
Tackling Global & Regional Environmental Challenges

December 2015 marked the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. World leaders gathered in Paris, France, with the goal of working out an international agreement aimed at minimizing global warming and thereby avoiding potentially catastrophic climate-related events. The negotiations resulted in a landmark agreement, with 195 countries committing to lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order to limit the rise in global temperatures to less than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures. In addition to reducing GHG emissions, much more is needed for environmental sustainability. Another area that has been gaining momentum is recycling.

Regional Maharashtra has always taken the lead in terms of initiatives for preserving the environment and minimizing or reducing ecological damage. The state of Maharashtra recently committed itself to following strict environmental norms as recommended by its newly-appointed consultant, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).

Suresh Shetty, Minister - Environment Department, Government of Maharashtra, pointed out that Maharashtra is the first state to have a consultant to conduct an overall environmental assessment, which will give an insight into agricultural, coastal and rainfall patterns for the next five years. Sachin Ahir, Minister of State for Environment Department, Government of Maharashtra, has been highlighting the need for flying squads as being necessary to monitor disposal of e-waste in the city, as a report released by state pollution board indicates alarming 50,000 tons of e-waste could be generated per year.

According to him, the state has already identified areas having the most e-waste and started the disposal centers at Taloja, Butibori and Ranjangaon near Pune city. The containers carrying e-waste are being tracked by GPS system to ensure the waste is disposed properly.