

Panel 3

The State of Brick Kilns in Pakistan

Brick making has been a symbol of development of a society, archeological remains of the ancient times like those found in the Indus Valley civilization indicate the climax of development. While according to some scholars, one of the causes of the downfall of this civilization was brick making. It is believed that huge forests were cut to obtain fuel wood for use in brick making.

The brick production sector in Pakistan depends upon fuel wasting units and techniques, which contribute to air pollution and emission of green house gases, thus generating negative economic and environmental impacts. Coal, woody biomass and gas are the main fuels used in brick kilns while used tires are frequently used in the ignition process.

Studies on the environmental impacts of brick kilns in Pakistan are scarce while data on emissions from brick kilns is not available. Traditionally brick kilns had been located at a distance from human habitations but fast rising urbanization has brought residential areas in near proximity to brick kilns. There are many reports of health hazards of brick kilns emissions. Efforts are underway to bring state of the art brick making technology in Pakistan while the need to undertake scientific studies on the environmental impacts of brick kilns are needed in a big way to discern fact from fiction. We need to explore the possibilities of reducing the hazards of brick kilns so that the industry can flourish while maintaining an environmental responsibility.

Abstracts followed by papers are invited on the issues mentioned above.

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