



Public waste and private property. An enquiry into the economics of solid waste in Calcutta

Anu Bose, Ian Blore

First published: February 1993

<https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.4230130102>

Citations: 15

Abstract

Perceptions of solid waste management in India belong to a tradition of thought which dates back to the early nineteenth century. Solid waste is often thought of as a purely municipal problem. The paper examines how far informal systems of solid waste management are a response to a void in property rights. It analyses the variety of local operations in Calcutta, including the informal system. The assumptions that solid waste management is a public good that therefore needs to be municipalized and that in the absence of municipalization there would be greater costs are both questioned. It is hypothesized that there may be no measurable economies of scale in any part of the waste cycle. It may be more worthwhile to improve and expand the informal system of waste management than to collectivize further the traditional system of collection, transportation and disposal.

References

AllIHPH (undated). Socio-Economic and Health Aspects of recycling of Urban Solid Waste Through Scavenging. A report prepared by the Department of Sanitary Engineering, All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta.

[Google Scholar](#)

Baden, J. 'A primer for the management of common pool resources'. In G. Hardin and J. Baden (eds), *Managing the Commons*. W. H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco.

[Google Scholar](#)

Bannerjee, T. K. (1991). 'An overview of planned interventions'. In *Calcutta's Urban Future*. GoWB, Calcutta, India.

Bartone, C. et al. (1990). *Investments in Solid Waste Management: Opportunities for Environmental Improvement*. Working Papers in Urban Development, The World Bank, Washington DC.

[Google Scholar](#)

Bish, R. L. (1977). 'Environmental resource management: public or private?' In G. Hardin and J. Baden (eds), *Managing the Commons*. W. H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco.

[Google Scholar](#)

Coase, R. H. (1988). 'The lighthouse in economies'. In T. Cowen (ed.), *The Theory of Market Failure—A Critical Examination*. George Mason University Press, Fairfax, Virginia.

[Web of Science®](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Dutt, D. K. and Chaudhry, J. R. (1979). *Garbage Disposal in Big Cities with Special Reference to Calcutta*. Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management, Calcutta, India.

[Google Scholar](#)

Furedy, C. (1989a). 'Challenges in reforming the philosophy and practice of solid waste management: a social perspective', *Regional Development Dialogue*, 10 (3), Autumn.

[Google Scholar](#)

Furedy, C. (1989b). 'Social considerations in solid waste management in Asian cities', *Regional Development Dialogue*, 10 (3), Autumn.

[Google Scholar](#)

Furubotn, E. G. and Pejovich, S. (1974). *The Economics of Property Rights*. Ballinger Publishing Co., Cambridge, Massachusetts.

[Google Scholar](#)

Libecap, G. (1989). *Contracting for Property Rights*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

[Google Scholar](#)

Mitra, A. (1990). *Calcutta on the Eve of her Tercentenary*. Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, India.

[Google Scholar](#)

Ostrom, V. and Ostrom, E. (1977). ' A theory for institutional analysis of common pool problems'. In G. Hardin and J. Baden (eds), *Managing the Commons*. W. H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco.

[Google Scholar](#)

Ostrom, E. (1977). ' Collective action and the tragedy of the commons'. In G. Hardin and J. Baden (eds), *Managing the Commons*. W. H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco.

[Google Scholar](#)

Pollock, C. (1987). Mining the Urban Wastes: The Potential for Recycling. World Watch Paper No. 76, World Watch Institute, Washington DC.

[Google Scholar](#)

Citing Literature



[Download PDF](#)

ABOUT WILEY ONLINE LIBRARY

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

[About Cookies](#)

[Manage Cookies](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Wiley Research DE&I Statement and Publishing Policies](#)

[Developing World Access](#)

HELP & SUPPORT

[Contact Us](#)

[Training and Support](#)

[DMCA & Reporting Piracy](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

[Subscription Agents](#)

[Advertisers & Corporate Partners](#)

CONNECT WITH WILEY

[The Wiley Network](#)

[Wiley Press Room](#)

