

Declaration on Climate Change and the Waste and Resource Management Sector

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ISWA

International Solid Waste Association

ISWA Declaration on Climate Change and the Waste and Resources Management Sector

Rotterdam, 3 November 2022

Key Messages

1. The waste and resource management sector offers a considerable and immediate cost-effective opportunity to mitigate global greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Policies that encourage the transition to a circular economy are not detrimental to economic growth and offer opportunities to establish innovative low-carbon technologies and markets for secondary raw materials, contributing to a net zero future.
3. Solving open burning and open dumping of waste and plastic pollution on both land and in the oceans, can increase action against climate change.

We, the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA):

Recognise that climate change is one of the greatest threats facing humanity contributing to the triple planetary crisis of climate disruption, biodiversity loss, and increased pollution already impacting people and ecosystems;

Acknowledge that we need to urgently apply both mitigating and adapting measures to avoid unprecedented consequences;

Emphasize that transitioning to a circular economy, improving waste management practices and providing a more resourceful approach has a total mitigation potential of around 20% of global GHG emissions.

Endorse the universal human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment;

Welcome the Global Methane Pledge launched at COP 26, and continuously collaborate to its full implementation to reduce methane emissions by 30% by 2030;

Consider that extreme weather conditions linked to climate change will exacerbate the spread of plastics in the natural environment and also maximize the consequences of other negative impacts in environmental quality including biodiversity loss and pollution;

Support the negotiation process to develop a legally binding agreement to mitigate plastic pollution as an important instrument to improve environmental quality and tackle GHG emissions.

Hereby declare:

1. The waste and resource management sector offer both an immediate and cost-effective opportunity to achieve substantial cuts in global Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCFs)¹ and carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions, also to achieve savings in other economic sectors and thus must be part of implementing the portfolio of solutions for mitigation and adaptation to reduce global emissions essential to reaching climate neutrality.
2. Policies that encourage the transition to a circular economy are not detrimental to economic growth and offer opportunities to establish innovative low-carbon technologies and markets for secondary raw materials contributing towards a net zero future
3. Solving open burning and open dumping of waste and plastic pollution on both land and in the oceans, can increase action against climate change.

Therefore, the National Members of ISWA, convened at its General Assembly, the governing body of the International Solid Waste Association, an Observer Organization of the UNFCCC and UNEP, call upon Governments, Industries, Multilateral and International Organizations, NGOs and the Civil Society to:

1. Prioritize sustainable and integrated waste and resources management strategies and a circular economy in national plans and initiatives for climate mitigation and adaptation, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and climate finance mechanisms.
2. Mobilize and scale up public and private funds to implement sound and low carbon waste and resources management systems and technologies, in order to stop and close all inadequate operations (e.g. open burning and open dumping of waste).

¹ Both methane and black carbon are SLCFs, which have much greater global heating potentials than carbon dioxide. SLCFs also decay more quickly in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide.

3. Develop a combination of economic instruments to finance climate mitigation and adaptation measures, including structuring a global market to trade methane reduction credits from waste operations in order to achieve the Global Methane Pledge goal.
4. Intensify support and maximize investments to identify, control and mitigate land-based sources of plastics contributing to ocean pollution.

To accomplish these objectives, **the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA)**, through its members, its Board, Scientific and Technical Committee, Working Groups, and the General Secretariat **commits to:**

1. Enhance cooperation with international agencies, governments and other organizations to extend access to adequate waste management systems to all citizens and support the transition to a circular economy.
2. Support cities, municipalities and regions on targeted and tangible actions to mitigate GHG emissions and tackle plastic pollution, encouraging the development and the implementation of policies and actions to mitigate climate change, tackle plastic pollution and establish a low carbon economy.
3. Collaborate with the private sector along the entire value chain on establishing good waste and resource management practices, across materials and products lifecycle improving design and production patterns, setting better Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) indicators, and supporting the transition to a circular economy, aiming at reducing the overall footprint towards a net-zero future.
4. Work towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as a significant contribution to a healthy environment and the mitigation of GHG and plastic pollution.
5. Contribute to the advancement of technical and scientific knowledge about sustainable waste and resource management oriented to mitigate GHG emissions and to reduce plastic pollution, through research, capacity building and disseminating successful experiences.



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