Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

Introduction to policy study on waste and recycling

The Final Workshop
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Main issues in the waste sector from economic integration

A. Problems

- Increased waste generation (quantity and complexity)
- Increased illegal waste trade, trade in recyclables, improper recycling
- Environmental damage from improper recycling and illegal and open dumping
  - Especially air, water, & soil contamination
  - Especially toxic and hard to manage materials from e-waste

B. Opportunities

- Opportunity for increased efficiency and specialization in recycling (increased efficiency of resource utilisation)
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Central research question

What kind of policy mix/ policy package are expected to be effective to reduce negative environmental impacts from waste and recycling (especially those of durable goods) in the context of regional economic integration

- National policies
- Regional policy coordination

Research on Innovative and Strategic Policy Options Second Phase (RISPO-II)
Waste and recycling

Rationale

- The primary aims of the proposed national and regional policies are
  1) aiming for institutional and industrial capacity building for sound material cycle and to
  2) promote regional coordination to seek win-win solutions for the countries in the region.

- The policy options examined in this study primarily try to address environmental concerns such as air, water and soil contamination and associated environmental and health damages and risks from
  - 1) open dumping of residues/ hard-to-manage materials and
  - 2) environmentally unsound recycling practices of e-waste in developing Asia. These problems are worsened by economic integration.

- However, the study tries to address these problems by examining how to shift the stream/flow of materials (focusing on e-waste) from improper recycling practices into formal/proper recycling and treatment processes as well as by increasing resource efficiency in the Asian region.

Overall policy package proposed

	Institutional development	Infrastructure development	Information and knowledge development
Overall regional policy option	Regional Recycling Mechanism		
Regional Policy	•International burden sharing for difficult to manage materials •International financial support for domestic infrastructure/ information development	•Networking of eco-towns/eco-industrial park through recycling port	•Information sharing between upstream and downstream on valuables and hazardous substances in the products •Certification for good recyclers/traders
National Policy	•EPR-based obligatory recycling mechanism	•Promote development of domestic recycling capacity through eco-towns/eco industrial parks policy	•Statistical information •Development of inventory •MFA

National and regional studies

Why a regional approach is desirable

Difference in location of production, consumption, and distribution of products, transboundary movement of products and materials

=> negative environmental impacts, difficulty in coordinating recycling

Difficulty in classification and distinction of secondhand goods, recyclables, or waste

=> Illegal waste trade, disguised waste

Gap in recycling capacity and mechanism among countries

Contribution of national studies

•Identification of different emphasis in national capacity development.

•Identification of commonality in policy issues faced by countries.

•Identification of opportunities and challenges for regional cooperation.

National study focus

Case study country	Focus/ interests
China	- Expecting high resource demands of industrial sector and consumption and waste of consumer durable goods because of expected economic development either with SEI or DEI -Importance of overall institutional capacity development/governance issues
Thailand	- Automobile industry are expected to be boom under EI. - Integrated material/recycling concern in the existing Eco-car policy. - Eco-industrial development to be a winner in eco-products market under EI.
Viet Nam	- Relatively less developed capacity - Small craft industries are transforming into informal recycling industries - Similar to China but focus on development of recycling industries
Japan	- Continuation of hollowing out - Lessons from Japanese experience - Regional policy to respond expanding loophole of domestic policy because of EI. - Coordination between upstream and downstream policy

Relevance to existing policy processes and current debates

- 3R Initiative as G8 Process
- 3R Initiative as Asia Process
- OECD-UNEP Conference on Resource Efficiency
- Japan's policy on "vision of a sound material cycle society in East Asia" and new "Japan's Action Plan to Promote Global Zero-Waste Societies".