

# Being a Hero through a Zero: Transforming One's Kitchen Into a Zero-waste Haven

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Mr. Hemat Bapat is an engineer by educational qualification and a Certified Career Mentor. This session was conducted on 10th Jan 2025 for Grade VI and VII students as a Bagless day activity.

Under the theme – the United Nation's SDG #14: Life Below Water - Mr. Hemant Bapat shared how his Zero Waste Kitchen practice since last 12 years is transforming his kitchen into a zero-waste haven. It is both rewarding and impactful. By adopting these sustainable practices, we'll save money, reduce waste, and create a healthier home environment. Start small, build new habits, and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing we're contributing to a greener future—one kitchen at a time!



Zero kitchen waste can be incredibly helpful for life below water in several ways. When kitchen waste, such as food scraps, oils, or plastics, ends up in the ocean, it can cause pollution and harm marine ecosystems. Here's how reducing kitchen waste can benefit marine life:

- 1. Reduced Ocean Pollution:** Food scraps and packaging that aren't disposed of properly often end up in the ocean. When you cut down on kitchen waste, there's less chance of it making its way to water bodies, reducing ocean pollution.
- 2. Less Plastic in the Ocean:** Many food items are wrapped in plastic, and reducing waste means less plastic is produced, used, and discarded. Plastics can take hundreds of years to break down and are harmful to marine life, causing ingestion or entanglement.
- 3. Reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Kitchen waste that goes to landfills generates methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Climate change negatively impacts oceans by increasing sea temperatures and causing ocean acidification, which affects marine biodiversity.





4. **Support for Sustainable Practices:** By practicing zero waste, you're encouraging more sustainable consumption. This can include buying less processed food (which often comes with excessive packaging) or choosing products that are eco-friendly, supporting practices that help preserve marine ecosystems.

5. **Healthier Marine Ecosystems:** If less waste is dumped into the water, marine life can thrive. Reducing food waste also reduces the chances of nutrient overload in water bodies, which can lead to harmful algal blooms, depleting oxygen and harming marine life.

By making small changes in how you manage kitchen waste, you're helping reduce the pollution that makes its way into the oceans and ultimately supporting the health of life below water. It's a small action that can make a big impact!

Mr. Bapat also shared that a terrace garden combined with a zero-kitchen-waste approach can be an excellent way to create a sustainable and eco-friendly living space. By composting, here's how you can be a sustainable practice.



**Kitchen Waste as Fertiliser:** Instead of throwing away food scraps, you can compost them. Kitchen waste like vegetable peels, coffee grounds, eggshells, and even small amounts of paper can be turned into nutrient-rich compost. This compost can then be used to nourish the plants in your terrace garden.

Students were excited and encouraged for Zero Kitchen Waste practices for by seeing actual photographs of Mr. Bapat's terrace garden.