

# These Two Friends Started Goa's First Zero-Waste Store To Beat Plastic Pollution At Its Root

Author - Sayantani Nath, Published on - 4.11.2018

Born and brought up amidst the tropical freshness of Goa, childhood friends Jonah and Eldridge were noticing their beautiful land gradually turning into a **garbage dump yard**, courtesy the unplanned waste management and eco-'unfriendly' lifestyle of the residents. Like the rest of the urban spectrum of India, Goans were also opting for a fast-paced lifestyle, befriending the indispensable 'plastic' in every walk of life. Jonah, the owner of a guest house and Eldridge, a restaurateur, had always been environmentally conscious. They noticed how their businesses are leaving behind a trail of plastic bottles, bags and non-biodegradable trash. To compensate, both of them started organising clean-up drives in their town, Siolim and individually adopted a zero-waste lifestyle. For bringing more people into a greener domain, the two friends started Ecoposro, which is Goa's first zero-waste all-purpose store. "[Ecoposro](#), ('posro' meaning a 'small local shop' in Konkani) is a place where anyone could conveniently shop for everything under one roof, without plastic and other wasteful packagings," Jonah shares with The Logical Indian.

[You won't find any trace of plastic at Ecoposro](#)

---

**How it all started** "When we decided to go zero-waste, we realised the how difficult it was to discard plastic packaging and procure quality goods. Suppose if we need ten items without plastic, we have to visit five different stores – which motivated us more to launch our own zero-waste initiative," narrates Jonah. Started in April 2018, Ecoposro has already become a favourite among the locals, who have personally witnessed the benefits of shopping from a zero-waste store. "When our customers happily exclaim that now they need to take out the trash only once in three weeks, we feel proud about doing our bit for the planet," gleams Jonah. "Personally, Eldridge and I have seen our waste reduce by 75% in just a few months," he adds.

---

**How Ecoposro works** The fact that distinguishes Ecoposro from other 'green' commercial ventures is that here the owners strictly adhere to the zero-waste policy – right from procuring the raw materials to delivering them to the customers. Coordinating with local vendors and farmers, Ecoposro requests them to avoid plastic during production. They bring the materials to the shop in gunny bags, jute sacks and reusable tin containers; and arrange them on the shelves in beautiful glass jars or coconut bowls. The customers are encouraged to bring their own paper or cloth bags. Else they are offered recyclable glass jars or paper packs to carry the groceries home.

For these kids, this is a new kind of shop

---

"All we had to do was think back to the times of how our grandparents went shopping. They took their own containers to the shops, and the rest was wrapped in paper or cloth. And this is exactly what we are trying to bring back," explains Jonah. **What Ecoposro offers** From everyday household essentials like grains, spices, cooking oils, and even local produce like coconut vinegar, rock salt and jaggery to milk and other dairy products, local eggs and bread, Ecoposro will take care of all your basic grocery needs. They also have a section of zero waste detergents, cleaners and toiletries like handmade soaps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper, cloth sanitary pads etc. Naturally made organic cosmetic items have also found a place in Ecoposro. "Other than household items, we keep steel tiffins, copper water bottles and a few stationary items made from recycled paper and tetra pack," Jonah enlists, detailing how a zero-waste store can actually substitute conventional departmental stores.

What Ecoposro offers

---

The vegetables sold at Ecoposro deserve a special mention as they are completely organically farmed by local organic farming enthusiasts – with zero chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Creating environmental awareness actually underlines all the purchases made at Ecoposro.

*All the vegetables are purely organic and locally sourced*

---

## The response from the residents

The duo has received an overwhelming response from the locals which translates to be their primary motivating factor. From turning towards a zero-trash lifestyle to frequenting their clean-up campaigns, the Goans have welcomed the Ecoposro way of life warm-heartedly. "Even in the digital age, word of mouth has brought more customers to the shop than Facebook or Instagram – which shows how eager people are to go eco-friendly but stopped by commercial obligations," shares Jonah.

---

**Ditching plastic is a bigger challenge than it sounds** Plastic is synonymous with our lives today. Cheap, durable, water-proof, convenient and readily available – it is hard to deny that plastic helps to keep grocery products fresh for a long time. So, initially, Jonah and Eldridge kept on losing their stocks of rice, pulses and grains due to moisture spoilage in the absence of an alternative preservation method. They sought the help from senior citizens, who were accustomed to living plastic-free in older days. *Organic homemade spices at the store*

---

"For example, we learnt from our grandparents that chunks of 'hing' (asafoetida) could keep rice fresh and fragrant for around a year. You will find the revival of several other traditional methods of preservation at Ecoposro," Jonah reveals. **Preservation is done right the traditional way**

---

[Plans on the cards](#) Ecoposro has already fuelled the flourishing of an organic market in and around the Parra village, where small-scale local producers set up stalls and interact with the customers. The founders aim to create a sustainable community which has little dependence on environmentally unhealthy practices. A permaculture farm is also coming up just opposite the shop. The devoted founders also dream of a cosy restaurant where people will be encouraged to prepare their family recipes and share those delicacies with the community. Message for everyone "According to statistics, by 2050, which is in 32 years, there is said to be more plastic in the sea than fish. We will be 60 years old when this happens. We don't want this to become a reality," Jonah shares. "Alternatives such as glass and paper both have restrictions such as weight and strength respectively, but if we are not ready to carry home a heavier bag for the sake of the environment, then we need to reconsider our priorities seriously," he adds. First published by

The Logical Indian

on Sep. 2018