

Highway Waste Management in Zambia Policy Preparedness and Remedies: The Case of Great East Road

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Abstract : The paper looked at highways/ roadside waste generation, disposal and the consequent environmental impacts. The dramatic increase in vehicular and paved roads in the recent past in Zambia, has given rise to the indiscriminate disposal of litter that now poses a threat to health and the environment. Primary data was generated by carrying out oral interviews and field observations for holistic and in-depth assessment of the environment and the secondary data was obtained from desk review method, information on effects of roadside wastes on environment were obtained from relevant literatures. The interviews were semi structured and a purposive sampling method was adopted and analyzed descriptively. The results of the findings showed that population growth and unplanned road expansion has exceeded the expected limit in recent time with resultant poor system of roadside wastes disposal. Roadside wastes which contain both biodegradable and non-biodegradable roadside wastes are disposed at the shoulders of major highways in temporary dumpsites and are never collected by a road development agency (RDA). There is no organized highway to highway or street to street collection of the wastes in Zambia by the key organization the RDA. The study revealed that roadside disposal of roadside wastes has serious impacts on the environment. Some of these impacts include physical nuisance of the wastes to the environment, the waste dumps also serve as hideouts for rodents and snakes which are dangerous. Waste are blown around by wind making the environment filthy, most of the wastes are also been washed by overland flow during heavy downpour to block drainage channels and subsequently lead to flooding of the environment. Most of the non- biodegradable wastes contain toxic chemicals which have serious implications on the environmental sustainability and human health. The paper therefore recommends that Government/ RDA should come up with proper orientation and environmental laws should be put in place for the general public and also to provide necessary facilities and arrange for better methods of collection of wastes.

Keywords : biodegradable, disposal, environment, impacts

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