

## How Taiwan commits to a green future



In today's pressing climate crisis, sustainability has now become a top priority for countries aiming to balance bullish economic development with its inevitable environmental impact.

Developing countries should look at the playbook of a once-garbage-ridden island republic in Asia, which is now one of the world's leading recycling countries.

More than a couple of decades ago, Taiwan grappled with a widespread waste disposal problem. Inaction pushed the residents of Taipei to protest, thus enacting change through laws and other government measures.

From then on, Taiwan has become a leader in many aspects, including green initiatives. Its success has been a result of effective public and private efforts.

To better arm itself in its bid for sustainable development, Taiwan has also adapted the Circular Economy model, which focuses on maximizing the resources while minimizing waste.

According to President Tsai Ing-Wen, Taiwan's development and push for the Circular Economy demonstrate that economic growth can go hand in hand with environmental protection and sustainability.

With the model used as a guiding principle, the green mindset has flourished in many other facets of Taiwanese life.



Aside from strict garbage disposal laws, the Taiwanese government has recently passed the Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Management Act, as well as amended its Air Pollution Control Act, with stronger measures to curtail air pollution and accelerate Taiwan's energy transition.

Also, Taiwan has created the National Climate Change Action Guidelines, which set emission caps and promote green finance initiatives.

Even in architecture, environmental consciousness permeates. For one, there's the iconic Taipei 101, which is considered one of the world's most innovative green structures. Another architectural marvel is the EcoARK Pavilion, a three-story exhibition hall built with 1.5 million interlocked plastic bottles instead of conventional bricks.

Taiwanese corporations have also found innovative ways to harness renewable energy and promote environmentally-friendly products and policies.

Recently, Taiwan's Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) has lauded green efforts of several companies including Fuji Xerox Taiwan and Taiwan High Speed Rail.

Additionally, many products have been developed to help achieve Taiwan's green dream. To further promote recycling, Taipei residents are now using vending machines like iTrash booths to recycle cans and bottles in exchange for credit on their transportation smart cards.

Taiwan Excellence awardee Kymco Motors is also leading the electronic motorbike revolution. The company has developed all-electric scooters powered by swappable batteries, effectively improving air quality.

Fellow awardee PaperShoot Camera offers a compact digital camera with a case made out of eco-friendly paper.

Meanwhile, Deya makes waves with its backpack line made from recycled materials including the Ocean Recycling Roll Function Backpack, whose fibers are spun from recycled ocean waste.



As a testament to its successful green innovations, the EPA says that around eleven thousand environmentally-conscious stores throughout Taiwan sold NT\$44.4 billion worth of green products in 2017.

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