

## Netherlands and Belgium Will Help Brazil Recycle Rubble

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Brazil's Ministry of Science and Technology's Mineral Technology Center (Cetem) is beginning a project for the Recycling of the Mineral Portion of Construction and Demolition Rubble.

The project represents a pioneering initiative in the country to combat environmental pollution and lower the costs of mass housing.

According to data provided by the Cetem, Brazil produces 68.5 million tons of rubble every year. The coordinator of the project, Salvador Almeida, says that only 5% is recovered.

A substantial portion of the rubble is dumped illegally in public spaces, especially in the big metropolises, contributing to urban environmental problems, such as the silting of rivers, blockage of storm sewers, and degradation of urban areas.

The project's pilot program will be executed over a two-year period at the Macaé Recycling Plant, in the northwest region of the state of Rio.

The municipality produces 80 tons of construction and demolition rubble every day, a result of the growing urbanization stimulated by the development of the petroleum industry.

According to Almeida, a National Environmental Council (Conama) law determines that the mineral portion of demolition rubble be separated and recycled.

"The idea is to create an alternative, especially in the big metropolises, where there is a lack of sand and gravel," he said.

This means that the rubble will be transformed into two products, sand and gravel, he explained.

Almeida informed that plants for processing or recycling rubble exist in Brazil, in the cities of São Paulo, Piracicaba (state of São Paulo), Belo Horizonte (capital of Minas Gerais), and Londrina (Paraná state), but the operation is still very rudimentary. The project will help to improve and modernize these plants.

The Cetem project for the Recycling of the Mineral Portion of Construction and Demolition Rubble will receive a total of US\$ 151,000 (360,000 thousand reais) in funds from the Studies and Projects Finance Agency (Finep) and the Federal Savings Bank.

The professors who are acting as co-administrators of the project are already in touch with scientists from the Netherlands and Belgium, the two most advanced countries in this area, Almeida said.

The project will make it possible to obtain better quality products at lower costs for mass housing and public works, with positive environmental preservation effects.

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