**Consultation Questionnaire: Methane Reduction and Waste Pickers: Challenges and Opportunities for the Protection of ESCER in the Context of Climate Emergency**

The Office of the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (REDESCA) of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) will prepare a report that will address the relationship between the reduction of methane emissions from the waste sector and the protection of the ESCER of waste pickers in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This report aims to analyze the crucial role of waste pickers, who, by diverting waste from open dumps, avoid methane generation in stagnant waters and anaerobic conditions caused by uncollected waste, contributing significantly to the mitigation of emissions from deficient or non-existent waste management systems. In particular, the collection and reinsertion into the productive recycling chain of waste such as paper, cardboard, textiles and wood contribute directly to the reduction of methane emissions. Therefore, the report will address the reduction of methane emissions as a global climate priority due to its high potential to contribute to global warming, as well as the responsibility of companies in waste generation and management. Based on these findings, the report will seek to develop specific inter-American standards and recommendations to guide the formulation of inclusive public policies for methane reduction and the transition to sustainable models of formal waste management. This will include the integration of waste pickers into recycling systems, circular economy and Extended Producer Responsibility schemes, guaranteeing the comprehensive protection of their rights. In addition, emphasis will be placed on the environmental and climate impact of these policies to strengthen their role in the fight against climate change and environmental protection.

In this framework, REDESCA invites member states, international organizations, civil society organizations, national human rights institutions, academic institutions, human rights defenders, as well as experts to submit their observations on the following topics.

**Deadline to respond: July 15, 2025 until 23:59 EST.**

Send responses to: [CIDH\_DESCA@oas.org](mailto:CIDH_DESCA@oas.org), and include in the subject line of the e-mail: **"Consultation Questionnaire - Methane Reduction and Waste pickers".**

**Questionnaire**

1. **Personal Information**

* **First Name/Last Name:**
* **E-mail:**
* **Institution/Organization:**
* **Position/Position:**
* **Country:**

1. Please present the current situation of informal waste pickers in your country, highlighting the main structural challenges and barriers to the full exercise of their economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. If possible, describe if they have the possibility to organize themselves, if they have access to social protection and what their living conditions are. Include information on specific contexts that contribute to the persistence of conditions of vulnerability and the systematic violation of their rights.
2. Indicate if the State has official indicators or statistical data on waste pickers, or if there are reliable data from non-governmental organizations or academia. If possible, please include information on the total number of waste pickers in your country, as well as the percentage of waste pickers working in landfills and on the streets, and the number of registered organizations of waste pickers. Please share these statistics, preferably disaggregated by factors such as geographic location, gender, ethnic or racial origin, nationality, age, among others.
3. What social, economic or structural factors contribute to the presence of child labor in the informal recycling sector? Indicate whether the State has official indicators or statistical data on the participation of children and adolescents in informal recycling activities in your country, or whether there are reliable data from non-governmental organizations.
4. Has the State implemented public policies, programs or specific measures aimed at the prevention and eradication of child labor in the collection, classification and informal commercialization of waste? If so, what have been the main results achieved, as well as the challenges identified in their implementation?
5. What alternatives for waste pickers are being implemented by the State in the face of landfill closures or during the process of transforming open dumps into landfills? Please present evaluations regarding the functioning of this regulation and indicate if a comprehensive framework has been contemplated that contemplates the use of methane reduction and capture technologies adapted to local contexts. Please specify whether these measures include the inclusion of waste pickers whose livelihoods depend on the landfill.
6. Do you know of any programs or public policies that promote the transition towards more sustainable models of formal waste management (with emphasis on reducing methane emissions generated in landfills), in line with international environmental and human rights standards and commitments? What impact have they had on the rights of waste pickers? Do they favor their inclusion?
7. Do you know of any programs or public policies that monitor the impacts and indirect effects of methane and other greenhouse gas emissions on human health, such as increased respiratory diseases or premature deaths? If you have information about preventive measures being promoted by the State to mitigate the health impact of methane emissions, especially in communities near emitting sources such as landfills, or on workers who are directly exposed to the waste (such as waste pickers), please attach such information.
8. Are there regulations that specifically integrate and promote waste pickers as essential actors in formal waste management systems, guaranteeing the integral protection of their human rights? Do you know of actions or measures that promote capacity building, technology transfer and recognition of informal waste pickers within the recycling value chains? If yes, please attach the information and provide your organization's assessment of the specific functioning of this regulation.
9. Describe the public policies, programs, state or national plans, and measures adopted by the State to guarantee the responsibility of companies in waste management, especially those that include the implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility, with the objective of mitigating the environmental impact of post-consumer products and reducing waste generation. Indicate whether such public policies, programs, state or national plans and measures adopted by the State have included, from their design to their implementation, waste pickers and their organizations.
10. What are the main sources of methane emissions in the waste sector in your country and what policies, plans or technologies have been implemented to reduce them? What are the main barriers to effective implementation of these policies (e.g. lack of funding, technical difficulties, lack of institutional capacity, etc.)?
11. What policies, programs, regulatory frameworks or initiatives have been developed in your country to involve waste pickers in strategies to capture and reduce methane emissions from the waste sector? Please indicate if there are specific regulatory frameworks, agreements with organizations or associations of waste pickers, economic or technical incentives, training programs, or any other measures aimed at strengthening their role in waste management and methane mitigation. In addition, please provide details on whether studies or evaluations have been conducted on the impact of these initiatives on emissions reduction.
12. Does your country's legislation recognize the right to work and to a healthy environment in relation to waste pickers? Are there formal channels of participation for this group? If so, what are these channels?
13. Please specify or clarify any other information that you consider relevant to the knowledge of REDESCA.

The questionnaire may be answered partially or completely, depending on the information available; research, reports, and other documents already prepared and/or published that are relevant to the topic may be submitted.

If annexes are submitted, they should be clearly identified and differentiated from the main document. Previously published reports may be submitted as annexes.

We appreciate your participation and the dissemination of this document.