

Knowledge exchange between India and Bangladesh on resource conservation in the brick and textile industries bears fruit as policy changes and piloting exercises begin

A stakeholder consultative workshop for ‘Promotion of resource efficient brick and textile manufacture in Bangladesh’ was organised on 25th February, 2016 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The workshop was jointly organised by the Department of Environment (DoE), Government of Bangladesh, in partnership with the Indian Institute of Productivity, under the DFID’s Knowledge Partnership Programme. The purpose was to bring together all relevant stakeholders on a common platform to assess the challenges and opportunities and to work out an action plan.

The workshop focused on promoting resource conservation in two key industry sectors of Bangladesh: Textile and Brick, by facilitating transfer and uptake of best practices, policies and technologies through knowledge sharing. More than 150 participants representing key policy makers and regulators, opinion leaders in the brick and textile sector, Industry Associations and financial, research and technical institutions were present. The workshop was preceded by several efforts on peer to peer knowledge exchange between the two countries, including exposure visits.



Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests stated that Bangladesh needed to follow ‘economic development’ and not ‘economic growth.’ Welcoming the Indian knowledge sharing initiative, he said that brick making in the country was using up fertile soil putting food security at grave risk and there was an urgent need explore options such as Fal G bricks as a solution.

Mr Md. Raisul Alam Mondal, Director General of the Department of Environment warned that with the increasing dominance of coal-based power generation, fly ash disposal would turn into a huge problem

and its use in bricks could help address this. He urged the industry to work with the government to jointly address environment challenges and move towards sustainability.

The Indian participants shared information on Fal G bricks, zero liquid waste discharge (ZLD) and India's Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme and the National Certification System for Energy Auditors and Managers, both promoted by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.

Mr Asadur Rahman Khan, Vice President of the Bangladesh Brick Manufacturing Owners Association presented the views of the industry. Highlighting the employment potential of the industry he recommended policy support and demonstration plants as a way forward.

As next steps it was agreed to have Fal G demonstration units in Bangladesh. The government informed that two policy amendments are underway: The inclusion of fly ash in the Bangladesh Environment Conservation Policy and Flyash bricks in the existing Brick gazette (Brick Manufacturing and Kiln Set up (Control) Act, 2013.

The Government is also planning to develop groundwater guidelines to regulate its use which could result in the acceptance of ZLD. The garment industry expressed concern over the financial viability and suggested that measures be explored to reduce costs. The gathering was also informed about the steps the textile industry is currently undertaking.

The project has now reached a critical stage where there is substantial scope for technology adoption through policy measures and institutionalising capacity activities. Work on both of these aspects has been initiated.

