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McDonald's franchisee Hardcastle reduced its plastic

and eatery operator, we began looking for plastic alternatives in our effort to comply with the state government's decision," said Smita Jatia, managing director, Hardcastle Restaurants Pvt Ltd, the master franchisee of global quick-service restaurant (QSR) brand McDonald's and McCafe in west and south India.

The management of the QSR chain undertook an intensive exercise to find a long-term solution and within two months was able to eliminate the use of plastic across its restaurants in Karnataka. That's not all, the management proactively took a decision to gradually implement the use of biodegradable materials



Smita Jatia

instead of plastic across its outlets in the western and southern region of India.

"All our business practices have been environmentally friendly and sustainable with the aim to give back to the community. We have been working on alternatives to

plastic as there was a ban in some states earlier. While it all started in Bengaluru, we knew it was a matter of time for the ban to get implemented across the country. So, even in the states where there was no ban then, we were proactively changing to biode-

gradable alternatives. That's because we knew that in the long run, we'll need to get rid of plastic. Earlier, plastic was used as a substitute to help prevent cut trees. But I think it's so overused that now it's giving a negative impact to the environment," she said.

The QSR chain uses wooden cutlery, substituted plastic cups with mason glass jars, or good quality paper cups. The plastic straws were initially replaced with straws made using polylactic acid (PLA) cornstarch-based material.

It eventually got replaced by paper straws. Also, all the paper and paper packaging material used across the res-

taurant chain is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified. The lid used for serving beverages is PLA material and is only used for deliveries not during dine-in.

"It obviously took us some time, even in Bengaluru, because it was a jolt to us at that point. I think in two months, they told us that plastic will be stopped and there'll be heavy fines imposed. And we realised that it's just a matter of time. So systematically, we started doing it in every state. Luckily, because of our proactive approach, we had a year and a half to change over. It's business as usual for us and we are completely ready for the October 2, 2019,

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