

INTERNAL UPDATE, edition 25-26/2015, 15- 26 June

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News

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1. EC opens a public consultation on waste market failures

As part of its work on new circular economy proposals, European Commission has opened a consultation on how to correct regulatory failures in EU waste markets that undermine its environmental effectiveness because in some cases “the regulatory environment may hamper the efficient functioning of waste markets and fail to ensure optimal implementation of the waste hierarchy”, the Commission said. EC is asking interested parties whether such regulatory failures in the EU waste markets are mainly related to EU legislation or to national and local policy or administrative decisions. Respondents should rate potential causes of obstacles to the effective functioning of waste markets that are related to EU legislation. The consultation runs until 4 September, followed by a stakeholder meeting planned for November.

Access to the public consultation:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/FunctioningWasteMarketsSurvey2015>

2. Environments MEPs adopted the Circular economy report to be voted in Parliament

The resolution of MEP Sirpa Pietikainen on the Circular Economy was adopted by the environment committee by 56 votes to 5, with 5 abstentions. The full House will vote on the report at the 6 to 9 July session, in Strasbourg. This resolution follows up the withdrawn Commission communications on a Circular Economy Package, tabled in July 2014 jointly with a legislative proposal on waste. The Environment Committee calls on the Commission to table a new proposal with the following points by the end of 2015:

- waste prevention measures;
 - binding waste-reduction targets for municipal, commercial and industrial waste to be achieved by 2025;
 - application of the “pay as you throw” principle;
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- targets for recycling and preparation for reuse to be raised to at least 70% of municipal solid waste and 80% of packaging waste by 2030;
- incineration to be strictly limited by 2020 to non-recyclable and non-biodegradable waste;
- a binding, gradual reduction of all landfill waste.
- life-cycle oriented approach towards product policy and ecodesign
- review of eco-design legislation by the end of 2016, broadening its scope and covering all product groups and eliminate planned obsolescence.
- a reduction, in absolute terms, of resource consumption to sustainable levels;
- strict application of the waste hierarchy;
- greater use of renewables,
- phasing-out of toxic substances;
- Improvements in the quality of ecosystem services
- indicators for resource efficiency, mandatory from 2018
- binding target to increase resource efficiency at EU level by 30% from 2014 levels, by 2030

More information:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150615IPR66486/html/Circular-economy-%E2%80%9Csystemic-change%E2%80%9D-needed-to-address-resource-scarcity>

3. Waste is key to global climate protection

A recent study from the Institute for Applied Ecology and the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IFEU) conducted on behalf of Germany's Federal Environment Agency (UBA) has found out that the waste management industry in many developing and newly industrialising countries, as well as in numerous OECD countries and the United States, could do much more to contribute to climate protection. Germany for example has reduced harmful emissions through waste processing. Contrarily other OECD countries such as the United States, India and Egypt, shows that methane emissions related to waste dumping are among the main causes of greenhouse gas pollution. Only a few OECD countries, such as Japan, who do not or only rarely dump (organic) waste are able to ease



the burden. The more recycling and waste processing takes place, the more significantly positive the country's climate footprint. Results also showed that there is an urgent need for support of an integrated circular economy in many countries to cut greenhouse gas emissions by increasing recycling. For example, in the best case scenario, separating and recycling together with residual waste incineration in efficient facilities could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 25 million tonnes per year in India and almost 14 million tonnes per year in Egypt, the study indicates.

More information:

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/sustainable-dev/waste-key-global-climate-protection-german-study-says-315852>

4. Gipuzkoa (Spain) the fastest transition towards Zero Waste in Europe

Zero Waste Europe published a new case study showing the transition of Gipuzkoa towards zero waste. In 2011, the Province of Gipuzkoa decided to scrap the plans to build an oversized incineration plant and took steps towards Zero Waste, arguing that the plant was highly resource-consuming and it heavily endangered the circularity of resources. On top of saving € 250 million, Gipuzkoa has managed to meet EU targets 5 years earlier than expected. Today, the province separately collects 51% of its municipal waste and plans to meet 70% by 2020. These improvements are even more significant when considering that only one fifth of Gipuzkoa's population live in municipalities that have followed a transition, which prove that the results of these municipalities are outstanding, some of them above 80 or even 90% of separate collection. This example proves that reaching the EU target of 50% recycling is completely feasible in only 5 years. The drivers behind this change have been: political will, citizens mobilisation and participation, prioritisation of biowaste collection, intensive separate collection at source and not having built incineration capacity which would hijack prevention, reuse and recycling. Gipuzkoan towns have also proved that kerbside collection remains cheaper than roadside containers, while creating jobs and local economic activity. Today, these case studies show that, in contrast with the outdated idea of burning or burying our waste, preventing,

reusing and recycling it create jobs and resilience, save money, and protect the environment and public health.

More information:

<http://www.zerowasteeurope.eu/2015/06/new-case-study-the-story-of-gipuzkoa-the-fastest-transition-towards-in-europe/>

5. Report from Ellen MacArthur Foundation: “Delivering the circular economy – a toolkit for policymakers”

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation launched the results of its latest research which provides, for the first time, an actionable toolkit for policymakers who wish to embark on a circular economy transition. The report was presented at the Stakeholder Conference in Brussels to discuss which elements should be a part of the revised circular economy package which the European Commission is due to publish at the end of the year. “Delivering the circular economy – a toolkit for policymakers” is the result of a collaboration led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, with the Danish Business Authority and the Danish Environment Protection Agency as key contributors, especially in a pilot study of Denmark. The McKinsey Center for Business and Environment provided analytical support and NERA Economic Consulting provided support for the macroeconomic and policy analysis. The project was funded by the [MAVA Foundation](#). The report provides a step-by-step methodology including 11 tools, which aim to:

- Assess a country’s circular economy starting position, define its ambition level, and select focus areas
- Systematically screen, sector-by-sector, circular economy opportunities, identify barriers that limit these opportunities and analyse policy options to overcome these barriers
- Assess economy-wide implications.

The case study of Denmark applies the tools presented in the methodology, and evaluates opportunities in five focus sectors: food and beverage, construction and real estate, machinery, plastic packaging and hospitals. Modelling conducted suggests that opportunities identified in these

five focus sectors, covering just 25% of the economy, could lead, in Denmark and by 2035, to 0.8–1.4% additional GDP growth, the creation of 7,000–13,000 job equivalents, a 3–7% reduction in carbon footprint, and 5–50% reduction in virgin resource consumption for selected materials.

More information:

<http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/news/new-tools-for-policymakers-facilitate-transition-to-the-circular-economy>

6. Consultants back new Restrictions on Hazardous Substances exemptions

Consultants have recommended that the EC grants two new exemptions from EU restrictions on hazardous substances (RoHS) in electrical and electronic equipment for uses of cadmium and lead. The requested exemption for cadmium should last for seven years, while the one for lead should last until 30 June 2021, in line with similar existing exemptions. The first requested exemption is for “cadmium anodes in Hersch cells for oxygen sensors used in industrial monitoring and control instruments, where a sensitivity below 10 ppm is required”. Fewer than 50 of these sensors are placed on the EU market each year, and the firm that produce them, MOCON Inc. operates a recycling programme for its products so the net amount of cadmium placed on the market will be less than 0.329 kilogrammes per year. The second requested exemption is for “lead in solders of electrical connections to temperature measurement sensors in devices which are designed to be used periodically at temperatures below 150°C.” Exemption 26 from RoHS already covers other uses of lead in solders, so the consultants recommend that it be amended to include this use also. The applicant, Lake Shore Cryotronics, estimates that less than 10kg of lead would be brought onto the market each year through this recommendation. It claims that using potential substitutes, such as lead-free solders, would shorten the lifetime of products, increasing the quantity of waste electrical and electronic equipment. Neither requested exemption would undermine environmental and health protection under the REACH chemicals regulation, the consultants said.

More information:

<http://rohs.exemptions.oeko.info/index.php?id=127>

7. Resource-efficient Portuguese packaging waste management system brings multiple benefits

The Sistema Integrado de Gestão de Resíduos de Embalagens (SIGRE) was set up in Portugal by a non-profit organisation in response to the EU Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste. SIGRE organises and manages a loop for collecting, recovering and recycling non-reusable packaging waste from households and businesses. It is based on the waste hierarchy: recycling is prioritised as the main form of waste treatment. Anything that cannot be recycled is composted, incinerated for energy recovery, or landfilled if there are no other options. In 2011, 711 kt of the 1198 kt of waste it managed were recycled. SIGRE also uses a life-cycle assessment methods that track how much energy and materials are used and produced by all its waste management processes, including collection, sorting and treatment. Overall, the scheme brought clear benefits in terms of reduced emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and air pollutants in the form of volatile organic compounds (VOC). It also reduced acidification of water and soil, water consumption and pressure on resources. Its climate impacts were particularly striking: in 2011 it avoided the emission of 116 kt of CO₂ equivalent by replacing virgin materials with recovered materials from the waste. In addition, for every €1 of gross value added (GVA) generated in SIGRE itself, €1.25 is generated for the wider Portuguese economy. These economic impacts are realised in terms of direct impacts, such as payment for labour and resources, but also indirect impacts when companies which directly serve the scheme need to purchase goods or services from other companies. Thus the second-order, third-order and other companies also indirectly benefit from SIGRE, which is estimated to generate over 2300 jobs in companies and organisations associated with the scheme.

More information:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/resource_efficient_portuguese_packaging_waste_management_system_multiple%20benefits_49si1_en.pdf

8. Improving resource efficiency: research identifies key areas of product improvement

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is a commonly used tool to measure a product's environmental impacts, such as associated waste and damage to human health or ecosystems, from raw materials to disposal. However, some LCA results and scores can be difficult for product designers to interpret and do not necessarily provide useful information to develop design features which improve resource efficiency. For this, researchers from the Joint Research Centre have developed a method to assess the resource efficiency of a product, with a focus on the end-of-life phase of the product's life-cycle.

- 1) Characterising the product - data on materials, disassembly information and possible environmental impacts over the product's life cycle).
- 2) Assessing the product's resource efficiency in terms of recycling, reuse and recovery of the product and product parts, their environmental impacts or benefits and content of hazardous substances).
- 3) Identifying product 'hot-spots' or key parts of the product which can provide the greatest improvements in the product's resource efficiency. Currently, the recycling of some hot-spots is not compatible with the shredding scenario.
- 4) Analysis of 'hot-spots' to identify practical measures which could improve the product's lifecycle resource efficiency. These measures are then tested again through steps 1 to 3, to see if they produce lifecycle benefits.
- 5) Assessing policy measures which could improve the resource efficiency of the product group.

More information:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/improving_resource_efficiency_new_method_identifies_key_areas_of_product_improvement_49si4_en.pdf

Technology and business

9. Small-scale anaerobic digestion - case studies in Western Europe

Biogas-E vzw, the platform for anaerobic digestion in Flanders, has published a report on small-scale anaerobic digestion technology and case studies. Small-scale or pocket digestion is a technology where the anaerobic digestion process is applied to proprietary biomass flows for the on-site

production of renewable energy. This energy is made available in the form of electricity and heat after combustion of the biogas in a combined heat and power (CHP) installation and is used to a maximum on-site. It is applicable to installations with a proprietary biomass supply that produce energy in function of the proprietary energy demand. "Mono-digestion" is applicable for installations that use only one type of biomass input. The smallest installations are also called micro digesters. The popularity of pocket digestion has increased greatly in the last few years in the Flemish region of Belgium and a number of neighbouring countries. In Flanders there are about 80 active pocket installations to this date and it is expected that this number will increase.

More information and report:

<http://www.biogas-e.be/node/468?language=en>

10. Biogas needs more support says European Commission

The Renewable Energy Progress report of the EU released on 16 June has shown that Denmark, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia failed to meet their 2013 deployment target. According to the report, technologies such as biogas "urgently" required more support to increase their deployment and that they could then be used to boost heating targets. Biogas currently only plays a "small role" in heating and cooling technologies. In 2013 only 2.6 million tonnes of oil equivalent of heat was produced from biogas with Germany alone producing half the total. The report also revealed the progress of biomass-fired heat, which was shown to have helped countries including Bulgaria, Finland and Sweden meet targets due to the development of "low-cost" options. The report also says the use of cooperation mechanisms, where countries work together under the renewable energy law, will increase over 2015-16 as interim targets become more stringent.

11. EfW sector's mood improves, says CEWEP

An annual barometer of the energy-from-waste sector has revealed more than half of plant operators currently view the sector's prospects as good. The research compiled by consultancy Ecoprog for

CEWEP, records the views of EfW plant operators and businesses supplying them, Published on 25 June the results showed 52% of plant operators considered the current market good against only 9% who thought it was poor, while 39% said satisfactory. Last year's barometer found only 23% of those surveyed considered the market good, while 66% said satisfactory and 11% poor. The report also found 50% of suppliers said their order backlog was too small, the same percentage as in 2014's report. This year no EfW plant reported its utilisation as being too low. While 76% of people said their facility was currently reaching a "comparatively high" plant utilisation, the rest reported sufficient usage. In 2014 only 49% said demand was comparatively high, 47 % sufficient, 2% too low and 2% did not answer.

Researchers also found 60% of operators reported demand in the spot market for waste incineration had improved while last year only 17% of people thought so. The sector revealed ongoing concerns about stricter efficiency goals expected under the revision of the waste incineration Best Available Techniques Reference Document (BREF). Less than 20% of respondents thought the specifications would not to be tightened considerably after negotiations at EU level are completed.

More information:

http://www.endswasteandbioenergy.com/article/1353348/efw-sectors-mood-improves-says-cewep?DCMP=EMC-CONENDSWasteBioenergyWeekly&bulletin=ewb-weekly&utm_medium=EMAIL&utm_campaign=eNews%20Bulletin&utm_source=20150630&utm_content=

12. European Waste-to-Energy Facilities Market 2015-2019 report

ENDS Waste&Bionergy launched a report on the European Waste-to-Energy Facilities Market 2015-2019. The analysis predicts that European energy-from-waste plants' capacity, which stood at 98.8 million tonnes per year at the end of last year, will rise to around 116Mt/yr in 2019. Electric generation capacity will rise to some 10.5GW, an increase of 18%. Investment to reach these levels, alongside upgrades, refurbishment and maintenance of the existing fleet, will average around €5bn/yr to the end of the decade, but the technology be divided into three type of countries: the

pioneers, the late-comers and the non-starters. For the pioneering there is little scope for plant development beyond maintenance, upgrades and replacing existing capacity. Billions of euros are now being invested in the late-comers. This group is in the process of shifting from reliance on landfill towards energy recovery.

The probability of project failure and scheduled decommissioning are also accounted and it is considered the co-incineration of waste alongside other fuels such as coal and virgin biomass.

Conferences, seminars and meetings

External

1. Exchange of good practices on metal by-products recovery. Technology and policy exchanges, 12-13 November, Brussels

The conference is organised by the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) of the European Commission and will tackle the technology challenges but also the policies and regulatory framework apt to promote the recovery of metal by-products which are currently sub-exploited. The event aims to provide an opportunity to share experiences, exchange good practices and present examples across the whole value chain. It will bring together industry, academia and research entities excelling in the technologies to recover by-products, as well as relevant public entities and policymakers from the EU and from third countries.

More information:

<http://newsletter-europa.eu/SME/FPI/20150629.php?email=vanya.veras@municipalwasteeurope.eu&firstname=&newsletter=621>

Internal

Past weeks:

- MWE, CEWEP and ESWET organised a session within the Sustainable Energy Week: Heat and Steam from Waste: Linking Energy Union and Circular Economy, 18 June 2015, Brussels

Summary and information of the event:

<http://www.eswet.eu/id-20150618-eusew-high-level-policy-conference.html>

- SG Vanya Veras gave a presentation in the Annual Conference KIGO, 19 June, Warsaw, Poland
- SG Vanya Veras gave a presentation in the workshop of the Expert group at the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, 22 June, Brussels
- SG Vanya Veras and assistant Mercedes attended to a personal meeting with the EC responsables of the Waste Package, 22 June, EC, Brussels
- Assistant Mercedes attended to the Circular Economy-Finance workshop, 23 June, Brussels
- SG Vanya Veras and assistant Mercedes participated in the Conference “The Role of Biowaste in the Emerging Circular Economy – Creating new jobs from managing biowaste”, 24 June , EESC, Brussels

Summary and more information:

<http://ebcd.org/event/the-role-of-biowaste-in-the-emerging-circular-economy/>

- SG Vanya Veras attended to the EPR Club lunch debate, 24 June, Brussels
 - Meeting with Andrea Accorigi, Bio-Based products, DG research and Innovation, 24 June, Brussels
 - SG Vanya Veras and assistant Mercedes participated at the Stakeholders Conference “Closing the Loop, Circular Economy: boosting business, reducing waste” organised by the EC, 25 June, Brussels
 - SG Vanya Veras attended to the FNADE breakfast debate on Circular Economy “How to reach ambitious and realistic recycling targets?”, 26 June, Brussels
 - Assistant Mercedes attended to the conference: State of aid to firms: is it efficient and effective? 26 June, EESC Brussels
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- Assistant Mercedes attended to the ESWET/CEWEP Joint working group on Waste Incineration BREF meeting, 29 June, Brussels

Upcoming:

- PC meeting: 15 September
- PC meeting: 23 November in Brussels
- Seminar: 24 November in Brussels

