

Global Treaties, Policies and Legislations pertaining to waste

Before you Begin

Waste as we have come to understand are materials that are unwanted or unusable that get discarded. We have also learnt that what is waste for one person, may not necessarily be the same for another. The term waste is also applicable to different types of materials including municipal, hazardous, biomedical, industrial, E-waste, to name a few. Based on its nature, waste can also be toxic, hazardous, inert or infectious. The nature of the waste and the volume in which waste is being produced today, has put immense pressure on our environment.

Waste type, quantity of waste generated, how and where it is disposed, its nature (hazardous or infectious) which sometimes makes it mandatory to be handled with care. How it is collected, transported and treated are some of the other questions which arise around “waste”.

A number of laws and legislations are in place which look at waste management. These govern the transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of waste. These laws look at minimising or controlling indiscriminate dispersal of waste; reduce ecological or biological harm; mandate waste recycling or even mandate where the waste can or cannot be disposed.

Different conventions and laws have been put together for waste management, some of these are:-

- Convention on Civil Liability for Damage Caused during Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail, and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD), Geneva, 1989
- Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Basel, 1989
- Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movements and Management of Hazardous Wastes Within Africa, Bamako, 1991
- Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, Rotterdam, 1998
- Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, Helsinki, 1992
- European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (AND), Geneva, 2000
- European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), Geneva, 1957
- FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, Rome, 1985
- Minamata Convention on Mercury, Minamata 2013
- Stockholm Convention Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants Stockholm, 2001
- Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region, Waigani, 1995

The Microbead-Free Waters Act are examples of some of the different types of laws and legislations governing waste that are applicable in different locations.

Waste and Law



INTRODUCTION

Being aware of the laws is an important component of “Citizenship Education”. With our “Rights” we have our “Responsibilities”. With the waste becoming a global problem that is effecting our oceans at a scale that can threaten wild life and the largest source of food supply, it is important to be aware of the laws at various levels - local to global for better compliance.

The lesson plan encourages research of laws related to waste that can encourage better compliance and responsible global citizenship.

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- record an inventory of laws related to waste.
- create a display of the different types of laws related to waste.

Eco-Schools Steps: Environmental review, Curriculum linkages, Inform and Involve

Curriculum Linkage: Science/ Environmental Studies/Social Science

Time required/ Duration:

- **Classroom Session 1:** 45 minutes to do a background introduction on waste and law.
- **Group Assignment:** Five hours over a week for students to undertake internet based research and identify different laws pertaining to waste.
- **Classroom Session 2:** 90 minutes to summarise and students to prepare the Eco-Schools display board along with one month display time.

Resources Required:

- Resource 1 (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act)
- Internet
- Writing Materials



Activity

Classroom session 1

- Start with a discussion introducing students to waste and law.
- Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students.
- Guide students to undertake internet based search on the different types of laws and legislations pertaining to waste. Different groups can be assigned different aspects so as to avoid overlaps
 - Laws could be pertaining to category of waste.
 - Laws could be pertaining to collection of waste.
 - Laws could be pertaining to disposal of waste - how and where?
 - Laws could be related to littering and such behaviours.

Teachers should provide one week for each group to further research and collate information about laws relevant to waste.

Classroom session 2

- Ask students to summarise and share their research work.
- Discuss what is the responsibility of a common citizen in enforcement of laws.
- Brainstorm on why some of the laws do not work and what can be done to create more compliance.
- Guide the groups to organise the information collected to inform the students of the schools.
- Ask the students to create a display with information pertaining to waste and law on the Eco-Schools bulletin board.

Evaluation:

Teachers could evaluate the lesson plan based on the content of the display board.