

Pollution control in the non-ferrous industries – An Indian perspective of worldwide importance

In a developing economy such as India's, it is tempting to see expansion of production at low capital cost as the primary target. There are good arguments needed to convince investors to spend more money to achieve best work practice in terms of good environmental performance, as well as the essential low cost of production and high quality of product.

It is in the interests of the community, as well as the long-term benefits of the industry to ensure that the full benefits of pollution control are recognised by the resource developers and investors.

A dialogue between industry, the community and the regulators is inevitable, and many now believe that industrial participation should be on the basis of encouragement of open debate with transparency achieved through exchanging, the knowledge and views of all parties with an interest in the development.

In the non-ferrous metals extraction industry, there are significant improvements which have been made to technology to achieve better means of processing both from a cost and an environmental viewpoint.

Modifying old technology is often a costly and inefficient way of achieving this compared with utilising the best available technology. The high level of sophistication of teaching and training of metallurgists and engineers in India ensures that the management of process plants have a good understanding of the innovations and alternatives which are available to them. As well as choosing a technology which provides low costs, reduced emissions, a good work environment, better quality products and by-products with minimal or no waste streams, the Indian plant manager can seek to ensure sustainable development through a full knowledge of what a technology can achieve.

India's population continues to grow and industrial development must be accelerated efficiently if India is to achieve the vision which some people have of a nation with one of the highest domestic productions in the world by the year 2050.

In a world-wide sense the issues of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and possible global warming resulting from an increase in CO₂ levels in the atmosphere have

been raised as a limitation on development. The pace of these immense global changes remains uncertain at present. It is unlikely that a nation with a great need for community wide improvements to the quality of life can give this more remote issue a high level of priority. The results of these world-wide changes, however, will be felt by the next generation in all of the world. It would therefore be also a necessary consideration in industrial development in India to ensure minimum gaseous emissions and maximum efficiency of energy use with this issue in mind.

Indian management of the developments and improvements in Environmental and Waste Management in the Non-Ferrous Metallurgical Industries is of significance to the world community as well as to the people of India and I wish the participants in this conference a successful and rewarding meeting.

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