

# Ending Open Burning of Waste in Asia: From Political Commitment to Action

Miho Hayashi

Programme Manager, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

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# What happens in Asia

256 million tonnes / year  
(84%) (16%)

62%  
(168 kilotonnes / year)

249 million tonnes

82%  
(220,000 / year)

# The Hidden Air Pollution Crisis

## Ending Open Burning of Waste in Asia

- ✓ Open burning of waste is **one of the most overlooked sources of air pollution.**
- ✓ Common in **peri-urban, dumpsites, and rural areas.**
- ✓ Releases **PM<sub>2.5</sub>** (including **black carbon**), **toxic gases**, and **hazardous pollutants** such as dioxins.
- ✓ Impacts **public health, climate, and economy** simultaneously.



Eliminating open burning of waste contributes to improvement of air quality and mitigation of climate change

# Why Does Open Burning Persist?

## Barriers Identified Across Asian Countries

- Weak enforcement of waste, air, and climate regulations
- Insufficient waste infrastructure for source segregation, collection, transportation, and disposal site management
- Institutional fragmentation between waste, air quality, and climate agencies
- Few affordable alternatives for municipalities and communities for implementation
- Lack of data and monitoring
- Habitual behavior and lack of awareness

**Low political priority and fragmented institutional responsibilities**

# What Unlocks Political Action?

## 1. Clear national commitment

- Integrate OWB into air quality and climate strategies

## 2. Practical Alternatives

- Expand waste collection coverage with application of source segregation
- Improve disposal site management
- Promote circular economy solutions

## 3. Regional Collaboration

- Share policies, knowledge, and financing mechanisms

**Political will grows when governments see that solutions are practical and scalable**

# From Dialogue to Commitment: Kathmandu Declaration

Regional dialogue helped build shared commitment to end open burning of waste

- Regional policy dialogue → political commitment
- Kathmandu Declaration (South Asia)
- Built on evidence + country baselines
- Reflection of practical realities and challenges in the region
- Inclusiveness: Agreed by all participants from different sectors



Key success factors:

- Inclusive dialogue (waste, air, climate sectors)
- Clear, action-oriented language



# Launch of the Asia Roadmap to End Open Burning of Waste



The roadmap provides:

- A **strategic framework for policy makers to eliminate OWB**
- **Five pillars for action**, including reframe of the narrative, enforcement, waste infrastructure, monitoring, and partnership
- A **phased implementation pathway** from short-term actions to long-term transition



AQMx library



# Join the Regional Effort!

Ending open burning of waste is **achievable**  
— and **cooperation** across governments  
will be essential

- Implement the roadmap
- Share best practices
- Mobilize financing
- Accelerate action on air quality through waste management and circular economy

Please reach out to **IGES**  
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Environmental Strategies



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BETTER AIR QUALITY  
CONFERENCE 11-13 MAR • BANGKOK



# Thank you for listening!

For questions, please contact  
[Miho.Hayashi@iges.or.jp](mailto:Miho.Hayashi@iges.or.jp)

