

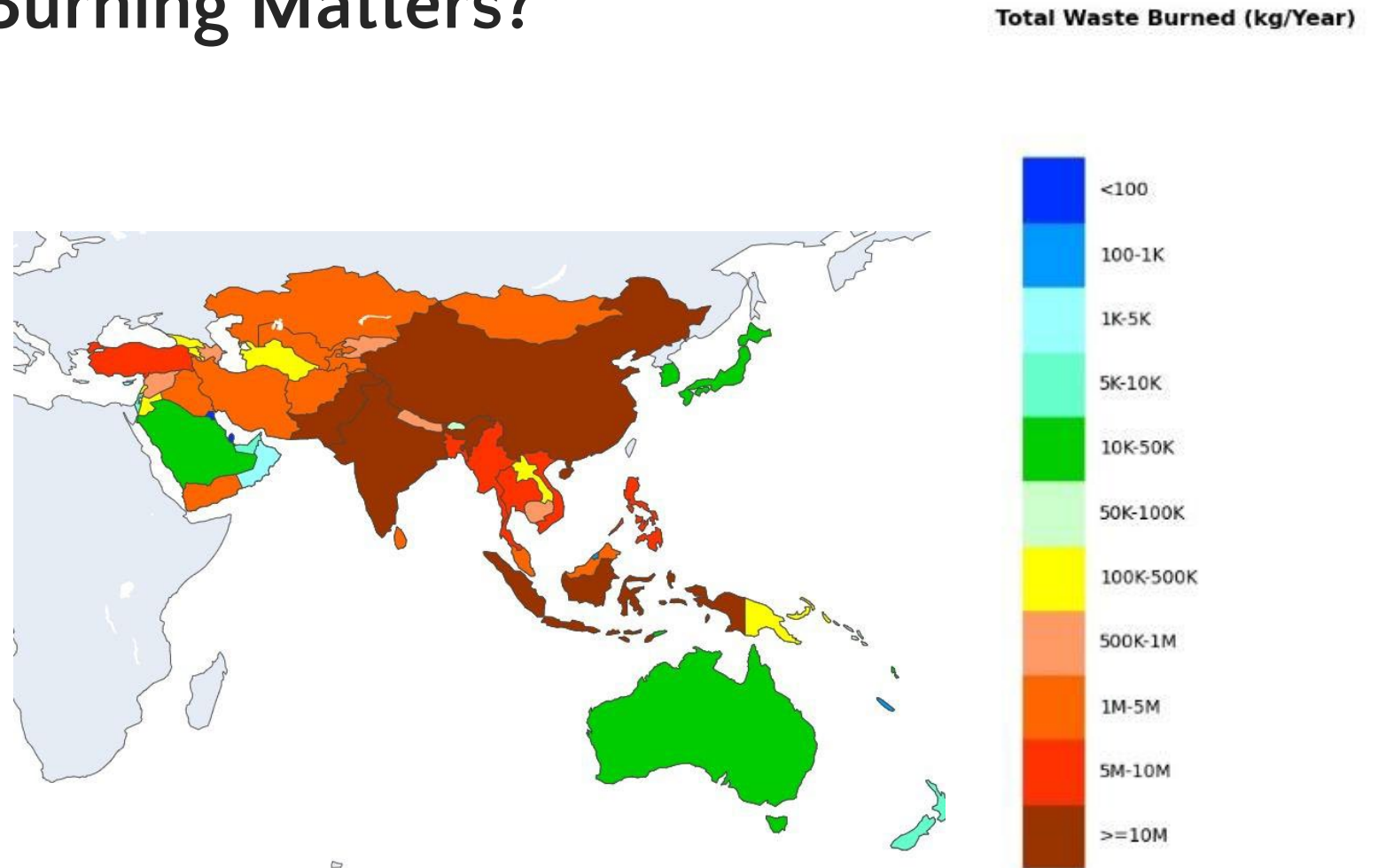
Transformative Action to End Open Burning of Waste in Asia

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Why Open Waste Burning Matters?

- 40% of municipal waste is openly burned in many Asian countries
- Contributes to 270,000 premature deaths annually
- Releases toxic pollutants such as dioxins, furans, and black carbon (short-lived climate pollutants: SLCPs)



Developed based on data from What a Waste 2.0 (World Bank, 2018) and Waste Atlas 2022

Open Burning of Waste is a **cross-cutting issue** that undermines national goals on **climate, health, and clean air** —not just a waste problem.

Process of Roadmap Development in Asia

1. **Conducted baseline survey** for 10 countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Nepal, Pakistan, India, Maldives, Iraq, Jordan and China) to understand the current practice, policy and regulatory framework, and institutional capacity around open burning of waste
2. **Estimated emissions of GHG and black carbon** and its climate impact caused by open burning of waste together with UN-Habitat.
3. Organised two **Regional dialogues** for peer-to-peer learning and review the draft regional roadmap
4. Implementing **city pilot activities**, formulating **an integrated waste management strategy/action plan**, and developing **policy recommendation** in Lao PDR, Maldives and Iraq
5. Finalise the Roadmap

Current status of open burning of waste

Dumping Sites (& institutions)

Who?

Waste pickers (informal sector)
Disposal site operator
Spontaneous fire (human, CH₄)

Why?

Poor disposal site management without adequate equipment and infra (lack of \$)
Absence of policy on waste disposal
No alternative land available for new disposal site (reduction of waste volume)
Extraction of valuable materials (E-waste)
Spontaneous methane fire

Residential Area

Who?

Waste generator (household, commercial sector)
Waste pickers (informal sector)

Why?

Cultural habit
Inadequate waste collection service (frequency, reliability, difficult access)
Lack of waste management infrastructure, vehicles and equipment
Unwillingness to pay collection fee
Weak enforcement

Why OBW Persists

Identified gaps:

- **Infrastructure gaps**
- **Policy and enforcement**
- **Behavioral norms**
- **Financial constraint**



Five Pillars of Action

- Reframe the narrative
- Strengthen governance and enforcement
- Invest in infrastructure & circular economy
- Build monitoring and transparency
- Expand partnerships & public engagement

What makes this roadmap different from existing waste strategies?

Integrating OBW into Policies

- Open waste burning often sits outside air quality, health, or climate policies
- Need integrated national action plans with clear roles and penalties



- Embed goal of Open Waste Burning in NDCs, SDGs, and health/climate strategies
- Align waste, air, health institutions
- Clarify city vs national roles



City-Level Actions

Realistic actions

- Expand collection **with source segregation**
- Decentralized **composting & recycling**
- **Fair enforcement +alternative+ awareness**
- Integrate informal workers



From Strategy to Action

Short term (1–3 yrs)

- Awareness, baseline data, pilot alternatives

Medium term (4–8 yrs)

- Scale segregation, infrastructure, incentives

Long term (9–15 yrs)

- Circular economy, burn-free communities

