



Household Waste Partnership

Basel Convention

on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

Key challenges faced by municipalities in developing/transition countries:

Escalating challenges in household waste management across the globe are widely acknowledged and draw attention to the importance of its environmentally sound management. While most developed countries already introduced complex household waste management practices, many developing and transition countries are still struggling with sound management of the ever-increasing volume of household waste.

The problems related to household waste may be attributed to many causes such as:

- Poverty and high rate of population growth;
- Unplanned urbanization;
- Increase in quantities and volumes of household waste;
- Increase in waste management costs/lack of financial resources;
- Inefficient institutional arrangements;
- Inappropriate technology and equipment;
- Inadequate legislation;
- Low awareness of the public and informal sector;
- Enforcement.

Environmental impacts of household waste:

A significant part of household waste in developing and transition countries is burnt in open air in the back yards or at uncontrolled dumping sites and poorly managed landfills. Overflowing landfills are often intentionally set on fire to reduce the total volume of deposited waste. Open burning releases POPs and other hazardous chemicals into air. Leachate from landfills and dumpsites contaminates surrounding soil and water. Plastic waste comprises a large portion of household waste and plastic pollution in oceans, rivers and lakes is a great concern globally.

Household Waste and the Basel Convention:

The environmentally sound management of household wastes includes source separation, collection, transportation, storage, recycling, energy recovery and final disposal. Based on their origin, composition and characteristics, household waste may contain hazardous materials co-mingled with non-hazardous materials. Because of the potential for contamination with hazardous substances, the Basel Convention classifies waste collected from households as requiring special consideration (Basel Convention, Annex II, Y46).



What is the Household Waste Partnership?

The Household Waste Partnership was established by the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention in 2017 to address this important issue and to provide technical assistance worldwide, supporting all countries to benefit from already available solutions for environmentally sound management, including issues such as separation at source, collection, transport, storage, recycling, energy recovery and final disposal.

Objectives of the Partnership:

- To promote the environmentally sound management of household waste including its prevention and minimization
- To enable the decoupling of economic growth and environmental impacts associated with the generation of household waste and its initial handling by the public in their households

Benefits of the Partnership:

Through global information exchange, sharing of best practices by key stakeholders in the field, development and provision of technical guidance based on the latest science available, active engagement of the private sector for enhanced action to promote environmental sound management of wastes, including issues such as extended producer responsibility, active engagement of the civil society and the general public through targeted awareness raising, the Partnership provides the necessary infrastructure to address this global challenge in an efficient and innovative way.

Technical assistance through the Partnership:

These technical assistance activities will be based on scientific assessments undertaken through rigorous review of scientific data in the frame of the Partnership involving a wide variety of stakeholders, including namely academia, industry and civil society. The Partnership provides an efficient platform for information exchange linking scientific findings, technical solutions, and concrete on-ground actions.

Strengthen policy, legal and institutional framework:

To ensure the progress in environmentally sound management of household waste and the improvement of social conditions in communities that are dependent on waste as a source of revenue (i.e. informal sector), it is crucial to strengthen policy, legal and institutional framework at both national and local levels.

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Guidance to be developed:

The guidance to be developed by the Partnership will address the prevention and minimization of household waste, waste characterization and data collection for the traceability of waste throughout its life-cycle, separation at source, recycling, use of waste for energy recovery as well as final disposal, including the sound handling of hazardous substances and objects contained in household wastes.

These are key aspects of environmentally sound management that will assist countries to work towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

Enhance public awareness and participation:

The Partnership also aims to enhance awareness-raising through education and training on the environmentally sound management of household waste, and enhance participation by the public in household waste management activities and decision-making at the national level.

Membership:

The membership of the Partnership is open to all Parties and observers of the Basel Convention. Governments, regional and local authorities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations including private sector, academia, civil society and regional/coordinating centers of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions are all welcome to join the Partnership.



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