Press Release

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**Sustainability and Green Growth Working Committee Held**

The 4th Sustainability and Green Growth Working Committee (SGGWC) took place on May 21, 2023 at the MOEFCC Conference Room. The meeting was presided over by Dr. Farhina Ahmed, Secretary of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of Bangladesh.

MOEFCC Secretary put emphasis on controlling the use of plastics in packaging, consumer goods and textiles, and in other sectors and said it cannot be controlled since it has got demand in consumers’ end. To control it, we need biobased and biodegradable packaging solutions as alternatives to conventional plastics, she added.

We encourage private sector to establish their businesses not impacting the environment and biodiversity at any costs and environmental responsibilities comes ahead of business, she said.

Environmental issues should be the built-in cost for industries and businesses, environmental governance is important in that respect. We are addressing global concerns but first we need to prioritize our local concerns and local incentivization is important than global incentivization. Referring to water scarcity in the coastal area, she cited example on how people in coastal regions are facing environmental challenges.

We cannot jump into de-carbonization in one go and we need to conduct rational exercise as we are currently into a transition and our main agenda is to boost the economy and once we are graduated we can consider it, she said.

We can work to improve the understanding of private sector around these materials and clarify how we can develop green industries to ensure genuine environmental benefits, she further added. She requested for a list for good performer and bad performer so that following good performer gradually bad performer can go away.

At the beginning of the meeting, BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum updated the meeting with the progress achieved in implementation of decisions of the Sustainability and Green Growth Working Committee and she informed about formation of two committees on circular economy and recycling and green growth, MOEFCC informed that DOE can start working in that respect.

Mehedi Hasan, Senior Research Associate, BUILD delivered a presentation on De-carbonization and Circularity for Sustainability of Clothing sector in Bangladesh. RMG sector is the biggest industrial contributor to Bangladesh's carbon footprint at 15.4%, followed by textiles at 12.4%. He informed that total volume of annual leftovers from Bangladesh’s garment units is around 400,000 tones, if recycled can be a business of more than $4 billion. The main challenges towards circular fashion industry are lack of infrastructure, fast fashion model, lack of awareness and education on circularity, heavy investment requirements, low to middle end products, import restrictions on cut fabric, poor industrial wastewater treatment, etc.

BUILD urged that duty exemption may be considered for developers of solar cells and solar developers should get license for duty exemption from BERC. The government may encourage green energy production by providing tax incentives, in the form of a Corporate Income Tax reduction or accelerated depreciation. BUILD also made a call for ensuring inclusion of solar power technology components in the coming import policy order and expanding testing facilities for solar power components and simplify testing process at import stage.

Providing clear guidelines in the Building Code of Bangladesh will allow more efficient utilization of rooftop space for solar generation and a number of linkage industries for producing panels, Caro cell panels, and cables can also be established, said BUILD presentation. BUILD suggested for a clear target-oriented roadmap or action plan with proper strategies to ensure de-carbonization and implementation of circular fashion industry. Provisions for the import of cut fabric or used fabric in special circumstances can help producing recycled yarn inside the country. Also, it requested the industry stakeholders to drive for high value added products to make recycling and upcycling possible.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) will work closely with BUILD as well as other relevant stakeholders to ensure an effective policy on Extended Producer Responsibility for the plastic sector, said the Environment Secretary.

Arif Faisal, Programme Specialist at UNDP Bangladesh responding to a recommendations by BUILD for formulation of an action plan for next 10-year on the SDG-12, he informed that a scoping study has been initiated by UNDP, however he put importance on country-specific data for the strategy. He said that green is globally the new currency, we cannot sustain without going green.

Chowdhury Liakat Ali, Director, SFD, Bangladesh Bank informed that the recycling industry should get acknowledged in the policy and Green Transformation can be allowed for this sector. He informed that initially there were lack of GTF, however presently some awareness have been development, but it is still confirmed on only in a energy efficiency area implemented by RMG sector.

BGMEA Secretary General Md Faizur Rahan spoke on the occasion and informed that they have taken a strategy 2030 to reduce emission by 30% and initiated a number of projects with a number of development partners and international education institutions.

Mentioning a recommendation of BUILD for encouraging segregated bins and containers, Shamima Akhter, Director - Corporate Affairs, Partnerships and Communications at Unilever Bangladesh informed that they have initiated this segregation voluntarily and requested that if it can be included in the policy would be helpful for them. Referring to another proposal for waste to energy, she added that infrastructure needs to be prepared and in this respect investment is needed.

The meeting was also attended by representatives from BSTI, BIDA, Ministry of Water Resources, Finance Division, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, DBL Group among others.

Sincerely yours,



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