

MILEAGE FROM RUBBISH

*HUL harnesses agro waste in a move to turn green, earn more greenbacks***Gaurav Choudhury**

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NEW DELHI: From coconut shells and cashew kernels to ice creams, ketchup, tea and soaps. Fast moving consumer goods major Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) hopes to piggyback on nondescript agricultural waste as it sets out to achieve multiple objectives of

strengthening its bottomline and reducing harmful emissions.

The company has an ambitious target to reduce carbon-dioxide emission (CO2) in its manufacturing operations by 25 per cent in the next four years by using agri-waste to fuel its boilers in factories.

The company also has set out a 10-year plan to earn

lucrative carbon credits through emission reduction technologies.

"Our energy costs have come down by 30 per cent in those factories where we are using agri waste to run boilers," HUL executive director Dhaval Buch told *Hindustan Times*.

Agricultural waste such as groundnut shells, bagasse (from sugarcane), saw-dust,

coconut shells, cashew kernels etc do not have any primary use. What these waste products do have, is a fair amount of calorific value — the ability to burn and impart heat — which comes in handy if one looks at them as potential fuels.

HUL first used agri-waste in its factory in Chiplun, Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra, and followed it

up with another plant in Pondicherry.

Buch said the exercise would be extended to plants located across the country.

The company has also developed a process of manufacturing soap based on 'Plough Share Mixer' technology, which eliminates the need for steam in soap-making. That cuts carbon emissions by 15,000 tonnes a year.

HUL is also expecting additional revenue by trading carbon credits regulated by the United Nations Framework of Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The UNFCCC has put in place all the rules and the required apparatus. Authorised agencies certify the reduction in carbon emissions through a particular technology or project in

terms of "units." The price of carbon is fixed on a per-tonne basis and determined by market forces.

Buch said the projects would help the company earn carbon emission reduction (CER) of approximately 27,000 a year for the next 10 years. Under UNFCCC norms one CER is equivalent to reduction in emission of one tonne of carbon dioxide.