



New APO publication



SOLID-WASTE MANAGEMENT: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN ASIA

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The Asian economic miracle has led to poverty alleviation and a better quality of life for most. However, there is increasing concern about the negative consequences of rapid industrialization and urbanization to society and the environment. One major challenge in urban areas is the concomitant increase in the volume and variety of waste generated as a result of accelerated socioeconomic development. The economic and social costs of managing solid waste in particular are fast becoming a primary concern of urban planners.

According to the World Bank, urban areas in Asia spend US\$25 million per year on solid waste management, and this figure is expected to double by 2025. Despite huge expenditures, urban areas in most APO member countries are still grappling with the challenge of preventing environmental degradation due to nonsystematic solid waste management.

With recognition of the significance of the issue in Asia-Pacific countries and increasing concerns over the ever-increasing amounts of solid waste in their municipalities, the APO conducted a fact-finding survey to study the current situation, major problems, and technomanagerial practices in solid waste management in member countries. The chief resource person of the survey, Director and CEO Tay Joo Hwa, Institute of Environment Science and Engineering, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, emphasized the complex, interrelated aspects of the issue when he defined solid waste management as “the discipline associated with controlling the generation, storage, collection, transfer and transport, processing, and disposal of solid waste in a manner that is in accordance with the best principles of health, economy, engineering, conservation, aesthetics, and other environmental considerations, and that is also responsive to public attitudes.”

Eleven APO member countries participated in the survey: Bangladesh, Republic of China, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. This survey was also an attempt to create a consolidated database on solid waste which could then be utilized for planning purposes at the national level and for strategy formulation for regional planning. This volume contains survey information on solid waste management from the 11 participating countries, including waste generation profiles, regulatory frameworks, solid waste management governance, and waste collection and disposal mechanisms. It also explains the current applications of Green Productivity (GP) tools and other proactive measures that each country is utilizing not only to minimize waste but also to exploit it as a resource. GP is a methodology that enhances productivity and environmental performance for overall socioeconomic development. The APO has been promoting GP as a simple, cost-effective, and sustainable means of systematic solid waste management. Organizations or communities that have implemented GP programs have benefited not only from the reduction in waste management costs, but also achieved economic gains through the lowering of total manufacturing/operation costs and improved productivity and hence profitability.

This publication will be useful for policymakers, municipal planners, and solid waste management professionals, giving them a better insight into the issues involved and developing new perspectives for addressing them.

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