

Gorai dumpsite project bags major global climate change award

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A Marathi documentary on the story of the successful closure of the dumpsite and promoting climate friendly policies has received third prize in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun, Mexico

The spotlight turned once again on the Gorai Dumpsite project. A two minute Marathi documentary Changing Lives in Gorai was awarded third prize in the video category, in the CDM Changing Lives Photo and Video Contest 2010. A certificate and formal recognition for the success will be received in the coming days after the conclusion of the UN Climate Change Conference now taking place in Cancun, Mexico. Narrated through the eyes of a young resident of Gorai, the documentary tells the success story of the scientific closure of Gorai, one of the city's biggest dumping ground and the impact it has created in the lives of the local residents. Produced by filmmaker Lalit Ajgaonkar, the film competed with 40 other works from leading renewal energy promoting countries like Mexico, Brazil and Colombia.

Conceptualised by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the project is the brainchild of R A Rajeev, Thane civic chief, during his tenure in the BMC as additional municipal commissioner. The work of the said project was carried out by using clean development mechanism of United Phosphorous Ltd. (UPL), Van Der Well Strotgas BV [JV] under the Consultant, IL & FS Ltd.

Due to rapid urbanization, the area around the Gorai dumping ground was occupied by inhabitants and at the same time complaints about the foul odour, smoke and fires increased gradually. The local residents moved court against the dumpsite and based on the Supreme Court's order, the BMC along with UPL commenced the Gorai dumping ground scientific closure project in March, 2007. The same has been successfully completed in the year 2009.

Through this initiative, India entered in the race of earning carbon credit and felt to avail the benefit of Clean Development Mechanism under Kyoto Protocol. "Project Concept Note" (PCN) and "Project Design Document" (PDD) was submitted to Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). Host country approval from MOEF was received on February 2009 and the project was registered by UNFCCC on February 7, 2010 for 10 years crediting period.

The BMC has signed an Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA) with Asian Development Bank (ADB), to receive advance upfront money against 300235 Nos. of Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) and 125789 Nos. of Verified Emission Reductions (VERs). Part of CERs generated at Gorai Dumping Ground sold to ADB for which MCGM received an advance of Rs. 245 million from ADB in lieu of sale of these CERs/VERs. It is expected that MCGM will receive total revenue of approximately Rs. 720 million from the sale of balance CERs & VERs in future at the rate prevailing at that time.

Project Benefits:

- Quality of life of people of Gorai improved.
- Quality of marine life improved.
- Market value of property in the area increased resulting in increases in property tax collection to MCGM.
- Fishermen's income increased because of better marine environment.
- Mangroves got rejuvenated resulting in healthy biodiversity in this region
- 19 ha. of green lung added to the City of Mumbai.
- GHG emission stopped resulting in reducing carbon foot prints in the city.

- Prevention in occurrence of problem like foul odour, fire, health hazards & breeding of flies & rodents.
- Power generation from methane of 1 MW for at least next ten years will be additional benefit.

Meanwhile, the Gorai project continues to bag national headlines, Recently, Maharashtra was titled as 'All India Winner' of '9th CONSTRU Excellence Award 2010' in Urban Infrastructure Development sector for case study received on 'Successful Registration of CDM project for Earning Carbon Credits - Gorai Closure Project'. Civic commissioner Swadhin Kshatriya accepted the excellence award from President Pratibha Patil, for recognition as the first civic body to earn from carbon credits and to receive the first cheque of Rs. 24,51,39,862 crores from United Nations.