

Green Governance Journal: Singapore's Waste Awakening

By Anaika

Waste is one of the most pressing issues our society faces today. From food waste to fast fashion, consumerism is both a blessing and a curse. Living in a modern city, we are fortunate to have access to a wide variety of cuisines, stores and products at our fingertips. However, when these items go out of fashion, where do they end up? In landfills and dumps, which ultimately pollute our planet. This essay aims to explore various methods we can implement to prevent the waste pollution affecting ou...

Singapore's Resource Sustainability Act, implemented in 2020 aims to reduce waste through a three-pronged approach: targeting electrical and electronic waste, packaging waste and food waste.

One policy Singapore has already adopted is the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging. As Singapore only has one landfill "Semakau Landfill", there is an urgent need to extend its lifespan. In 2021, Singapore implemented an EPR system under the Resource Sustainability Act (RSA), supervised by the ...

Singapore has also introduced various policies to mitigate food waste. For example, large food and business establishments must segregate and report food waste, then treat it either onsite or via central facilities. Food waste can be categorized as avoidable (e.g., leftovers that

were meant to be eaten) and unavoidable (e.g., eggshells or bones). Since 2021, building developers have been required to ensure that buildings expected to generate large amounts of food waste include space for on-site waste trea...

Singapore has also taken steps to reduce disposable waste. Since July 2023, there has been a nationwide 5-cent charge for disposable bags. Most F&B outlets have voluntarily joined WWF's Plastic ACTion (PACT) initiative to phase out plastic straws and reduce unnecessary disposable items.

In addition, Singapore has made significant investments in the circular economy and waste-to-energy projects. At least \$45 billion has been invested in these efforts through the Singapore Green Plan. Waste-to-energy re...

However, Singapore could do more to implement policies that focus on citizens. The government could invest in public campaigns that promote reducing household waste. Grocery stores could offer more single-portion meals to help people avoid food waste from bulk buying. Schools could include educational programs about zero waste, and provide recycling and composting bins to help students manage food waste responsibly. Annual donation drives in schools to collect supplies like paper and pencils could both pr...

Singapore is a city well on its way to achieving zero waste. With continued efforts to promote zero waste practices within the community, it can become an even more sustainable and healthy place for all.