



ACTIVIST CAMPAIGN KIT

A guide for community action to combat plastic pollution



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The Plastic Straw Epidemic and Call for Action:

There is no denying that plastic straws are one of the biggest threats to our oceans today. In just the U.S. alone, one estimate suggests 500 million straws are used every single day. That would amount to about 182.5 billion straws a year. Most of these cannot be recycled and end up in the oceans where they pose a massive threat to marine life. They are the 11th most found ocean trash and take up to 200 years to decompose. With increasing global concern and time running out, the need to take action against single-use plastic straws has intensified, now more than ever.

This guide has been designed to help individuals, clubs and organisations to come up with their own strategies and campaigns to fight plastic straw pollution in their community. A straw campaign can span from something as simple as getting your local restaurants to go straw free for a month to something as bold as managing to pass a legislation that restricts the use of plastic straws. No matter what your goal, your campaign must have a roadmap, a clear set of strategies, knowledge of resources and tools, team and timing and a media policy. It should be built on such a strategy that there is scope for further advancements and other chapters to build on.

This guide is an amalgamation of strategies and approaches adopted by many local, national as well as international campaigns to fight the plastic straw epidemic and aims to provide future crusaders with the collective knowledge and tools necessary to launch a campaign of their own and take action.



HOW TO ORGANISE A PLASTIC STRAW CAMPAIGN



Below are a set of golden points to keep in mind while designing and organising a plastic straw campaign:

1. PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

Before going out on the streets, take action at an individual level and pledge to refuse a plastic straw the next time you visit a restaurant or order a drink. Ask friends, relatives and people around you to do the same and ask them to spread the message.

2. LAY DOWN A CLEAR SET OF GOALS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

It is imperative to have a clear set of goals and targets before diving into a campaign. Your goals should reflect the extent of impact that you wish to create and one that is desirable for the community. It should be easily comprehensible and accessible for other chapters and individuals to replicate or build on.

3. GET LOCAL BUSINESSES ON BOARD

One of the most effective ways to reduce plastic straw pollution is to get restaurants and establishments to voluntarily stop using plastic straws. This has a direct implication on the amount of plastic straw waste that is generated which ultimately helps in keeping them out of our oceans and helps set an example that inspires other businesses to follow suit.

- Depending on the size of the community, set a realistic and attainable set of target businesses and establishments that you wish to engage in your campaign.

- Go out and make a list of popular restaurants and establishments in your area with a large customer base. This will help you narrow down the businesses involving which would have a substantial impact.
- Visit the restaurants and convince them to completely give up straws. Try to make them understand how straws are an unnecessary addition to a drink and are usually required only if the drink is considerably thick.
- If the restaurants are not willing to go completely straw free, ask them to give straws only on requests or if it is absolutely necessary.
- Get the target restaurants and establishments to switch to straws made from alternate materials from plastic straws. The businesses should be given information on all the available alternatives as well as price comparisons to show them what it might cost them to switch to an alternative. Providing them with a list of companies and organisations that make or sell such alternatives is recommended.
- If restaurants are still sceptical, give them incentives for going plastic straw free. A certification or tag that says they are environmentally sound would be a good way to get more businesses on board. They might also get the benefit of hosting campaign meetings and events at their establishment as a consequence of going straw free.
- The best way to make contact with the restaurants and businesses is to directly go to the restaurant and talk to the manager about the program. Otherwise, you can contact them over phone or make a mailing list of all the target restaurants and send out a mail describing the program.

4. KNOW HOW TO START THE CONVERSATION

It is very important to have clear conversation outline in your mind before approaching any restaurant or business as it determines their response. Start off by telling them about the organisation that you belong to and the kind of work they are involved in. Talk about past chapters and initiatives and the impact that they have had on the community and the environment. Give them power facts as to why we need to refuse plastic straws and the impact that it has on the environment. Show them videos and newspaper articles on the plastic straw epidemic and the need for immediate action.

5. MEDIA POLICY

The key to any successful campaign or program is good media attention. Having a good media policy can help elevate conversation around the campaign, build support

and might also garner attention from the government or other concerned authorities.

- **Print Media:** Draft a media press release on the program. Posters and flyers are a good way to spread the message among the public.



- **Digital Media:** Social media is a great way to reach a wider audience for your campaign. In fact nowadays entire campaigns are designed and marketed on social media alone. Short videos and films focussing on the campaign or on the impacts of using plastic straws are a great tool to communicate the campaign message to the public. Polls, events and memes are also very effective in doing so. Consistently posting interesting relevant content will help you engage with your followers and build an online community. For this you can use Facebook, Twitter , Whatsapp, Youtube etc.
 - ❖ Create a series of mini stories using videos, images, blogspots, tweets, pins and more to draw attention to the bigger idea
 - ❖ Regularly rotate content such as news, blogspots, images, videos or quotes.
 - ❖ Post attractive short videos, photos, posters on Facebook pages and put them up as your statuses
 - ❖ Post photos and videos of previous campaigns
 - ❖ Use Youtube vlogs for maximum outreach.
 - ❖ Create a series of status updates on Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp.

HOW TO EDIT A VIDEO

Nowadays a video can be edited on both mobile phones and computers. There are many types of software available on the web for video editing. Video editing is basically manipulating and rearranging a row video file to make a better video. Most editing softwares work on the basis of time line interface paradigm. The generally important components of video editing are audio editing and visual editing. Audio editing includes audio trimming, changing pitch, volume, speed, adding effects etc. visual editing includes addition of slides, transition effects, adding of text etc. Many editing software offers options to overlay multiple audios for a single clip. After editing the final video can be saved to ROM in any format depending on your choice.

The commonly used video editing softwares are the following:

- Adobe Premiere Pro CC
- Final cut ProX
- Corel Video Studio Ultimate 2019
- Pinnacle Studio22
- Filmora
- i movie
- Shotcut
- Movavi
- Power director

Including slides in a video

Some advanced video editing softwares allow us to make slides within the editing interface itself. But usually slides can be made in other image editing softwares like Adobe Photoshop or Light room. The step of making slides in adobe Photoshop is given below:

- Open Photoshop and press **Ctrl+N** or select New from the File button to create a background layer.
- Now select the **Text tool** to write something on the layer.
- Text other than English may require specific fonts to support. Usually **FML fonts** of a language offer wide range of styles than Unicode fonts.
- Pictures can be added to the slides by pressing **Ctrl+O** and to go to the location of the picture select the required picture(s) from the dialogue box appearing.
- The slide can be saved **JPJ** format to add them in video. That can be done by pressing **Ctrl+Shift+S** and select **JPJ** from the format type list.

Create new video project:

From the above list any software can be selected for making a video project. Basic steps of video editing;

- ❖ Run the software and select New Project .
- ❖ Select **Open** from the file button at the left top corner and import the row video file, audio file, image or slides saved as image to the editing platform.
- ❖ In that interface the visual clip and audio can be found separately as two horizontal zones.

- ❖ These zones can be cut using a split tool and such pieces can be removed or merged with some other point in the same footage or in other video footages.
- ❖ Many editors provide transition effect tools that make the video visually attractive
- ❖ Slides and images can also be added in between or at the edges of visual clips.
- ❖ The tone, volume, pitch, and other effects can also be added to the audio
- ❖ Likewise, the audio can also be trimmed and displaced according to your wish.
- ❖ Audio can overlap and hence background tones can be added, so that multiple audio files can play at a time for a particular clip.
- ❖ The tone, volume, pitch, and other effects can also be added to the audio.
- ❖ After editing the whole file can be exported to system memory in a wide range of formats and quality. The commonly used video formats are; HD, Blu-ray, mp4, mkv, m4a, etc.

Compressing Exported Video File

Usually the video file exported using editor may be large compared to the duration. These large files are difficult to handle and send across the web. The solution to this problem is quite simple. There are online video compressors available on the web. Upload your video footage to those sites and they will process it in a server and return to us as a small compressed file. Usually compression may reduce the quality of the video.

Online video file compressor sites are:

- <https://www.youcompress.com>
- <https://keepvid.com/video-compressor.html>
- <https://www.ps2pdf.com/compress-mp4>
- <https://www.media.io/video-compressor.html>
- <https://www.mp4compress.com>.

There are offline compressors that can be installed in PC. The popular offline video file compressors are:

- Hand break
- Format factory
- Slate Digital Virtual Buss Compressor (VTS)
- IK- Multimedia-T-Rack S3 Bundle VST
- Abbey Road Plug-in-MI Brilliance



6. STRAW ALTERNATIVES

It is highly recommendable to provide the target restaurants and businesses with a list of manufacturers or sellers who provide plastic straw alternatives. This makes it easier to convince them to go plastic straw free as they would already have the option of an alternative. Here are a few companies that manufacture eco-friendly straws in the country:

- **Bhava India-** Bhava India is a seller of steel straws made from food grade steel that can be used as an alternative to plastic straws. The straws come with a cleaner which can be used to clean the interiors of the straw.
Phone: 91-9746288054
Email: thebhavastore@gmail.com
- **Pappco India-** Pappco sells paper straws that are produced in India and are non-toxic since they don't use any ink. Paper decomposes faster than plastic and so, recycling them is much quicker too.
Address: 226/30, Kalbadevi Road
4th Floor, Chamber Bhawan
Mumbai- 400002, India
Phone: 02222414333
Email: info@pappcoindia.com
- **Eco-Products-** Eco-Products manufacture straws that are compostable. These straws are made of Polylactic Acid (PLA) plastic, which is made from plant-based renewable sources such as corn starch etc.
Address: LA 23A, Mahavir Enclave
New Delhi, 110045
Phone: 01164582263
- **Almitra Sustainables-** Almitra Sustainables have a wide range of sustainable products which are thoughtfully designed, and are made largely of natural materials, or low processed materials.
Phone: 91-9987557387
Email: biplab.d@almitrasustainables.com
- **Shunya-** Shunya is an initiative by a brother-sister duo who were on a mission to make human products more environmentally friendly. Shunya makes use-and-throw recyclable straws as well as reusable bamboo straws.
Phone: 91-9920407033; 9920877443
Email: connect@shunya.co
- **Bamboo India-** As the name suggests, Bamboo India makes reusable straws using bamboo.

Address: Bamboo India
PO Box: 1115
Pune 411018, India
Phone: 91-2067264712
Email: info@bambooindia.com



Paper straws from Pappco India



Bamboo straws from Bamboo India



Steel straw from Almitra Sustainables

7. THE BIGGER PICTURE

Believing in the cause and having the passion to make a change are the driving forces of a successful program. Try to make people around you see the bigger picture behind an anti-straw campaign by giving information on the changing global climate and our

contribution to it. Tell them how plastic straws are silently choking our oceans and how every little step counts. Tell them hard facts and statistics, make them believe that they can be trailblazers for change as well. Take action before it's too late!

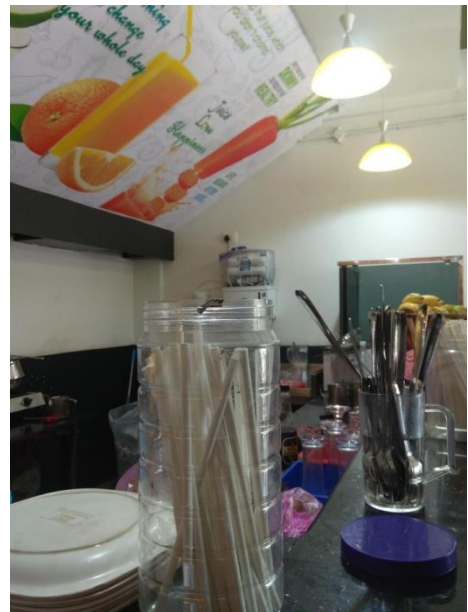
CAMPAIGN IN SPOTLIGHT:

Muhamma Plastic Straw Campaign

The Muhamma chapter was centred around banning the use of single use plastic straws in the village of Muhamma in the Allapuzha district of Kerala as a part of the project to make Muhamma a plastic free model village. ATREE CERC in association with the Muhamma Panchayat led the campaign to urge local shops and businesses to give up plastic straws and switch to paper straws instead. The campaign was successful in convincing most of the local businesses to get on board with the scheme and slowly switch to alternative straws before implementing a complete ban on plastic straws in the village.

The strategy adopted consisted of general public awareness through social and print media (posters on impacts of plastic straws and need to prevent their use, videos urging people to refuse plastic straws at shops and restaurants), incorporating stakeholders such as The Panchayat and business owners into the initiative, getting local businesses on board and direct contact with the key players. Going from business to business, the campaign team spread the word about plastic straw pollution, informed the restaurants about the alternatives to plastic straws and how to make the switch.





ATREE staff and interns visiting local businesses and distributing paper straws

