**For Immediate Release**

 **09/03/2017**

**\*\*THE EVENT IS OPEN TO JOURNALISTS\*\***

**Decentralised solid waste management policy innovation in Bengaluru**

Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru, India and Institute of New Energy and Low-carbon Technology of Sichuan University, Chengdu, China, are jointly conducting a workshop on ‘Decentralized solid waste management policy innovation in Bengaluru: Special focus on residential bulk generators’ on March 10, 2017, in Bengaluru.

The workshop aims to disseminate the results of a 10-month on solid waste management policy innovation in Bengaluru for residential bulk generators promulgated in 2012. The workshop will also address how residential bulk generators in Bengaluru cope with the policy of decentralised waste management, issues with the implementation of this policy, costs of legal compliance, and stocks, flows and final destinations of waste fractions from this section of the population.

**Plugging gaps in Bengaluru's SWM policy**

The innovations in Bengaluru’s SWM policy lies in targeting bulk and non-bulk generators differently and in mandating all waste generators to segregate waste at source into three fractions (dry, wet and sanitary waste). According to this policy, bulk generators are mandated to segregate waste at source and then either treat their wet-waste onsite (by composting or bio-methanation) or procure the services of empanelled vendors to transport wet and dry waste fractions to designated treatment and sorting facilities in the city. Another key element of Bengaluru’s SWM policy is in decentralising treatment and sorting of wet and dry waste to the ward level. Since the implementation of the new court rules issued in 2012, over one hundred residential bulk generators in the city have adopted some sort of on-site wet-waste composting method. However, significant challenges for a full and effective implementation of the mandatory segregation of waste at source have remained. One of the key persistent challenges is the waste collection contractor “mafia” and its alleged collusion with the BBMP corporators and BBMP staff that had prevented the effective management of solid waste in Bengaluru.

 Says Megha Shenoy, Adjunct Fellow, ATREE, who co-led the project, “Challenges faced by residential bulk generators include enforcement of segregation at source, costs of incineration of sanitary waste, having to engage with private vendors for waste management services while still paying SWM Cess to the BBMP and lack of direction from the BBMP on how to dispose rejects from dry waste. The BBMP needs to enforce incineration of sanitary waste, waive off SWM Cess for legally compliant bulk generators, and identify reject materials to chalk out strategies (including extended producer responsibility) to reduce generation and eventual disposal of these reject materials.”

According to Xuehua Zhang , Sichuan University, China, who co-led the project “My first visit in 2015 to Bengaluru with an old friend of mine from Stanford University brought this new innovative waste management practice to my attention. I was a bit shocked by the determination demonstrated by the Karnataka Court, BBMP, local NGOs and concerned citizens to treat their waste at source without going down the widely-accepted path of landfill and incineration, as has been in many parts of the world such as China. It was then a natural choice to set up a collaborative project between Sichuan University where I am affiliated and ATREE where I have come to know a number of outstanding researchers when a successful Chinese businessman offered funding support. The goal is to learn from the Bengaluru experience, to establish similar demonstrative projects in Chengdu, China where I am from, and ultimately to push for policy changes that will switch from an incineration-based waste management approach to a decentralised treatment-based approach. One of many valuable lessons I have learned through this project is “waste is gold. Waste is a misplaced resource.” We want to introduce this fundamental concept to Chengdu and other parts of China. “

**About ATREE**

Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) focuses on research and education to engage and influence policy and practice in the conservation of nature, management of natural resources, and sustainable development. Established in 1996 as a non-profit organisation, ATREE works in the forests of the Western Ghats, the ecosystems of Northeast Himalayas, grasslands of Kutch, wetlands of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the expanding urban cities of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, and other parts of India.

**About Community-Based Wet-waste Composting in Bangalore, India (Project by ATREE and Sichuan University)**

This project studied community-based garbage segregation and composting initiatives in Bangalore city in order to identify socio-economic, technical, political, and institutional elements that are crucial to the performance of such systems, including their methods of treating wet-waste. The project also carried out a desk review of experiences elsewhere to come up with recommendations for replication and scaling in different contexts. The Bangalore experience can provide valuable insights for other parts of the world that face garbage disposal challenges. Cities of Chengdu, China and Vancouver, Canada have expressed interest in adopting similar composting systems.

**About Institute of New Energy and Low-carbon Technology, Sichuan University**

Sichuan University is one of the top universities located in the south-west of China. It is a comprehensive research-oriented university with a total of 12 colleges. The Institute of New Energy and Low-carbon Technology was established in 2011 and is a stand-alone research institute equivalent to a college within the university.  The Institute focuses on research and education to engage in scientific and technological development of renewable energy and low carbon issues. It also aims to engage and influence the policy and practice in the field of traditional energy, renewable energy, climate change and environmental protection.

**Date: 10th March 2017 (Friday)**

**Time: 9.30 AM to 4:30 PM**

**Venue: Hotel Iris, #70, Brigade Road, Next to Eva Mall, Bengaluru - 560025**

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