# Celebrating the Unlimited Potential of Plastic Pipes Industry

## at the SPE Pipes Conference

Having all industry experts gather on a common platform to discuss the future of the plastic pipes industry, is indeed a landmark occasion. Especially if the platform is one designed for knowledge sharing, receiving and mutually benefitting the plastic pipes industry. All this and more was witnessed at the recently held Plastic Pipes 2019 conference organised by the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) India. Read on to know all about this event...

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The Plastic Pipes 2019 conference held on 21st and 22nd November, 2019 at Mumbai - in its third edition - proved to be a massive success. What made this conference unique is the fact that it welcomed industry stalwarts from across the globe to share knowledge about the future of the plastic pipes industry and how sustainable can the industry at large be made. This event was organised by the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) India. Opening the two-day conference, Vijay Boolani, President, SPE India spoke about the inception of the plastic pipes industry (PPI) in India






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as well as globally and how far it has come. He shared, "Historically, the world relied on materials like metal, concrete and clay; however, thanks to the technical innovation and rapid development by the stakeholders, plastics too have become a material of choice and sees application in sewage systems, oil and gas industry, chemicals, clean water and many more areas."

Further talking about the growing plastics market trends globally, Vijay Boolani shared that North America alone is one of leading trend accelerators in the plastics industry. As an economy, the United States of America itself plays a key role as the world's largest market. Therefore, any change in demand and trends here cannot be ignored. "Closely following North America is APAC, in which China is closely followed by India. And in the times to come, will occupy more markets than before, by clocking impressive growth by 2023," Vijay Boolani said, sharing his projections.

Vijay Boolani also mentioned that research suggests that oil and gas innovation in these markets is bound to lead the market for PPI. While the European market will attain a healthy compounded growth rate of 5.18% during 2019 - 2023, it is said that the Indian market for PVC, in terms of CAGR will grow over 14% till 2025. "All these changes are a chain-reaction to the favourable government policies, infrastructural growth, investments, rapid industrialisation and booming urbanisation in these geographies."

Further leading the discussion on the roadmap for PPI and its last five decades in MENA and South Asia, Robert J. Lawrence, CEO, ProjAC shared, "The last 5 decades have been exciting for the industry and have laid strong foundation for our next decades to come. Companies in Middle East have taken chances and earned from their risks. All thanks to them and their innovative hats, two decades down we have a catalogue of firsts. We have giant offshore pipelines and have huge large diameter horizontal directional drilling poles. We have, as an industry, seen such rapid growth. When we did our market research 5 decades ago, plastics was projected at 2 - 5% of the market; however, we now stand at 35%." Yet, he emphasised, that the industry still needs to work on a consistent regional approach and clean the industry specifications and ensure that the quality controls remain to be the key to businesses.

Also present at the conference, Dr. Brian G. Landes, President, SPE Global shared his views on forming the sustainable future for plastics. He questioned the industry players on their innovation and end-results. He asked, "While innovation is key to plastics industry, and we believe we are doing a good

job there, but we are questioned on how much our industry is changing for the societal impact?" He further shared that all one hears is that plastics are a threat for our planet, never hear how it changes ones' lifestyle and, "Thus, it's important that we, as an industry, have this conversation within ourselves and with our communities and make them understand how we can change a few things amongst ourselves to be more successful. We have to share the positive impacts of the industry and make people understand them too. What we need is a perspective change and that needs to come in quick."

Closing the two-day conference, Patrick Farrey, CEO, SPE USA shared his take on how SPE India, as part of SPE Global, is trying to build a bridge within the industry for a better future. He shared, "SPE Global is spread across the globe, has over 22,000 members worldwide. We are a global society with stakeholders across the value chain. We are a diverse organisation, but have a commonality that we all work in plastics business. Our forte has been organising seminars and technical conferences, in addition to journals and reports that add value to members and industry, at large. Our content is turned into educational content for market awareness." Further highlighting on SPE, he mentioned, what SPE takes pride the most in is the fact that seminars like such help companies to create business opportunities at this common accessible platform - creating a win-win opportunity for all.

This event later culminated into an industry connect platform with Rajendra Pawar, Secretary, Water Resources Department addressing the gathering on the status and prospects of irrigation projects in Maharashtra and the role of plastic pipes. Also giving their insights at the conference were Murali Adhyatmabhattar, Technical Business Development Manager, United Special Services LLC who shared his knowledge on innovative, high-performance internal lining solutions while Dr. Niranjan Swarup, Director General, IndSTT spoke about converting pipe dreams to dream pipes in trenchless applications. Also present at the conference was Dr. Purnima Jalihal, Sc G and Head, Energy and Fresh Water, NIOT who spoke on HDPE pipes in innovative configurations for ocean thermal desalination. All this and more made this event a wholesome learning experience for all.

It's noteworthy to mention here that the event would not have achieved such resounding success had it not been for the efforts and guidance of Ramesh Parasuraman, Vice President (President-Elect), SPE India and Rajiv Sanghavi, International Counsellor, SPE India.