

Dhaka Declaration 2004 on Waste Management

- Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh organized a three day SAARC workshop during 10 – 12 October 2004 at BRAC Center Inn, Dhaka. The workshop was sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the SAARC Secretariat. About 35 participants from home and abroad including delegates from the SAARC countries India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh participated. The workshop had 5 technical sessions that included a Keynote Presentation followed by Country Paper Presentations, Institutional, Legal and Technical Issues, and Best Practices in Solid Waste Management.
- The recommendations presented here are based on discussions in each technical sessions as well as group meetings among SAARC delegates and unanimous consensus among the participating countries. It was confirmed by the participating countries that the recommendations be considered as “DHAKA DECLARATION ON WASTE MANAGEMENT 2004”, the key features of which are as follows:
 1. We should promote an effective, efficient, affordable, safe and sustainable waste management system of all the urban/ rural settlement of SAARC countries with special attention to addressing the needs of the poor.
 2. SAARC countries agree to establish a SAARC network on waste management with the objectives of sharing information and technology transfer on municipal solid waste and hazardous waste management among SAARC countries. The network will consist of representatives from relevant government organizations, non-government organizations, university and research institutions, and urban local government authorities from each country. The aforesaid network shall undertake the following activities:
 - Establishing information exchange mechanism
 - Forming a Technology Advisory Group for resolving technological issues
 - Developing training programs for regulatory/ implementation bodies.
 - Demonstration of technologies in the SAARC countries (SAARC fund/ donor fund)
 - Develop a database on entrepreneurs/ suppliers of equipments/ technology providers
 - Developing materials for awareness campaign
 - Developing institutional cooperation mechanism
 - Arranging annual meetings on a rotational basis
 - Organizing exchange visits amongst SAARC countries to share experiences of best practices
 - Facilitating development of legislative frameworks and guidelines
 - Undertaking joint research on legal, institutional and technical aspects of waste management
 - Developing newsletters on success stories and a dialogue website

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3. SAARC countries agree that open dumping should be stopped immediately and these open dumping should be replaced with new safe disposal options (controlled landfill sites)
4. SAARC countries agree that incineration as well as unproven technologies such as Plasma, should not be considered as an option for the treatment of their municipal solid wastes for low calorific value and environmental pollution potential. However, in absence of an appropriate no-burn technology, it may be considered for the treatment of infectious/ hazardous bio-medical wastes.
5. SAARC countries agree that present informal waste picking practice be improved as a safe and eco-friendly practice by improving the working conditions of the waste pickers and thereby reducing the occupational health hazard.
6. SAARC countries agree to encourage NGOs and private companies to establish community based segregation at source, separate collection and resource recovery from wastes with particular focus on composting.
7. SAARC countries agree that hospital waste may be treated as a special waste and managed separately.
8. SAARC countries agree that in order to make the system financially viable the cost of solid waste management should be rationalized with the view to increase revenue.
9. SAARC countries agree that waste collection disposal and treatment may be privatized to allow greater mobilization of capital. To attract foreign investment in waste management projects financing opportunities under the CDM may be harnessed.