

**Ministry of Planning and Development**  
**Response to the Joint Select Committee on Land and Physical Infrastructure**  
***An inquiry into the impact of landfills on the environment of Trinidad and Tobago***

Recommendation 15:

We recommend the installation of air quality stations in close proximity to all landfills which will provide the EMA with almost immediate real-time results from any untoward activities that take place at landfill sites. The stations can be relocated for other uses when the landfills become decommissioned.

Response:

The Environmental Management Authority (EMA) is currently evaluating this option and a decision is expected to be made by July 2023.

Recommendation 38:

We recommend that the Ministry of Public Utilities, SWMCOL and EMA meet with the Ministry of Trade & Industry regarding the management and monitoring of chemicals being imported to Trinidad and Tobago with an aim of ensuring the proper disposal of same.

Response:

It should be noted that the importation and management of pesticides and toxic chemicals are regulated by the Ministry of Health under the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals (PTC) Act. The Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board (PTCCB) established under this Act consists of the follow members as stipulated under the PTC Act:

- a) Chief Medical Officer;
- b) Chief Technical Officer, Ministry of Agriculture;
- c) Chief Chemist and Director of Food and Drugs;
- d) Director of the Bureau of Standards;
- e) Industrial Inspection Supervisor; and
- f) Not more than eight (8) other persons whom the Minister may from time to time appoint as members, of whom:
  - i. One shall be a representative of an organisation of workers;
  - ii. One shall be a representative of an organisation of employers;

- iii. One shall be a person with specialised knowledge of occupational medicine or industrial hygiene;
- iv. One shall be a person with specialised knowledge of a branch of agriculture involving the use or effects of pesticides;
- v. One shall be a person with specialised knowledge of wildlife and its management;
- vi. One shall be a representative of the Environmental Management Authority; and
- vii. One shall be a representative of the Ministry with responsibility for consumer affairs.

The functions of the Board include, but are not limited to:

- a) Determination of all applications for registration, licences, research permits, and general research permits, within a reasonable time after the applications are received;
- b) Granting, or cancelling registration, licences, or permits in circumstances where the Board deems it fit to do so;
- c) Advising the Minister on matters relevant to the making of regulations under the PTC Act; and
- d) Advising on and monitoring the implementation of those regulations; The PTC Act also provides the framework for the establishment of the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate who are responsible for the ensuring the provisions of the PTC Act and its regulations are carried out. These include:
  - i. Ensuring that all premises involved in the sale, storage, packaging, manufacture and importation of pesticides are licensed to do so;
  - ii. All products (Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals) imported/manufactured for sale and use in Trinidad and Tobago are registered by the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board;
  - iii. Examination of Customs and Excise Documents (C 82 & Invoices), relating to the importation of Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals;
  - iv. Label Examinations;
  - v. Sampling of Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals at the ports of entry, warehouses, manufacturers, agriculture shops and on the local market;
  - vi. Investigating complaints involving the use and abuse of Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals;
  - vii. Conducting enforcement actions such as seizures, criminal prosecution and civil administrative action;

- viii. Advising prospective proprietors in the setting up of pesticides and toxic chemicals facilities and also the importation of pesticides and toxic chemicals; and
- ix. Advising members of the public on health and safety aspects and use of pesticides and toxic chemicals.

#### Recommendation 39:

We recommend the establishment of a joint agency network for waste disposal in Trinidad and Tobago to be coordinated by the EMA.

#### Response:

The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSO), chaired by the EMA, was appointed by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in July 2020. The Council constitutes members from the following organizations and agencies:

- Environmental Management Authority (Chair)
- Ministry of Planning and Development
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries
- Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries
- Ministry of Public Utilities
- The University of the West Indies
- University of Trinidad and Tobago
- Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago
- Environment Tobago and COPE
- National Gas Company
- Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association
- Fondes Amandes Community Reforestation Project
- ERIC Tobago
- Tobago House of Assembly

The NCSO will further the implementation of the National Environmental Policy (NEP) across all sectors acting as a “forum for Government, business and civil society to have ongoing oversight with advisory functions to the Action Plan”. To support the work of the NCSO and advance the priority areas of the NEP Action Plan, six (6) working groups (WG) (one for each priority area) was established to recommend implementation plans aligned with the prioritised thematic areas for consideration by the NCSO. The Working Group for Priority Area 1 “Protecting Environmental and Human Health Through Pollution Control” is currently developing the Action Plans for Hazardous and Solid Waste. The Working Group comprises persons from the following agencies:

- Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries
- Ministry of Planning and Development

- Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries
- Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government
- Tobago House of Assembly
- Environmental Management Authority
- Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company
- Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago
- Association of Upstream Operators
- Quarry Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme

Additional, persons from the following agencies were co-opted members of the Working Group

- Ministry of Public Utilities
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
- Ministry of Works and Transport (Marine Services Division)
- Ministry of National Security
- Institute of Marine Affairs
- Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards
- Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the Caribbean
- Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association
- Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- Occupational Safety and Health Agency

#### Recommendation 40:

We recommend the use of the information from Annual Reports of permit holders which is a requirement under the Waste Management Rules to assist in providing statistics on waste generation and its management.

#### Response:

The EMA confirms that the Annual Reports will form part of the public Waste Register and in accordance with Section 55 of the Environmental Management Act Chap. 35:05 the information will aid in ascertaining the volume and nature of wastes.

#### Recommendation 41:

We recommend the procurement of weigh bridges for all landfill sites to record accurate data on tonnage of waste entering landfills.

#### Response:

Landfill management and waste disposal is a direct responsibility of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL). SWMCOL's initial mandates to design and implement solid and hazardous waste management systems and structures, and to advise the local government providers on waste management, were subsequently expanded to include the construction and management of engineered landfills, the collection of industrial waste, the transportation and processing of faecal waste, and the processing of recyclable materials. The activities of SWMCOL falls within the purview of the Ministry of Public Utilities who would be better equipped to respond to this Recommendation.

#### Recommendation 58:

We recommend the development of environmental mitigation plans for the extraction of landfill gases which should be shared with the EMA for consideration prior to being implemented for feedback on limiting the negative impact on the environment that may arise from the MOU (SWMCOL's MOU with NGC National Energy and NGC CNG).

#### Response:

The three (3) landfills managed by SWMCOL are currently in the process of being registered as source emitters under the Air Pollution Rules, 2014. As part of the process, SWMCOL has been requested to conduct Air Quality Assessments (AQAs) which will allow for a detailed analysis of the emissions from the landfill and inform whether an Air Pollution Permit (APP) will be required. If the EMA determines that the facilities should fall under the permitting regime, any permit issued will require development and implementation of mitigation plans for the relevant emissions in consideration of the expected lifespan of these landfills. Any proposed projects to enable extraction of landfill gases will require submission of a CEC Application to inform a determination. Proposed mitigation measures and associated plans will form part of the submission of the CEC Application.