSTAINABLE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

- CHOOSE REUSABLE PERIOD PRODUCTS



MINDFUL CONSUMPTION

- BUY LESS!
- BUY ONLY WHAT YOU NEED



THE BUYERARCHY
of NEEDS
(with apologies to
Maslow)

DEMAND

EFFECTIVE EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOUNTAINS

- Amend EPR framework bringing in mountain specificities and targets
- Recognise mountain challenges - higher costs, difficulty in collection, remoteness, socio-ecological fragility
- Capacity building of Local Bodies on EPR
- Pilot EPR programmes for mountains
- Phase out multilayered plastics for the mountains
- Designing out waste to be made integral to EPR

RECLAIM FOOD SPACES AND LOCAL FOOD CULTURES

- Campaigns and awareness to reclaim food cultures of the mountains
- Policies to restrict the advertisement of ultra-processed and packaged food and beverages.
- Regulations on energy drinks sale
- Junk food and beverage regulation - implementing FSSAI guidelines for educational institutions
- Front of label packaging with easy to understand warnings for informed consumer choices

BEYOND DUSTBINS AND LANDFILLS - SYSTEMIC CHANGES

- Promote Decentralised / localised management for waste
- Review of existing waste management systems in the mountains
- Strengthen and expand the Single Use Plastic bans
- Invest in long term and consistent education and awareness campaigns
- Focus of tourism, religious and forest landscapes in waste management
- No burning of waste in the mountains including waste to energy plants.
- Allocation of appropriate resources for the mountains ULBs and PRIs.



CONCLUSION

The journey of The Himalayan Cleanup for the past 6 years has brought countless people across the mountains to rally for a common cause - the Himalayan waste crisis. It is an indication of how deep the plastic crisis in the mountain runs and that mountain people are looking for solutions.

The unabated onslaught of plastic in the Himalaya calls for urgent and emergent response to the crisis. It calls on individual action to reduce waste and move to mindful consumption, intersecting issues of food and nutrition security.

But, focus also has to shift from only individual action to more systemic solutions.

Waste management is a challenging task in the mountains and this needs to be acknowledged with adequate resource allocation and mountain sensitive policies. The narrative has to go beyond end of the pipeline management issue, to expanding it to the complete production and consumption cycles. It has to intersect with food and nutrition security, climate crisis, biodiversity conservation dialogues and policies. Waste has equity and justice issues ingrained that needs integration.

THC calls on companies to stop polluting the Himalaya and extend their responsibility to manage their waste at an intermediary level. Ultimately, plastic waste has to be designed out of the system.

This requires targeted and committed action at the local, national and global level that includes a strong global plastic treaty.

Our Mountains Deserve Better!





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Himalayan Cleanup team is immensely grateful to the countless organisations and departments across mountain states who partner with the campaign. We are grateful that you are with us on this journey. Thank you for understanding the need to do the cleanup and taking the lead; sticking with the tedious audit processes, and mainly, believing in the power of solidarity and volunteerism among mountain peoples.

We would like to express our gratitude to the many educational institutions, the dedicated teachers who lead the students, and spread the learning beyond THC into their everyday lives. This special love that you show for the mountains is indeed heartwarming, a blessing and gives hope to all.

For THC 2024, we are grateful to Sikkim's Education Department and Rural Development Department who officially took on THC, bringing in participation from all corners of the state. The IMI State Chapters have been supportive of the campaign throughout and taken the lead in many sites.

We are indebted to the many ULBs and PRIs who partnered with us in THC2024 as well as enabled the disposal of waste that have have no solutions. Thank You, the many informal waste pickers and aggregators who have enabled THC2024 recyclables to be connected to the treatment chain.

#BreakFreeFromPlastic and GAIA have been our allies and partners at the National, South Asia and Global levels, from whom we draw much energy, knowledge and solidarity. Thank You.

THC acknowledges all the individual stewards of the mountains who rise up to the call every year to show their love for the mountains. It is your motivation, interest and enthusiasm that keeps THC moving forward each year. Thank You

We still have miles to go...

Let's keep raising our voices and lets commit to take action against plastic pollution.

TEAM THC, 2024





THE HIMALAYAN CLEANUP

A JOURNEY TOWARDS ZERO WASTE!

At an **INDIVIDUAL** level, I pledge to understand how my everyday lifestyle matters, and how my actions are contributing to the problem of waste.



I will reflect on my lifestyle choices and choose to reduce the use of unnecessary plastics in my life.

At a **COMMUNITY** level, we the people of the Indian Himalaya pledge to take strong measures to free our mountains from the burden of plastic waste.



We pledge to beat plastic pollution by eradicating single use plastics from everyday use and evolving sustainable waste management strategies and practices.

As **MOUNTAIN PEOPLE**, we demand for policies that support design systems which are circular in nature.



Having made these changes in our personal lives, we will strive to influence our families, friends and peers.

We strongly advocate for polluting companies to be responsible for the plastic trash they are leaving behind in our mountains.

We remain deeply connected and forever **PROUD OF OUR MOUNTAINS.**



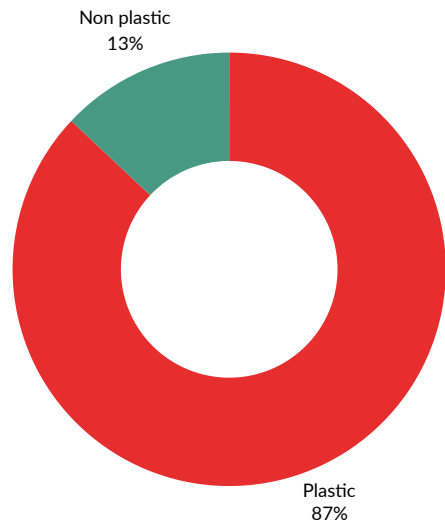
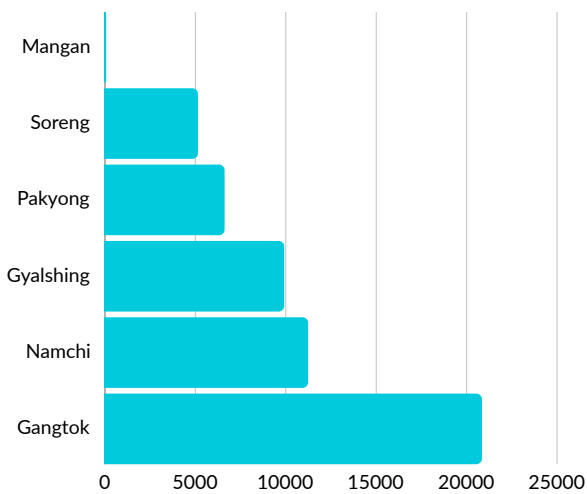
#BEATPLASTICPOLLUTION

ANNEXURE

THC 2024 - SIKKIM

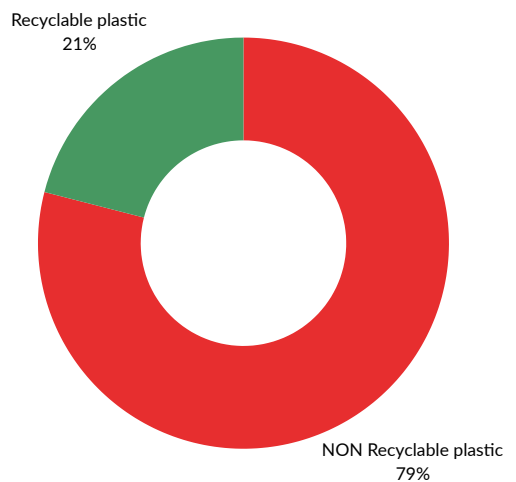
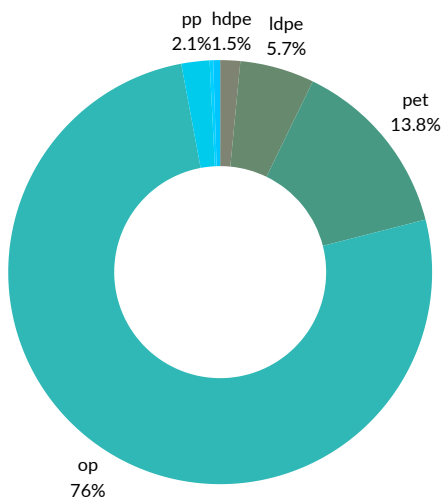
Sikkim had the highest numbers of cleanup sites with 259 sites cleaned up by over 9300 volunteers. THC was officially taken up by the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), Rural Development Department. The Education Department also issued a notification for all schools to participate in the campaign, which brought in many more participation.

Of the 259 sites cleaned up, waste and brand audits were conducted in 86 sites and the data therefore is representative of those sites. The results are presented below -

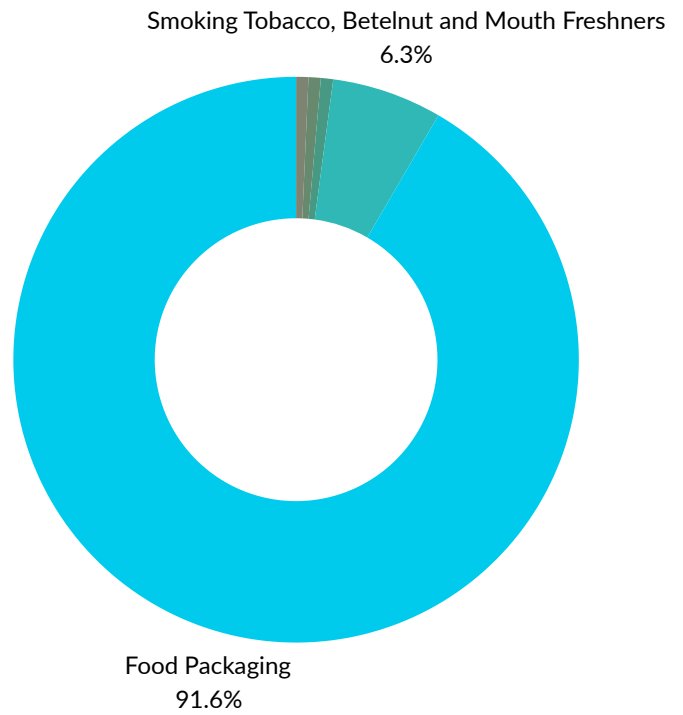


The cleanup covered all districts of the State. Gangtok District had the highest number of cleanups and therefore also recorded the highest number of trash collected.

Total number of waste items picked up was 53814 of which 46908 - 87%, was plastics.

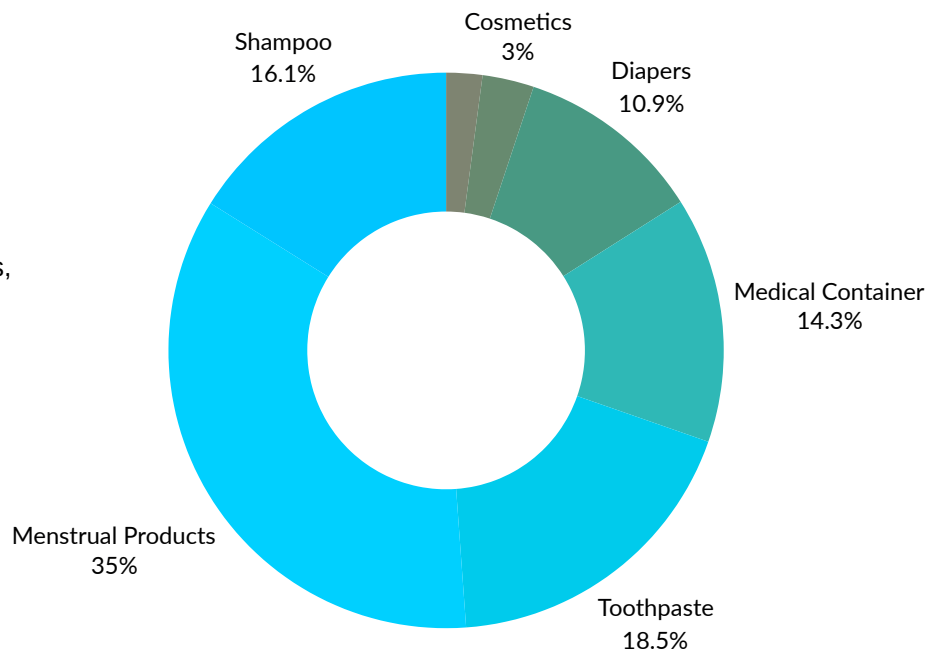


Of the plastic trash collected, most of it (76%) was categorised as others or No. 7. These would include multilayered plastics, Tetrapak cartons, and any other plastics which were not single layer. 79% of the plastics was therefore non recyclable plastics.



For Sikkim, food packaging in plastic waste was found to be higher than other states. Close to 92 % of the plastic trash picked up was food packaging, followed by smoking and gutka material at 6.3%.

Under personal care products, menstrual products were found in highest numbers followed by toothpaste, shampoo sachets, medicine containers, diapers and other cosmetic items.



THC 2024 - DARJEELING/ KALIMPONG

In Darjeeling, a total of around 47 sites were cleaned up with the support of many organisations and institutions who have been part of The Himalayan Cleanup since 2018. Over 3000 volunteers were mobilised for cleaning up these sites.

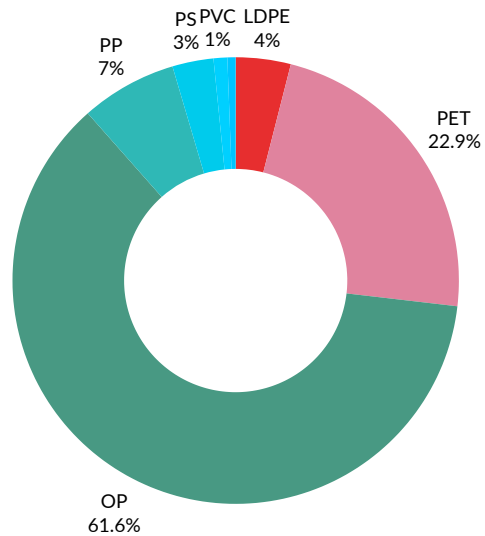
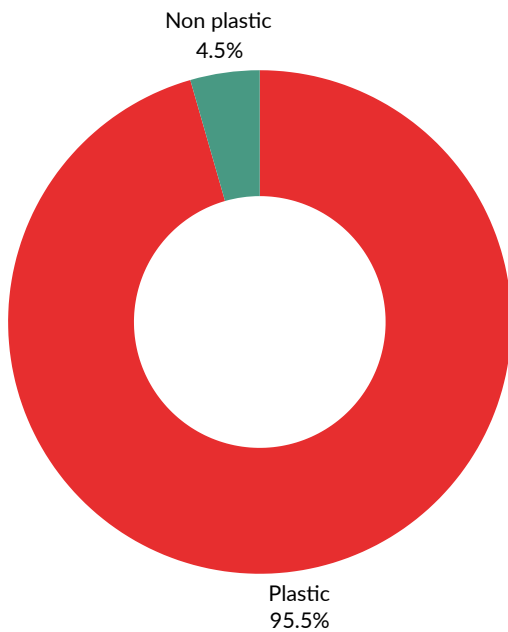

Audited sites
26


Total waste picked up
36180

Waste and brand audits were conducted in 18 of the cleaned up sites, which are reflected in the results presented below -

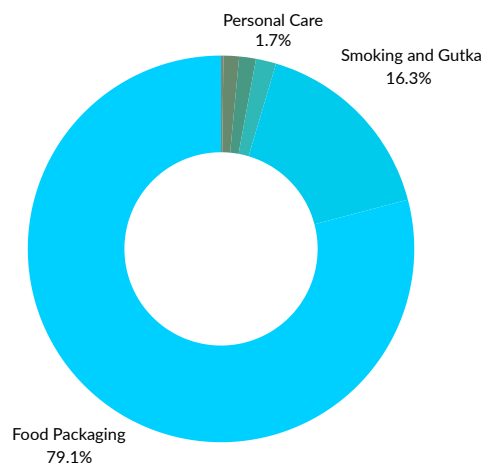
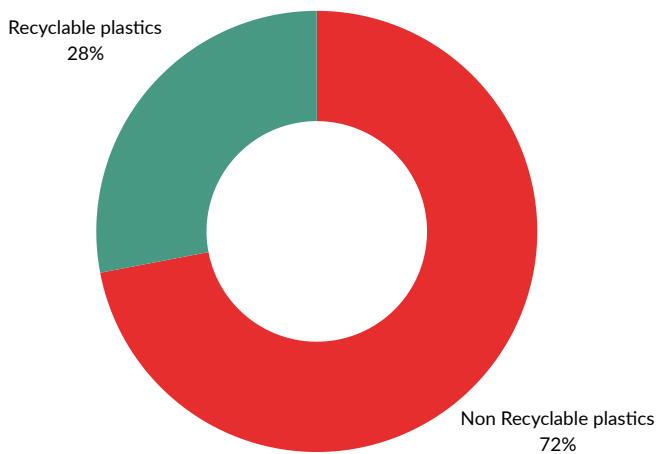

Volunteers
2100+


Total plastic waste
34569



Total number of waste items picked up was 36180 of which 34569 - 95.5%, was just plastics.

Categorisation of the plastics into different types revealed that 61.6% of plastics were others (No. 7.) followed by 22.9 % PET (No. 1)



72 % of the plastics collected were non recyclable and only 28 % was recyclable.

79.1 % of the plastics was found to from food packaging followed by 16.3 % being smoking and gutka material.

THC 2024 - LADAKH

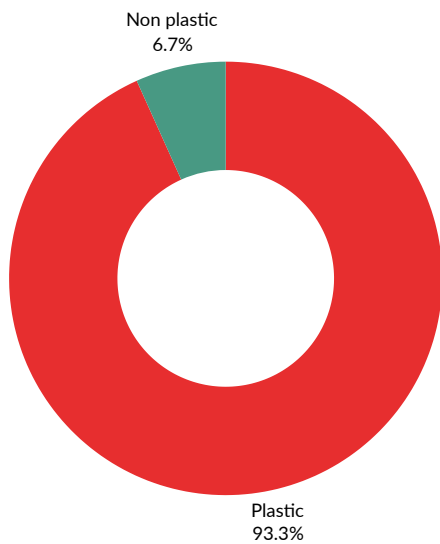
THC partner, Little Green World led the cleanup in Ladakh. Some cleanups were also conducted through the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, however the waste was not audited. The results here are from the 18 cleanups led by organisations and institutions mobilised by Little Green World.


Audited sites
18

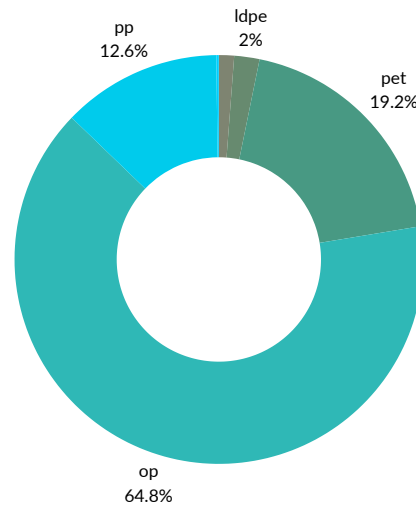

Total waste picked up
11975


Volunteers
1069

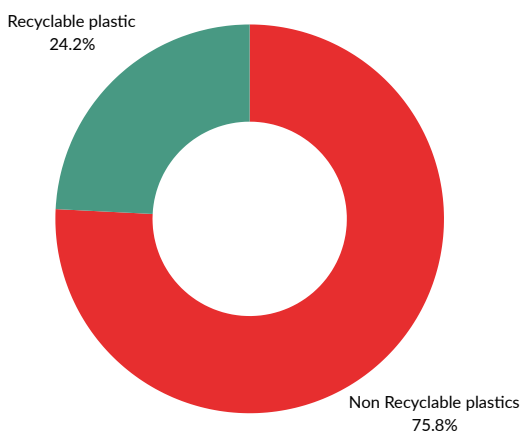

Total plastic waste
11168



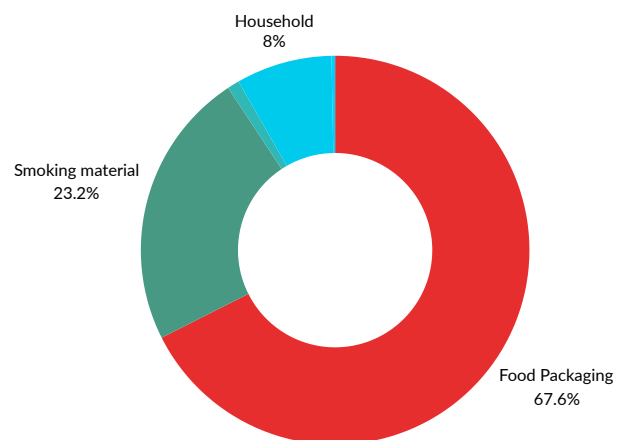
Total number of waste items picked up was 11975 of which 11168 - 93.3%, was plastics.



64.8 % of plastics were categorised as Others (No. 7), followed by PET (No.1) at 19.2 %.



75.8 % of plastics were categorised as non recyclable type and only 24.2 % recyclable.



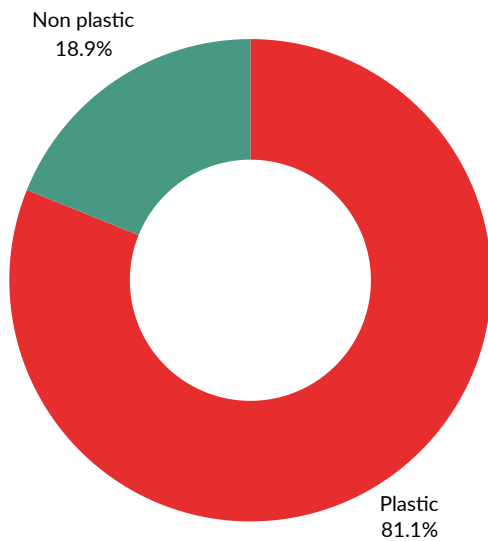
Over 67 % of the plastics were from food packaging, followed by smoking material at 23.2 %.

THC 2024 - UTTARAKHAND

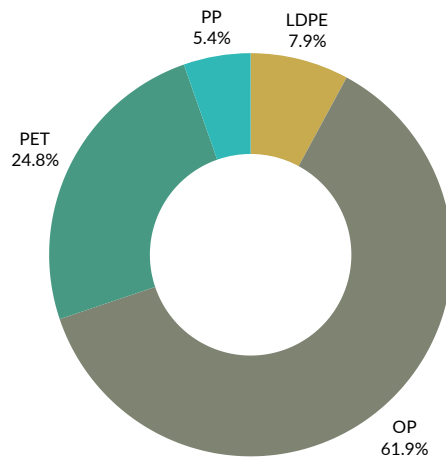
In Uttarakhand, the cleanups were led by Waste Warriors Society and IndiaHikes team who cleaned up and also conducted the waste and brand audit in the sites.



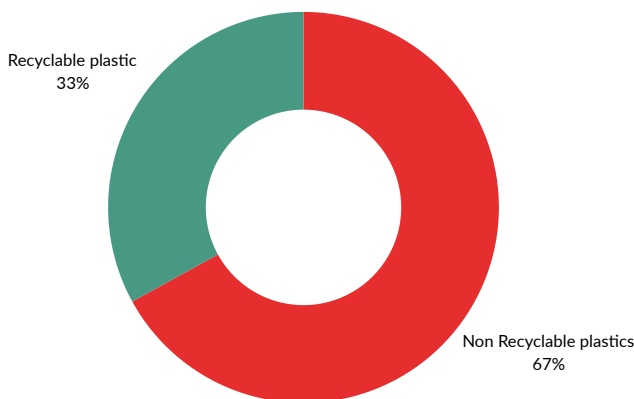
Besides these cleanups, more than 20 Nagar Panchayats also participated in The Himalayan Cleanup mobilising over 500 volunteers, however waste and brand audits were not conducted for these sites.



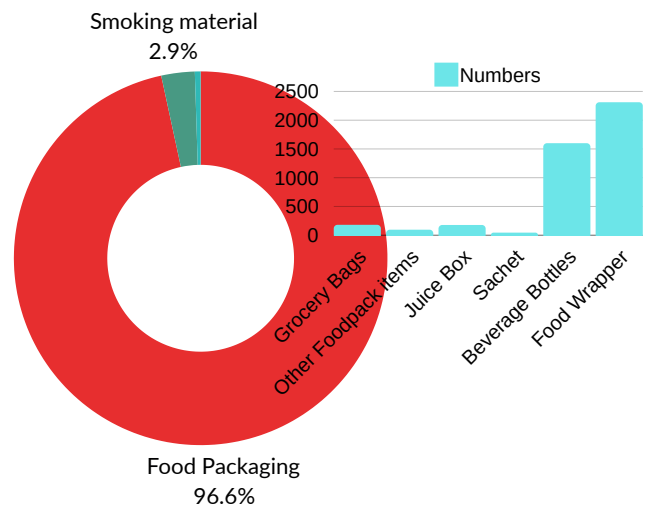
Total number of waste items picked up was 5937 of which 4554 - 81.1 % was plastics.



Other plastics was almost 62 % followed by PET, LDPE and PP.



Recyclable plastics in the trash collected was 33% while the non recyclable plastic was 67%.

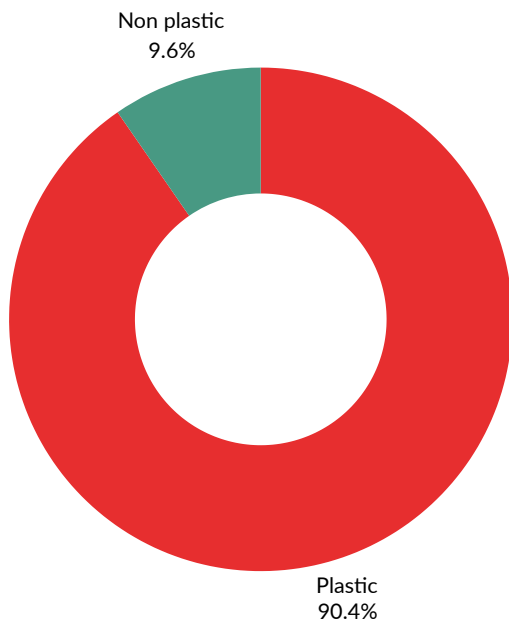


Food packaging was close to 97 % of the plastic waste among which food wrappers were collected in highest numbers followed by beverage bottles and juice boxes and bags.

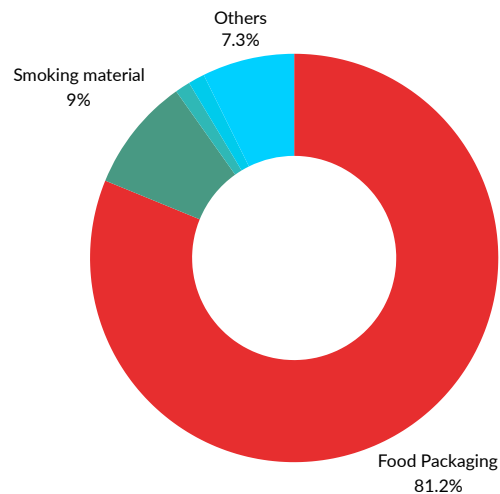
THC 2024 - NAGALAND

In Nagaland, Chizami Student's Union has been one of the key partners conducting THC every year in the Chizami Village and beyond.

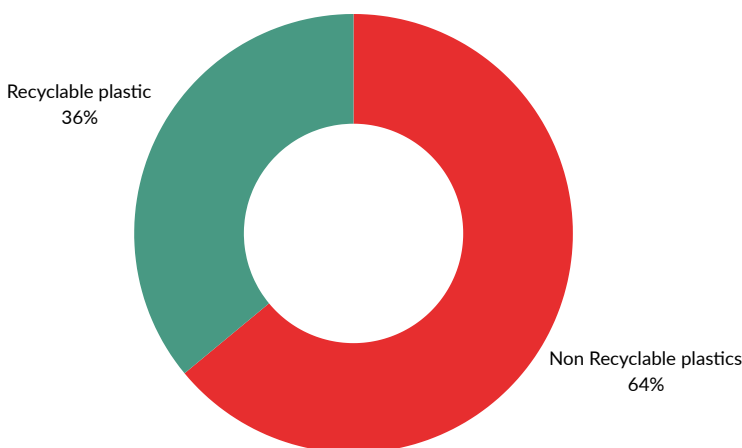
This year, a group of volunteers led by Methadou and friends also managed to mobilise several cleanups around Dimapur through schools and colleges.



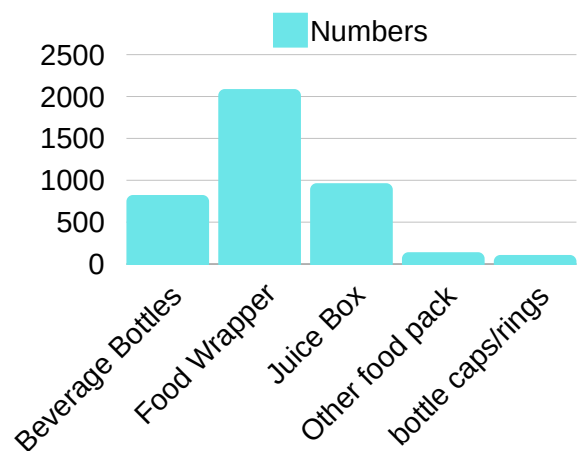
Total number of waste items picked up was 6512 of which 5885 - 90.4%, was plastics.



Within plastic waste, food packaging amounted to 81.2%.



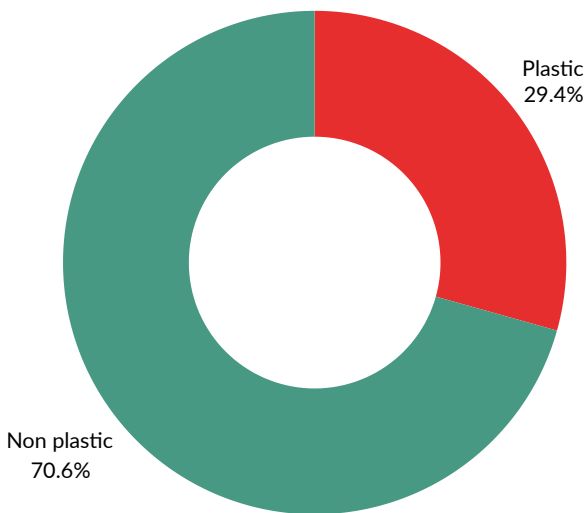
Recyclable plastics in the trash collected was 36% while the non recyclable plastic was 64%.



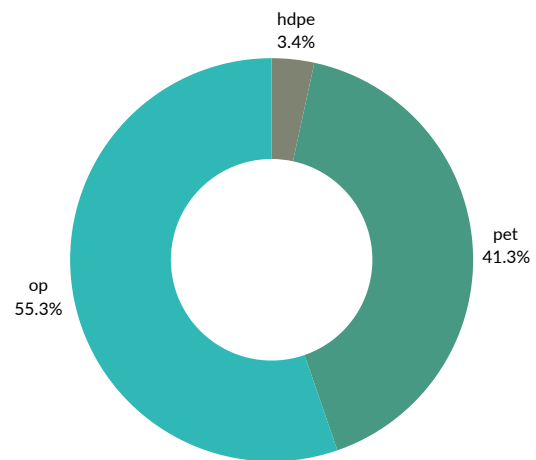
Among food packaging, food wrappers were collected in highest numbers, followed by beverage bottles and juice boxes.

THC 2024 - ARUNACHAL PRADESH

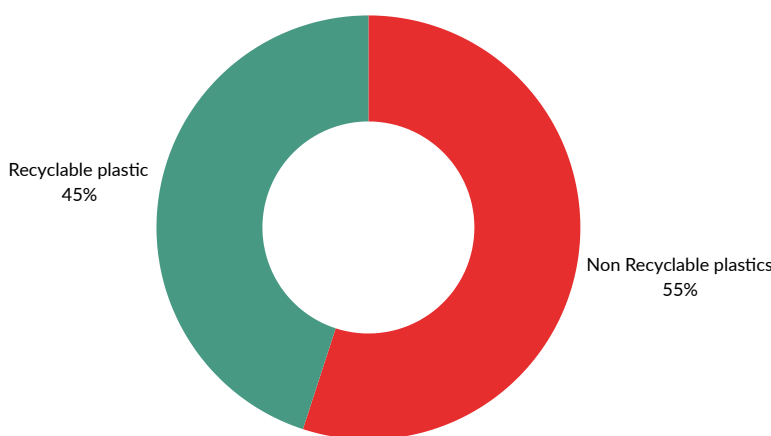
In Arunachal Pradesh, a number of cleanups were organised by various organisations in different districts. North East Waste Collective, AMYAA NGO, Magic Club and Youth for Clean Rivers undertook the cleanups. Waste and brand audit was conducted at only one site in Sangti Valley by NEWC.



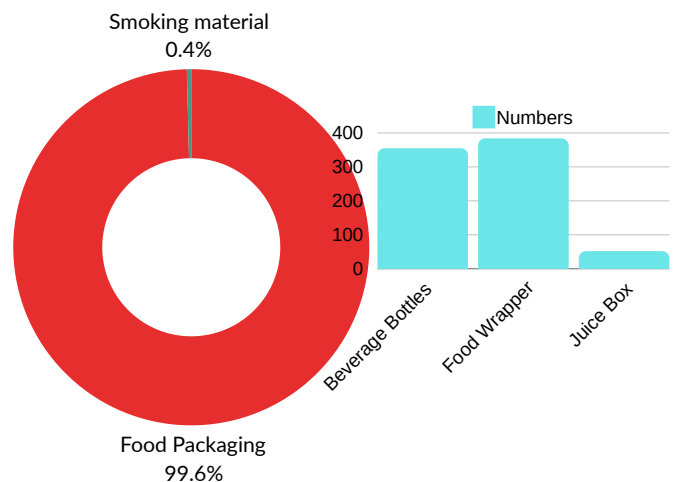
Total number of waste items picked up was 2705 of which 794 - 70.6%, was plastics. This was less than the figures in other states



Mainly 3 types of plastics were found in the trash collected - Others (55.3%), PET (41.3 %) and HDPE(3.4%)



55 % of plastics were categorised as non recyclable type and 45 % were recyclable, which was higher than in other states.



Almost all collected trash was food packaging, with food wrappers collected in highest numbers followed by beverage bottles and juice boxes.

THC 2024 - HIMACHAL PRADESH

In Himachal Pradesh, the cleanups were led by IndiaHikes team who cleaned up and also conducted the waste and brand audit for the site.

Other cleanups were also conducted by Gadiara Panchayat Mahila Mandal, Palampur Welfare and Environment Protection Forum mobilising local volunteers at Tehsil Palampur in Kangra District.



THC 2024 - MANIPUR

THC partner ENFOGAL conducted the cleanup in Ukhrul, Manipur along with a waste and brand audit.

THC 2024 - MIZORAM

IMI's State Chapter - Mizoram Sustainable Development Forum organised the cleanup in Aizawl, Mizoram. Volunteers from the Mizoram University participated in the cleanup and waste audits.



LIST OF CLEANUP AND WASTE AUDIT SITES

	Organisation	State	Cleanup site
1	Indiahikes	Himachal Pradesh	Janglik
2	Northeast Waste Collective	Arunachal Pradesh	Sangti Valley
3	Little Green World	Ladakh	18 sites across Ladakh
4	ENFOGAL	Manipur	St. Joseph's college premise
5	Mizoram Sustainable Development Foundation	Mizoram	Vaipuanpho
6	GHSS Singrijan & Nagaland Zoological Park	Nagaland	Nagaland Zoological Park
7	North East Institute of Social Sciences and Research	Nagaland	NEISSR compound and road stretch
8	Honili Memorial Hr Sec School	Nagaland	Lhomithi colony road & Sham Bazaar
9	Chizami Students' Union	Nagaland	Local Ground and Village footpath of all the 6 Khel(colony)
10	Patkai Hr Sec School	Nagaland	School and College compound & Chumu View point
11	St Peter's School , Purana Bazar	Nagaland	School Compund and Dhansiri River banks
12	Modern SS school + Zero Waste Himalaya	Sikkim	Hurhuray Dara, Namnang
13	Lower Syari Secondary School, Gangtok	Sikkim	School areas and adjoining villages
14	32-Upper Thambong GPU	Sikkim	32-Upper Thambong GPU Area
15	Govt Senior Secondary School	Sikkim	Gairi Gaon, Tadong Check post to Tadong Bazaar, NH-10
16	15 Yangtey GPU	Sikkim	15 Yangtey GPU
17	16-Yangthang Gpu	Sikkim	Langang
18	17-Tikjuk Kyongsha GPU	Sikkim	Kyongsha
19	Individual	Sikkim	Pelling
20	19 Sardong Lungzik GPU	Sikkim	Sardong Lungzik
21	16-Yangthang Gpu	Sikkim	Langang
22	Dokchin Village	Sikkim	Dokchin Village
23	32-Maniram Phalidara GPU	Sikkim	Alley Bhanjyang
24	Sir Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School. Eco Club	Sikkim	Development area
25	34-Sapreynagi GPU	Sikkim	Road side Area of GPK
26	17 Luingperbing GP	Sikkim	Luing
27	14, Rawtey Rumtek GPU	Sikkim	Sajong
28	16 - Ranka GPU	Sikkim	Roadside near GPU.
29	07 Khamdong GPU	Sikkim	BAC Khamdong to Khamdong GPU
30	05-Deythang GPU	Sikkim	Deythang Secondary School area

32	OKHREY GPU	Sikkim	Okhrey
33	31-Rumbuk GPU	Sikkim	Nearby Gram Prashashan kendra
34	31-Rongbul GUP	Sikkim	Rongbul mainline road side
35	Siktam Tikpur GPU	Sikkim	Siktam Tikpur GPU
36	02-Bara Samdong Boom Reshi GPU under Kaluk Block	Sikkim	Samdong Junior High school to Durpuja Dara
37	27-Dodak GPU	Sikkim	Govt. Sec School Dodak
38	Lungchok-Salangdang GPU	Sikkim	GPK office and road site area
39	Malbasey Budang	Sikkim	Devi Mandir
40	Sorok Shyampani GPU	Sikkim	Namchi goam road side and lower gom road side
41	Phodong Sr.Sec School	Sikkim	Phodong bazaar to phodong hospital
42	Bhusuk JHS	Sikkim	Bhusuk surrounding
43	39-Tinik Chisopani GPU	Sikkim	Chisopani
44	38 Poklok GPU	Sikkim	Nandugoan
45	37-salghari GPU	Sikkim	Nandugoan
46	Boomtar Salleybong GPU	Sikkim	Government Schools and Salleybong Road side
47	Kongri Labdang gpu	Sikkim	Pokhari, near Kongri Gumpa
48	Kumari Pema Tseden School High Secondary School Rongli Changeylakha GPU	Sikkim	Rongli Bazar
49	12-Namphing GPU	Sikkim	Around Namphing Secondary school
50	07-Amba GPU	Sikkim	Cleaning roadside, water source
51	Government Secondary School Duga	Sikkim	Around School ground and Duga Road
52	PM SHRI BIRASPATI PARSAI SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL , RANIPPOOL	Sikkim	Ranipool
53	Tashiding Primary School	Sikkim	PHC Dara and Tashiding primary school
54	Sapung PS Dentam West Sikkim	Sikkim	Sapung surroundings and Sapung waterfalls
55	Govt.Lower Nandok JHS	Sikkim	Saramsa Epica Garden
56	Kamrang GPK	Sikkim	Road side Bio diversity park
57	BEN-NAMPRICK, GPU	Sikkim	Near Ben Monastery, Manglay BAZAAR
58	Ralong Namlung GPU	Sikkim	Titanic view point
59	Jhusingthang JHS School	Sikkim	Near gpu
60	14 Rameng Nizrameng GPU	Sikkim	Tingley
61	Segeng JHS	Sikkim	Segeng JHS
62	31- BERMIOK BERTHANG GPU	Sikkim	Near JH School Bermiok Daragaon
63	12-Sudunglakha GPU	Sikkim	Sudunglakha
64	Namcheybong GPU	Sikkim	Padam Turning to Community center
65	Tarpin GPU	Sikkim	Middle Tarpin

66	11 RIMBI-TINGBRUM GPU West Sikkim	Sikkim	GPK premises
67	Borong Phamtam GPU	Sikkim	Borong Phamtam gpu
68	07-Sangmoo Rankey GPU	Sikkim	Sangmoo PHSC
69	Mangmoo Dentam GPU	Sikkim	Mangmoo Dentam
70	30 Kitam Manpur GPU	Sikkim	Kitam Bazar and surrounding area
71	29-Martam GPU	Sikkim	Public places
72	Government Secondary School, Rongneck	Sikkim	Dechenling Area
73	Enchey Government Senior Secondary School, Gangtok	Sikkim	School compound
74	GOVT. SECONDARY SCHOOL, JARRONG	Sikkim	BRAHMI TAL DEYTHANG (ECO FRIENDLY PARK)
75	52-Barfung Jarrong GPU	Sikkim	School premises and roadside Drainage
76	Maneybung Gpu	Sikkim	S L jhora Gumpadara
77	Sumin Lingzey Gpu	Sikkim	Roadside of gpu
78	22-Maneybung GPU	Sikkim	S L jhora Gumpadara
79	10-Melli Aching GPU	Sikkim	GPU
80	18-Chumbung GPU	Sikkim	Road side
81	Deythang junior high school	Sikkim	School premises
82	30-PECHEREK HEE PATAL GPU	Sikkim	Road near GPU
83	Gelling Baiguney GPU	Sikkim	Baiguney
84	13-Darap Singhpheng gpu	Sikkim	Darap
85	12 Nambu sindrabong gpu	Sikkim	Nambu
86	47/TinkitamRayong GPU	Sikkim	Rayong village
87	Turuk VAC	Sikkim	Turuk GPU
88	08/Ravongkhop GPU	Sikkim	GPU to Ravongla Hospital
89	Lachung dzomsa	Sikkim	Lachung road side
90	Chongay GP	Sikkim	Chongay
91	Govt Secondary School Ahopul Kishan	Sikkim	Jalipool river
92	24- Sukrabarey Suntaley GPU	Sikkim	Tarey Vir Tourist Spot
93	Namcheybong Sr Sec School	Sikkim	Khonsee ward, Namcheybong
94	Green Circle Sikkim and Friends of Chongay	Sikkim	Chongay Village and surroundings
95	Zero Waste Himalaya / Tashi Namgyal Academy / NBBGC	Sikkim	Ridge Park
96	Waste Warriors Society	Uttarakhand	Harrawala + other sites
97	Gyanoday Niketan	Darjeeling, West Bengal	School neighbourhood
98	Trinity Yuwa Jhund (TYJ)	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Jorepokhri Tourist Spot, Sukhia Pokhri
99	Ruhiyyih School	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Jorebunglow motor stand to Tiger hill and Old Military Road
100	Management Club, St Joseph's College, Darjeeling assisted by Zero Waste Himalaya and DLR Prerna	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Tenzing Rock, Darjeeling

101	SAMBHOTA TIBETAN SCHOOL DARJEELING	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Mall Road, Mahakal Mandir, Stretch of Area above Bhutia busty
102	WWF India	Kalimpong, West Bengal	Changey Falls, Kolakham,
103	BIRUWA	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Tigerhill, Darjeeling
104	Darjeeling Montessori House Of Children	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Dali, Bloomfield
105	Bokar Vajradhara Memorial school	Darjeeling, West Bengal	BVMS and Deosay Dara
106	Anugyalaya DDSSS	Kalimpong, West Bengal	Bhalukhop
107	Cambridge School , DLR Prerna	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Cambridge school
108	Assembly of God School, Darjeeling assisted by DLR Prerna	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Chowrasta Mall Road
109	Darjeeling Himalaya Initiative , Zero Waste Himalaya and DLR Prerna	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Chowrasta Mahakal Site
110	Tashi Namgyal Academy NBBGC	Sikkim	Ridge Park
111	Narbahadur Bhandari Government Degree College	Sikkim	Ridge Park
112	WWF India	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Maldiram / 8th Mile
113	West Point School	Darjeeling, West Bengal	School neighbourhood
114	DLR Prerna cleanup sites	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Padeng/Manedara /Kolbong /Marybong /Mahanadi /Latpanchar
115	St Joseph's College, Nature Club	Darjeeling, West Bengal	Chitrey

TOTAL WASTE AUDITED - TOP 20 ORGANISATIONS

1	Cleanups led by Little Green World in Ladakh	11958
2	Sambhota Tibetan School, Darjeeling	7074
3	Darjeeling Montessori House Of Children, Darjeeling	6284
4	Zero Waste Himalaya with Modern School + TNA + Tadong College Gangtok	5786
5	Turuk VAC, Sikkim	5100
6	BIRUWA, Darjeeling	5074
7	Cleanups led by IndiaHikes in Uttarkhand	4631
8	Sir Tashi Namgyal Senior secondary school. Eco club, Gangtok	4575
9	Cleanups led by WWF India	4431
10	Cleanups led by Methadou and team in Nagaland	3911
11	Govt Senior Secondary School, Sikkim	3202
12	Cleanups led by Waste Warriors Society	2662
13	Chizami Students' Union, Nagaland	2601
14	Green Circle Sikkim and Friends of Chongay, Gangtok	2478
15	Trinity Yuwa Jhund (TYJ), Darjeeling	2329
16	Namcheybong Sr Sec School, Sikkim	2382
17	Ruhiyyih School, Darjeeling	1874
18	Assembly of God School, Darjeeling	1769
19	Phodong Sr.Sec School, Sikkim	1756
20	Melli Aching Gram Panchayat, Sikkim	1600

INTEGRATED MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE

DEHRADUN REGIONAL OFFICE: H.NO. 25, LANE 3, TEG BAHADUR ROAD, DALANWALA, DEHRADUN -248001, UTTARAKHAND, INDIA

GANGTOK REGIONAL OFFICE: TAYAKHIM J155, TADONG, DARAGAON, GANGTOK, SIKKIM-737102, INDIA

ZERO WASTE HIMALAYA

TADONG, GANGTOK, SIKKIM

LADENLA ROAD, DARJEELING

WWW.THEHIMALAYANCLEANUP.IN