

# Landfill site, a CNG source?

An experiment at Mumbai's Gorai dump could provide fuel for cars

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THE STINKING landfill site near your home may turn into the source of fuel for your vehicle. That is if a Public Private Partnership experiment in Mumbai succeeds in trapping methane from the Gorai landfill site and economically provide CNG.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation with IL&FS Ecosmart, a company dealing with Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects, has submitted a proposal to the CDM Authority for validation to earn carbon credits by trapping methane from the soon-to-be-closed site.

In the first experiment of its kind in India, to start from 2009, the topmost strata of the site would provide green space while below the surface would be landfill

**Project that will start in 2009 hopes to trap methane and economically provide CNG. Cost will depend on price of cleaning and converting it**

gas collection trench and leachate collection system to prevent degradation of underground water levels. The greenhouse gases — methane and carbon dioxide mix — collected will be channelised through a pipeline to the processing unit.

"The methane once cleaned can be used for fuelling vehicles and producing electricity," said Mahesh Babu, CEO, Ecosmart. "The cost will depend on the price of cleaning methane and converting it into CNG," added Debashish Tripathy, V-P (Strategy) with Ecosmart.

But, Babu felt that selling 1.5 million tones of carbon credits generated from the Gorai project in the international

market would help offset the high processing cost. A tonne of carbon sells between Euros 12 to 15.

If the economics of the project works, the 19-acre landfill site would be a source of CNG for thousands of vehicles every day and may also provide a viable answer to India's growing urban waste problem.

India generates about 1,15,000 metric tones of municipal waste every day and the quantity is estimated to increase to 1,50,000 metric tones by 2015.

"The Kyoto Protocol has provided new hope," said Srikanta K. Panigrahi, former executive director of CDM Authority. There is a lot of scope of innovation in projects dealing with urban waste management, he said, but added that like China, India needs to replicate innovations in a big way to reap maximum benefit of carbon trading under Kyoto Protocol.