

Special Issue Newsletter

International Zero-waste City Network: The Zero-waste City Mayor Forum

Preface

The International Zero-waste City Network is a global network initiated by Basel Convention Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific (BCRC China) since 2022, and co-sponsored by 7 other Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres. At present, BCRC China has invited 7 regional centres (BCRCs) of Basel Convention to serve as co-sponsors. As of October 2024, the Network have 48 memberships, including 7 provinces, 31 cities, 8 BCRCs, and 2 observer cities. Since 2021, BCRC China, relying on the Network and in conjunction with the International Conference on Solid Waste Management and Technology, has held five consecutive Zero-waste City high-level forums, inviting more than 60 cities from China and foreign countries to share experiences. At the same time, two training courses along the "the Belt and Road" countries were held, one online training courses held in November 2023 attracting nearly 90 participants from 23 countries, and another face-to-face meeting was held in September 2024 attracting 20 representatives from 8 countries.

In order to facilitate the exchange of good practices of zero-waste initiatives among cities, BCRC China organized the Zero-waste City Mayor Forum from May 18 to 20, 2024, in Hangzhou, China, back-to-back with the 19th International Conference on Waste Management and Technology (ICWMT19). Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres, and city mayors or his/her representatives were invited to share their experience and discuss important issues on zero-waste topic at the municipal, national and regional levels. Six cities from different regions shared their experience on the construction of zero-waste city, including Sihanoukville in Cambodia, Auckland and Palmerston North in New Zealand, Surakarta in Indonesia, Balcarce in Argentina, and Zahle in Lebanon.

This special issue of the newsletter is centred around the Zero-waste City Mayor Forum and its presentations, as well as a technical field visit in Hangzhou aimed to provide insights into the household waste recycling system.

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Introduction

The International Zero-waste City Network is a global network initiated by Basel Convention Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific (BCRC China) since 2022, and co-sponsored by 7 other Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres, including the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Arab States, Egypt (BCRC Egypt), the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the English-speaking African countries, South Africa (BCRC South Africa), the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for South-East Asia, Indonesia (BCRC Indonesia), the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer in Tehran, Iran (BCRC Iran), the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for CIS countries, Russian Federation (BCRC Russia), the Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the South American Region, Argentina (BCRC Argentina), and the Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for Latin America and Caribbean Region, Uruguay (BCCC Uruguay). The Network is composed of the Secretariat, a Subsidiary Committee of Experts, a Subsidiary Committee of Industry representatives, members and observers.

Aim

The aim of the Network is to assist cities and other entities with achieving a key set of targets to ensure their long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability within the goals set out by key international, regional and national instruments, policies and other relevant agreements, especially for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The network endeavors to promote the international progress of zero-waste initiatives through sharing good practices, providing technical assistance and capacity building to the city members of the Network.

Membership

Any government of cities, counties or any other kind of administrative divisions, that shares the objectives and the vision of the Network may apply for membership. While voluntary contributions are appreciated, membership and co-sponsorship does not require any financial contribution. By far, the Network have 48 members including 7 provinces, 31 cities, 8 Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres, and 2 observer cities.

The Zero-waste City Mayor Forum

In order to facilitate the experience exchange of zero-waste initiatives among cities, BCRC China organized the Zero-waste City Mayor Forum from May 18 to 20, 2024, in Hangzhou, China, back-to-back with the 19th International Conference on Waste Management and Technology (ICWMT19). Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Basel Convention Regional and Coordinating Centres, and city mayors or his/her representatives were invited to share their experience and discuss important issues on zero-waste topic at the municipal, national and regional levels. At the forum, Takehiro Nakamura, Head of International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC), UNEP, delivered a report on UN

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responses to the UN General Assembly Resolution on zero-waste. He briefed on the resolution A/RES/77/161 on “Promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the establishment of the Advisory Board on Zero Waste, its achievement to date and their future work.



Takehiro Nakamura, Head of IETC UNEP, reported at the forum

Six cities from different regions shared their experience on the construction of zero-waste city, including Sihanoukville in Cambodia, Auckland and Palmerston North in New Zealand, Surakarta in Indonesia, Balcarce in Argentina, and Zahle in Lebanon. Dr. Behdad Chehrenegar, Scientific Coordinator of the BCRC Iran shared the national waste management initiatives in Iran and the good practice of Isfahan Municipality.



EAM Sarin, Vice Mayor of Sihanouk City, Cambodia, reported at the forum

The 3 directors from the Network Co-sponsors, Mostafa Ahmed, the Director of the BCRC Egypt, Alberto Santos Capra, the Director of BCRC Argentina, Anton Purnomo, the Director of the BCRC Indonesia, joined the panel discussion of the forum. They shared their points and suggestions for cities in different regions to

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overcome the challenges, to transform the overconsumption, and to narrow the gap in current waste management policy and institutional capacity.



Director Alberto Santos Capra, Director Moustafa Ahmed and Director Anton Purnomo in the panel discussion (from left to right)

The Technical Field Visit in Hangzhou

A technical field visit was arranged to Zhejiang Huge Waste Management Co., Ltd. (referred to as "HUGE") for the offline speakers of the forum. This visit aimed to provide insights into the household waste recycling system in Hangzhou, which is one of the 113 cities and 8 special areas conduct the zero-waste city construction in China during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025).



HUGE technical field visit

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What HUGE has done?

One-stop Front to End Collection

A collection network of service stations is established to cover the residential neighborhoods, stores along the streets, and institutions, with each station serving 2,000 households. To facilitate efficient recycling, each service station is staffed with two full-time personnel for publicity and recycling. Residents are provided with recyclable holders and special recycling bags by HUGE. The company utilizes an exclusion method for the collection of low-value recyclables and hazardous wastes, excluding perishable and other waste types. Through an APP or WeChat applet, residents can request door-to-door collection services from HUGE, earning Ecogold Points based on the type and weight of waste collected, which can be redeemed for goods at the HUGE online mall.

One Closed-loop Recycling Chain

To enhance the utilization of renewable resources, HUGE has focused on strengthening transportation and sorting processes. A sorting center has been established to receive waste from service stations, where resources are categorized into 9 major groups and over 40 subcategories. The remaining residues and hazardous waste are directed to waste incineration power plants and specialized disposal units respectively. The whole recycling chain achieves a resource utilization rate exceeding 95% and a 100% of harmless disposal.



HUGE Household Waste Recycling Solutions

One Set of Data Platform for Intelligent Supervision

Furthermore, the company has implemented a comprehensive data platform comprising six major sections, including Recycling Big Data Platform, Recycling Order Supervision Platform, Logistics Clearance Supervision Platform, End Resourcing Utilization Supervision Platform, Integral Mall Redemption Supervision Platform, and Carbon Emission Reduction Information Supervision Platform. More than 300

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resource recycling enterprises have registered at the platform. This platform enables real-time monitoring and transparency across the entire collection, transportation, sorting, and disposal processes. An innovative carbon emission reduction methodology for household waste recycling has been developed by HUGE to quantify residents' environmental impact. The creation of a Carbon Emission Reduction Information Supervision Platform supports Zhejiang Province's carbon inclusive policies. During the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou in 2023, HUGE contributed 32,000 tons of carbon emission reduction to the 19th Asian Games Organizing Committee during the event, earning commendation from the Committee for their effort.

Join the International Zero-waste City Network

Any government of cities, counties or any other kind of administrative divisions, who wants to share the objectives and vision of the Network, could apply for membership. If you want to support Network and improve waste management in cities around the world, or be an official partner of the Network, please contact us by sending an email to mea.waste@tsinghua.edu.cn for further collaboration.

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