

BUILDING SMART

for a Cooler Bangladesh

The country's latest Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) in climate explicitly calls for low-carbon, resilient buildings and infrastructure. Work is underway to quantify how much construction can save. The Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan noted that by 2035 Bangladesh aims to reduce 84.92 million tonnes of CO₂, and greener construction will contribute to that.

TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

Carbon footprint is the total greenhouse gas emissions caused by an activity or sector. It is a key measure of environmental impact, especially under climate change. Bangladesh's footprint is about 124.793 million tonnes of CO₂ as of 2023. Md Abu Sadeque, Executive Director of Centre of House Building and Research (HBRC) stated to the Daily Star that roughly one-third of Bangladesh's emissions come from construction and building materials, so transforming this sector is essential for meeting climate goals.

A large part of this comes from materials that form the base of development such as bricks, cement, and steel. Bangladesh has pledged to cut 84.92 million tonnes of CO₂ by 2035 in the NDC 3.0. The investment needed to achieve this is about US\$116.8 billion. The plan divides responsibility: 26.7 million tonnes of CO₂ reductions will come from domestic efforts, while 58.2 million tonnes will depend on international finance, technology, and partnerships. These numbers highlight both ambition and the scale of support needed. If this single sector changes how it builds, the nation can move much closer to its climate goals while improving air quality and health.

LOW-CARBON MATERIALS THAT WORK

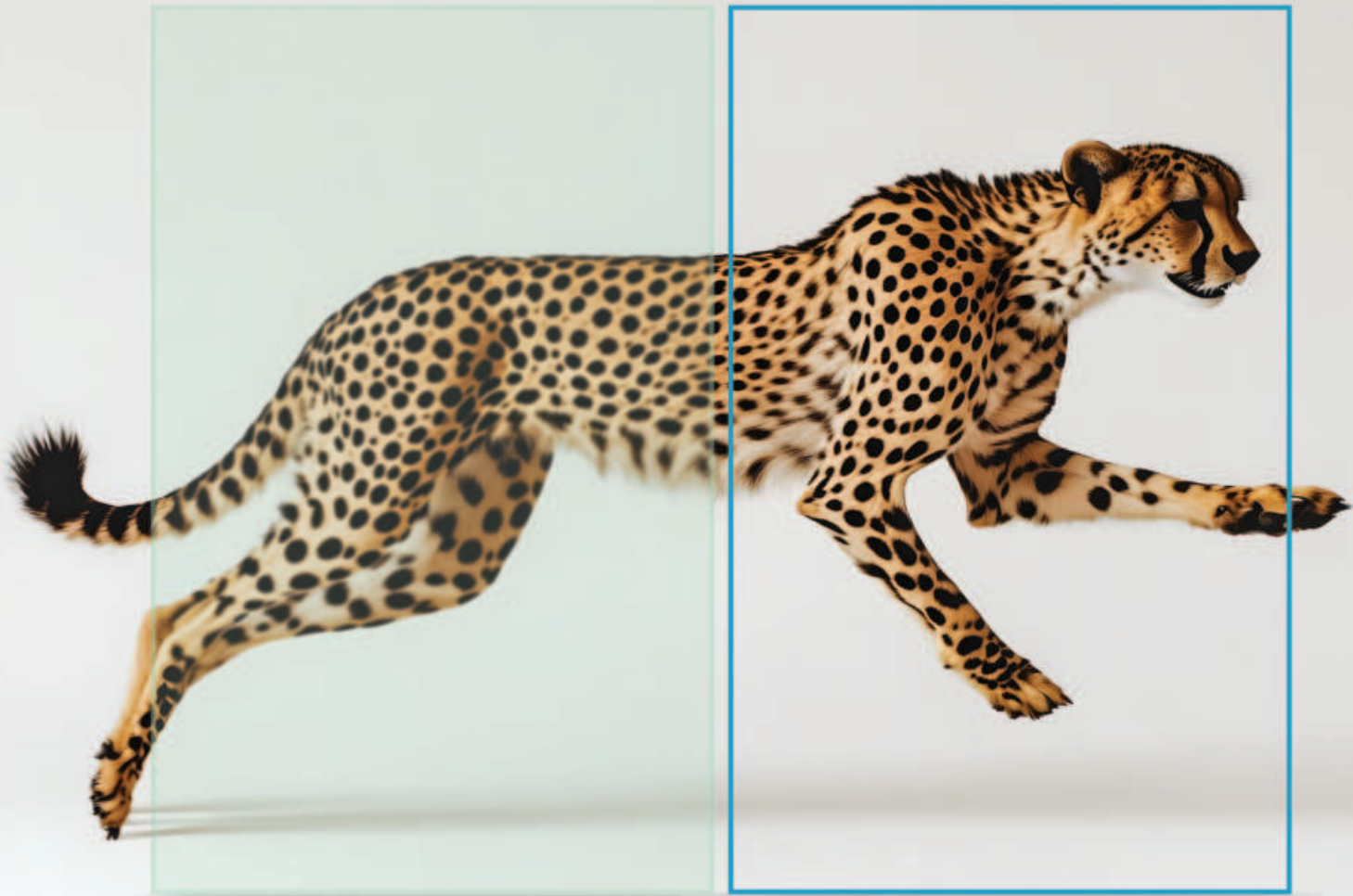
Traditional fired bricks are one of Bangladesh's largest polluters. Each kilogram of brick emits around 300 grams of CO₂, while concrete blocks emit only 100 grams. A simple switch could reduce two-thirds of current brick-related emissions.

Engineers and builders are already turning to alternatives. Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks (CSEB), interlocking blocks, hollow concrete blocks, aerated concrete, and ferro-cement panels all provide durable, low-carbon options.

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