

**JULY
2023**

FEAD MAGAZINE

UNLOCKING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY'S POTENTIAL

**HOW TO MAKE
THE CIRCULAR
ECONOMY
WORK**

**THE FUTURE OF
WASTE
MANAGEMENT**

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Waste Management and
Environmental Services**

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Lebanda

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Foreword



Claudia Mensi

FEAD President

FEAD, representing the entire waste management value chain, offers us a holistic overview on the industry that has shifted from being a service provider at the end of a linear economy, to being at the core of the circular economy. However, as we encounter a broad diversity of technologies and national geographical, demographical and cultural frameworks we understand that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and that our holistic vision is the key to succeed.

Change and diversity are constant elements in the daily life of our companies, which must be ready and versatile to handle any type of waste produced. We do not have fixed recipes and ingredients. The right approach is the best recipe.

Achieving a circular and resource efficient economy requires major changes in our production and consumption models. Today, we know that all our efforts could be in vain without the contribution of the manufacturers. Without a proper design that also envisages the end-of-life of the product, there cannot be a real circular economy. Ecodesign must mean design for recycling and design that incorporates secondary raw materials as a rule in products.

Once the products reach their end-of-life status and become waste, we come into play. Waste collection is a fundamental step in the success of waste management, for which we need the support and collaboration of our citizens and industries. Separate collection, with separation at source by the citizens, is one of the most important operations at the beginning of the chain and decisive to ensure quality recycling. Nevertheless, we cannot forget that also here solutions are not straight forward if we consider the diverse local factors across the EU. The integration of the collection system in the whole waste management chain and the existing market conditions are also a relevant aspect to consider.

The collected waste goes to our sorting and recycling plants, which give a second life to waste. To have a competitive and innovation-driven recycling industry, a strong, and stable market for secondary raw material is crucial. Today, only 12% of raw materials used by the European industry come from recycling, and this number must be doubled!

Yet, in the circular economy, we also have the responsibility to treat the residual waste in the best environmental way. Our waste-to-energy plants, not only safely treat non-recyclable waste, but also generate energy from a local and reliable source, while avoiding the combustion of fossil fuels and allowing a diversification of power supplies. This positive contribution of waste-to-energy plants to the circular economy must be reflected in the EU Taxonomy.

Finally, waste disposal remains the very last resort for all the residues from waste to energy and other specific waste streams, such as some hazardous wastes which have no other treatment solutions and for which the highest environmental and safety standards are especially relevant.

FEAD is the European Waste Management Association, representing the private waste and resource management industry across Europe, including 18 national waste management federations and 3,000 waste management companies. Private waste management companies operate in 60% of municipal waste markets in Europe and in 75% of industrial and commercial waste. This means more than 320,000 local jobs, fuelling €5 billion of investments into the economy every year.

A new vision for waste management

*Reflection, Synergies, Commitment.
FEAD unveils its vision for the future of the
waste management industry.*

Articles by FEAD and Pieter Van den Brand

Redefining waste management: FEAD's vision for a thriving circular Europe

by FEAD, European Waste Management Association

In an era where environmental concerns and sustainability have taken center stage, **FEAD, the European Waste Management Association has set a remarkably ambitious target: to recycle 75% of European waste by 2035.** This bold vision is a testament to FEAD's commitment to driving change and revolutionising the waste management sector. In this article, FEAD explores the origins of this groundbreaking goal and the profound implications it holds for EU countries and the European waste management industry.

A new vision takes root

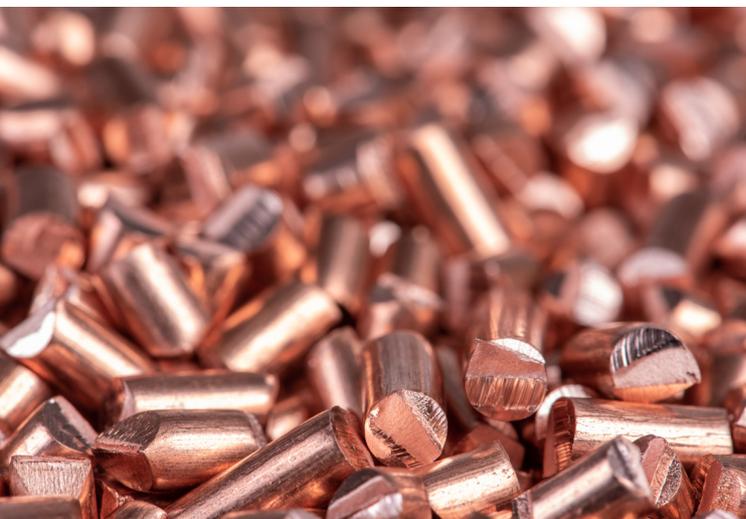
FEAD's vision for a circular Europe did not emerge out of thin air. It is the result of years of collaboration, research, and a collective realisation that the linear model of waste management is no longer viable. Acknowledging the pressing need to shift towards a circular economy, **FEAD aims to transform waste into valuable resources, reducing reliance on raw materials and mitigating environmental impact.**



The President of FEAD, Claudia Mensi, unveiling the association's vision for the future of the waste management industry, during the event "How to Make The Circular Economy Work? A New Alliance Between The Waste Management And Manufacturing Industries", held on 6 July 2023 in Brussels
© Zoi Didili / FEAD

Implications for EU countries

Aligned with the Commission's proposed European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan, FEAD's vision offers a comprehensive roadmap to achieve ambitious sustainability targets. By recycling 75% of waste, EU countries can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve natural resources, and create a more resilient and resource-efficient Europe. However, achieving this goal necessitates close cooperation among Member States, entailing the sharing of best practices, investments in advanced recycling technologies, and fostering cross-border collaborations. The 75% target presents both an opportunity and a challenge for EU Member States, requiring an acknowledgement of the diverse realities across Europe, as highlighted by the Commission's **Early Warning Report (EWR) on waste**, which revealed disparities in meeting reuse and recycling targets.



Copper Scrap ©copyright free

Transforming the waste management sector

FEAD's vision serves as a catalyst for transformation within the waste management sector. It compels industry stakeholders to **embrace innovation, develop efficient recycling technologies, and invest in research and development**. Adapting to a circular economy model requires a paradigm shift, where waste is viewed as a resource rather than a burden.

Furthermore, the vision underscores the **need for a comprehensive waste management framework at both national and EU levels**. This includes the establishment of large-scale and efficient separate collection systems, where public authorities (in the case of municipal waste), waste producers, and waste collectors cooperate on the basis of clear obligations and responsibilities. It also includes enhanced sorting and separation methods, and improved waste treatment facilities, while it also necessitates concerted action between the waste management sector, industrial production and product or service design.

To this end, we **need to identify demand-driven measures**, such as recycled content targets on certain material streams or product categories, the ecodesign of products needs to be improved, and recycling to be enhanced. At the same time, we need to restrict the presence of hazardous substances in waste materials, develop joint R&D programs to optimise the **uptake of secondary raw materials** in production and find new outlets for the recycling of waste materials.



Waste sorting plant. Conveyor on which waste is moving to enter the sorting for further storage ©copyright free

"Adapting to a circular economy model requires a paradigm shift, where waste is viewed as a resource rather than a burden."



Waste falling on pile from conveyor belt at recycling factory ©copyright free

FEAD's vision to recycle 75% of European waste by 2035 reflects **a decisive step towards a more sustainable future**. Embracing the principles of a circular economy will not only benefit the environment but also bolster the competitiveness and sustainability of the European waste management sector. The European Waste Management Association, in collaboration with its members, is dedicated to supporting this transformation, driving innovation, and working tirelessly towards creating a circular Europe that benefits both present and future generations.

FEAD sets the bar high: 75% recycling by 2035

by Pieter van den Brand

This article was originally published by wastematters.eu

The European federation for the private waste sector unveiled its ambitious proposal on Thursday 6 July during a workshop on the circular economy. The workshop was about building new alliances between the waste sector and the processing and manufacturing industries. 'Only about 12% of the raw materials currently used in Europe are circular,' says Mensi, citing a recent Eurostat report. The EU's statistical office reports that at the moment about 40% of the waste produced by the 27 EU member states is recycled and about the same volume is landfilled. In comparison, about 80% of the 60 million tonnes of waste produced in the Netherlands is recycled.

A SELF-SUFFICIENT EUROPE

The FEAD president says it is crucial that waste streams currently being landfilled or recycled for low-grade uses are redirected to release more materials for use by industry. As geopolitical developments are leading to a scarcity of raw materials, a self-sufficient Europe will depend heavily on high-quality recycling of material streams for its raw materials. 'Much has already been set in motion for several waste streams, such as batteries and packaging. We see it as our duty to launch and expand similar initiatives for other waste streams in circular partnerships with industry. For example, construction and demolition wastes contain huge volumes of building materials that can be recovered for use in material loops.'

HUGE RAW MATERIALS POTENTIAL

According to Mensi, exports of textiles have tripled in ten years, which represents a massive loss of materials. It is high time that European recycling capacity was brought up to the required level.

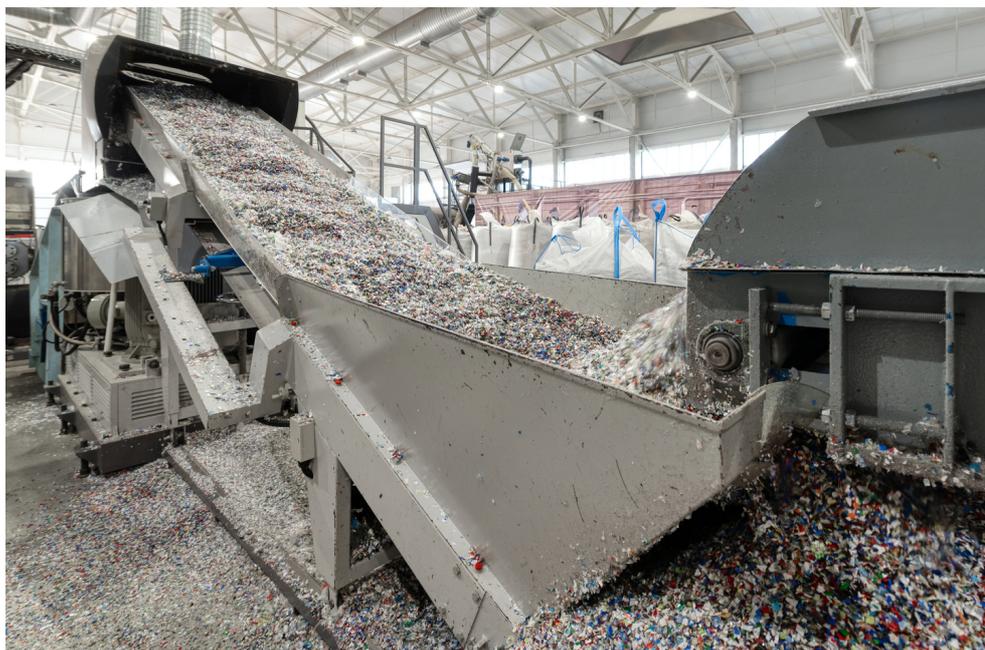


Pieter van den Brand
Freelance journalist

The same goes for the ten million tonnes of materials in discarded furniture each year. 'The potential for recovering raw materials for use in the European economy is huge. E-waste is a valuable source of rare earth elements and other materials, but only half of all electrical appliances are collected and recycled.'

IMPROVING PRODUCT DESIGN

FEAD wants to work with industry on setting standards and specifications for secondary materials to ensure they meet the quality required by manufacturers. Manufacturing industries are looking to increase the use of recycled materials in a large number of products, partly in response to European legislation. This can act as a catalyst, argues Mensi. 'We must also improve the design of products to make them more recyclable and ensure they contain no hazardous chemicals.'



Waste sorting conveyor ©copyright free

'The potential for recovering raw materials for use in the European economy is huge.'

CONTACT POINT FOR INDUSTRY

Of course, this is an enormous challenge, acknowledges Mensi. 'There is no one size fits all. Each industrial sector has its own standards and requirements, and we have to take that into account when setting up partnerships. FEAD wants to be the single contact point for industry.'

ASSISTANCE FROM GOVERNMENTS

Mensi is asking national and local governments for their cooperation. 'Without them we cannot achieve our goal. We are setting the bar high, but many EU member states do not have the basic infrastructure to support separate collection systems. Our sector has the expertise and technologies in house to provide assistance, so that these countries can get the best value possible out of their waste in the most environmentally friendly way.'

WASTE SECTOR INVESTS MILLIONS

The waste sector is fully prepared to make the necessary investments, says Mensi. 'We know from surveys of our members that each year our sector invests five billion euros in sustainable state-of-the-art waste treatment, and we want to guarantee that level of investment for the next twelve years. This means we will be investing 60 billion euros in innovation and expansion of recycling capacity in Europe. Likewise, we call upon the EU to contribute through its research and development programmes such as LIFE and Horizon Europe. To take this forward we need to mobilise all available resources.'

RAPID IMPLEMENTATION OF EU WASTE LEGISLATION

FEAD urges policymakers in the EU member states to make haste with implementing the EU waste legislation. In a recent report the European Commission notes that nine of the 27 member states, including the Netherlands, are at course to meet the 2025 recycling targets for municipal waste and packaging waste and the target of reducing landfilling of municipal waste to a maximum of 10% by 2035. Claudia Mensi: 'Many countries are a long way off these targets. We in the private waste sector must clearly convey how important it is for the circular economy that member states meet these targets.'

'Only about 12% of the raw materials currently used in Europe are circular.'



Claudia Mensi presenting FEAD's vision on 6 July 2023 in Brussels © Zoi Didili / FEAD



Past, Present, Future.

*Mapping the EU Council Presidencies:
Evaluating the Czech Republic's Leadership,
Spain's Rising Influence, and Belgium's
Promising Trajectory*

Articles by Petr Špičák, Luis Palomino and Aarnout Ecker

Assessing the Czech Presidency of the Council and the ongoing problems in achieving circular goals

by Petr Špičák

I am personally pleased and welcome the opportunity to present ČAObH in FEAD's Digital Magazine. In the format of an opinion article, I offer a broader view of the EU issue, viewed through the lens of our main activity - supporting the introduction of the circular economy in the Czech Republic. Just on a side note, I will mention that **next year we will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of joining the EU.**

Back to the last six months, when the Czech Republic presided over the Council of the European Union. On Thursday, 22 September 2022, the international conference of ČAObH "Higher energy and raw material security of EU countries" took place in Prague, held under the auspices of the Minister for European Affairs, Mr. Mikuláš Bek.

The international dimension of the ČAObH conference was based not only on the fact that the co-organiser was FEAD (European Waste Management Association), the sponsor was EXPRA (Extended Producer Responsibility Alliance), an important participant was CEFIC – the European Council of the Chemical Industry and also EuRIC – the European Association of the Recycling Industry but also from of great interest to multinational corporations, engaged in, for example, production from recycled raw materials.

A wide range of questions were discussed, so for the clarity of the participants, whether in the hall of the Marriott Hotel Prague or online, the program was divided into 3 parts:



Petr Špičák

Executive Committee
Chairman, Czech
Association of
Circular Economy
(ČAObH), Czechia

- **Energy,**
- **Recycling,**
- **Economy and climate.**

The timing of the conference was absolutely unique: Europe had never before faced such a crisis in securing raw materials as it is now.

Even the so-called OPEC oil crisis of 1973 was incomparably smaller in scope and impact. This year, we are fully continuing with activities aimed at circularity and recycling, and this year we are also planning to hold a conference in Prague where, in addition to the mentioned topics, we will also deal with energy and the topic of economy and climate. The conference is scheduled for 31 October 2023.



Front building Council of the European Union ©Copyright: European Union

However, every crisis, even the biggest one, carries the potential for positive changes, the realisation of long-unnoticed challenges and the initiation of transformation. From this point of view, the so-called democratic decision-making deficit of the European Union should be eliminated. Now, you ask how can this be accomplished? The EU "Governance" must be aware of:

1. The different state of economies and readiness of EU member countries not only for the transition to a circular economy, but also, for example, for accepting the goals of the Green Deal (GD). Compared to the time when GD was announced, we have an energy crisis and a war in Ukraine that affects all of Europe.

2. From the above, it is evident that there will certainly be at least a 'two-speed Europe' for many years - the dividing line will be based on the length of membership, or the dexterity in how to promote their national interests in the EU in the past decades.

3. For such a necessary change in the functioning of the EU, the application of the principle of feedback in the decision-making of the European Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament, is a prerequisite.

4. Moreover, what is perhaps the most important from the point of view of the Czech Republic: in the future, the EU must not be a tool for the democratic promotion of the interests of various lobbies, often led by the economically strongest members of the EU. Every new regulation, not only for waste management, must be accompanied by a so-called impact study, to assess how the new ordered regulation will impact the economy.

While these points may look like Euroscepticism, if these steps are not taken, it may gradually lead to a weakening of the EU 27.



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Just as a side note, I would like to emphasise that as an EU citizen, I wish with all my heart **a functional, democratic and efficient Europe - instead of one that serves as a breeding ground for lobbyists and that eternally struggles with bureaucracy.**

The point is that the EU leadership must get off the white clouds of the Union's ideas about ambitious goals, endless resources and go to reality, the reality of crisis, a state of war, and the imminent misery of a significant part of Europeans.

'Every crisis, even the biggest one, carries the potential for positive changes, the realisation of long-unnoticed challenges and the initiation of transformation.'



**Sustainably.
Responsibly.**

Environmental challenges of the Spanish EU Presidency

by Luis Palomino

The Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union has the responsibility of finalising negotiations on many files before the parliamentary elections in June 2024. This article explains the main lines of work of this Presidency and the most relevant topics regarding waste.

Spain took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the fifth time, in the second semester of 2023, from 1 July to 31 December. It will take place in the final stretch of the European institutional cycle, prior to the parliamentary elections scheduled for June 2024 and the subsequent appointment of a new Commission. Therefore, Spain will have a particular responsibility to conclude negotiations on many open files in the major areas of the Union's work: ecological transition, digital transformation, and social agenda.

Spain will focus its Presidency on four main pillars: reindustrialising the European Union and ensuring its open strategic autonomy, promoting greater social and economic justice, strengthening European unity, and advancing ecological transition and environmental adaptation. The Spanish Government has emphasised that slowing down climate change and environmental degradation will allow us to drastically reduce our dependencies on energy and raw materials, lowering our electricity bills and making European companies more competitive.

Advancing towards ecological transition will save up to €133 billion in fossil fuel imports by 2030. At the same time, it will make companies more competitive, creating around one million jobs in this decade.



Luis Palomino

Secretary General of ASEGRE, Spain
FEAD board member

To progress on this priority, the President of the Spanish Government has indicated that during the Spanish Presidency, a reform of the electricity market will be promoted to accelerate the deployment of renewables, reduce electricity prices, and improve system stability. There is a desire to streamline the processing of legislative files such as the gas and hydrogen package and energy efficiency regulations.

In addition to promoting these four priorities, Spain will host and coordinate high-level negotiations on numerous vital issues during the next semester, ensuring the approval of dozens of files that will ultimately become laws and concrete measures.

Moreover, during this presidency, the European institutions will address topics of great interest concerning waste. For example, on 25 September, the consultation on the joint proposal launched by Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden to curb the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) will come to an end. PFAS are a group of substances used worldwide that have been associated with serious effects on human health and nature. They can be found in food packaging, non-stick cookware, textiles, cosmetics, electronics, and more. This is the broadest restriction proposal to date, which could result in a total ban 18 months after its entry into force or a ban with limited-time derogations and specific use.

To make these decisions, it will be necessary to have academic studies on the subject to provide useful quantitative data that allows for the derivation of monitored PFAS concentration ranges in identified waste streams.

Another key issue will be the revision of the Waste Shipment Regulation. On 24 May, the Council approved its negotiation mandate to initiate discussions with the European Parliament on a proposal to update the EU legislation on cross-border waste shipments, ensuring that waste is only sent to countries where it is properly treated and prohibiting exports for disposal in another Member State.



The President of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sánchez, presents the priorities of the Spanish presidency of the Council of the EU © EFE/Juan Carlos Hidalgo

FEAD is collaborating with European authorities to ensure that this review takes into account the industry's perspective. Those of us who specialise in hazardous waste need to make it clear to the public authorities that the treatment of this type of waste requires highly specialised plants and techniques that cannot be replicated in each Member State. Therefore, the transfer of this type of waste may be essential to protect people's health and the environment.

Another pending issue that has been delayed and will affect the period of the Spanish Presidency is the revision of the REACH Regulation, which aims to improve protection of human health and the environment from the risks associated with the manufacture, marketing, and use of chemical substances and mixtures. The Commission has stated that it remains committed to a Europe free of toxins and that it will publish its review proposal no later than the fourth quarter of 2023. The Commission claims that it needs to meet divergent objectives of protecting human health and the environment, ensuring European competitive advantages and innovation through sustainable chemicals, and simplifying its regulatory processes. For now, progress is being made in increasing the use of alternatives to collect data on substance properties.

'Spain will have a particular responsibility to conclude negotiations on many open files in the major areas of the Union's work: ecological transition, digital transformation, and social agenda.'

Another issue that will require attention is related to asbestos, a hazardous waste that European Directive 2003/18/EC prohibits its use and commercialization and indicates its replacement with other materials due to its potential danger over time. The European Parliament urged the EU, the Commission, and the Member States to inventory the presence of asbestos and create location maps to subsequently develop action plans for its elimination before 2028.

Currently, there are initiatives and strategies for removing asbestos from buildings in most EU countries. However, only Poland has a comprehensive asbestos removal program with the aim of eliminating it completely by 2032. Unfortunately, the statistics collected in each Member State are inconsistent, resulting in fragmented, incomplete, and incomparable results.

Therefore, the environmental challenges facing the Spanish presidency of the EU are numerous, and it is a crucial period due to the proximity of European elections that may bring changes in how the EU addresses sustainability and the circular economy-related issues.

What to expect from the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU?

by Aarnout Ecker

As the world grapples with urgent environmental challenges, the upcoming Belgian Presidency arrives at a pivotal moment. With legislative initiatives and Council priorities focused on areas such as packaging waste, the circular economy, climate adaptation, and biodiversity, Belgium has a unique opportunity to spearhead transformative actions. In this article, our Belgian member Denuo explores what should be the key objectives and responsibilities of the Belgian Presidency, highlighting the importance of effective implementation and collaboration in achieving a more sustainable future.

Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)

One of the key elements that should be high on the agenda during the Belgian Presidency is the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation. By negotiating a final agreement between the European Commission, Parliament, and Council, we would like to see Belgium push for a comprehensive regulation that encourages sustainable packaging practices by ensuring high collection targets, concrete recyclability criteria, and broad recycled content targets. These measures will contribute to reducing waste generation, promoting recycling, and ensuring a more circular approach to packaging materials.

Waste Framework Directive (WFD)

In line with the circular economy agenda, the Belgian Presidency should also focus on the proposal for a revision of the Waste Framework Directive, which was published



Aarnout Ecker

Adviser of DENUO,
Belgium

on 5 July 2023 and which includes specific emphasis on textiles and bio-waste. This directive will play a crucial role in shaping waste management practices and encouraging resource efficiency throughout the EU. By focusing on textiles and organic waste, we can greatly reduce the amount of residual waste in the EU, as these two waste streams account for a significant share of the total residual waste volume, which was recently highlighted in the European Commission's Early Warning Reports. As a result, we could potentially significantly reduce the need for the incineration and landfilling of municipal and packaging waste.

Focus on environmental action

Recognising the urgency of climate change, the Belgian Presidency will seek to address climate adaptation measures to enhance resilience and preparedness in the face of changing climatic conditions. Additionally, the Belgian Presidency will aim to integrate biodiversity and climate objectives



Cardboard and plastic packaging ©Copyright free

'By negotiating a final agreement between the European Commission, Parliament, and Council, we would like to see Belgium push for a comprehensive regulation that encourages sustainable packaging practices by ensuring high collection targets, concrete recyclability criteria, and broad recycled content targets.' Denuo

across various sectors, emphasising the importance of safeguarding nature while tackling climate challenges.

A key component in the fight against climate change is the pursuit of a circular economy as shown by Denuo's recent climate study.^[1] Belgium can lay the groundwork for an update of the existing Circular Economy Action Plan by proposing measures that can reduce Europe's materials footprint.

Market Surveillance and Effective Implementation

Ensuring the effectiveness of new legislation and monitoring its implementation is of paramount importance and should be one of the focal points during the Belgian Presidency. By prioritising market surveillance, Belgium can help create an environment that fosters compliance, fair competition, and innovation. Rigorous monitoring and enforcement mechanisms will play a crucial role in realizing the promises and objectives of the various waste-, energy-, and circular economy-related regulations.

Mid-Term Evaluation of the 8th Environment Action Plan (EAP)

By March 2024, the mid-term evaluation of the 8th Environment Action Plan (EAP) will be conducted. This evaluation provides an opportunity to assess the progress made in achieving environmental goals and to identify areas that require further attention. The Belgian Presidency will actively engage in this evaluation process, focusing on effective policy implementation and ensuring that the objectives of the EAP are on track to be met.

Collaboration and Regional Responsibilities

Belgium's federal system means that each region will assume the lead on specific topics related to environmental initiatives. While the final responsibilities are yet to be determined, this collaborative approach enables tailored and context-specific actions to be taken, reflecting the unique

strengths and characteristics of each region. Such collaboration is vital to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to sustainable development.

The Belgian Presidency comes at a crucial time, providing an opportunity to drive legislative initiatives and prioritise environmental concerns. By focusing on packaging waste, circular economy, climate adaptation, biodiversity, and effective implementation, Belgium aims to shape a more sustainable and resilient future for EU member states. Through collaboration and regional responsibilities, the Presidency seeks to foster innovation, maximise resource efficiency, and accelerate the transition towards a circular and low-carbon economy. As the world faces pressing environmental challenges, the Belgian Presidency's efforts are pivotal in catalysing transformative actions and inspiring other nations to embrace sustainability. To highlight all these initiatives Belgium's Presidency will be hosting a major circular economy event in the first quarter of 2024 in collaboration with Flanders Technology and Innovation.

'Ensuring the effectiveness of new legislation and monitoring its implementation is of paramount importance and should be one of the focal points during the Belgian Presidency.'



Textile waste ©Copyright: Denuo

'By focusing on textiles and organic waste, we can greatly reduce the amount of residual waste in the EU, as these two waste streams account for a significant share of the total residual waste volume, which was recently highlighted in the European Commission's Early Warning Reports.' Denuo

[1] <https://denuo.be/fr/le-secteur-belge-du-recyclage-et-de-la-gestion-des-dechets-economise-deux-fois-plus-de-co2-tout-au>

Members' Voices

Full Members & Affiliates

*From Green Public Procurement to EU
Taxonomy and Waste-to-Energy*

Articles by Chicco Testa, Herwart Wilms, Elena Maggioni

From waste management a push toward material and energy self-sufficiency

by Chicco Testa

The waste sector has taken on a relevant role both socially and productively. In fact, it represents not only an essential public service for urban waste, by virtue of the immediate repercussions on the issue of the environment and the healthiness of urban contexts, but also one of the constant sources of supply of (secondary) materials and energy production, a real and growing sector in the recovery, and therefore productive of raw materials from waste for industry.

Waste management today is an activity that requires organisational effectiveness of the cycle and the ability to build and operate facilities with increasingly complex and efficient technological characteristics. Therefore, it becomes **crucial to develop an integrated management system**, effective and efficient, that gives companies the opportunity to activate downstream initiatives to reduce waste production, in which recycling and energy recovery are complementary elements, in order to achieve the goal of **minimising the use of landfill**.

European policy directions place the circular economy and the enhancement of recovery and regeneration of products and materials at the centre of the resource efficiency agenda to respond to the increasingly scarce availability of raw materials. This would be achievable by making the recycling industrial sector strong and competitive, ensuring the valorisation and recovery of materials and production residues, and defining cross-sector development paths based on new business models.



Chicco Testa

President of
Assoambiente, Italy

For the development of a strong European production sector, waste can play an important role by extracting from the waste stream all possible materials, starting with rare and critical materials and then, where this is not feasible, all the energy still available. **From waste can and must also come part of the solution to the European energy problem.**

The recovery of materials and energy from waste contributes to energy efficiency goals and is also an important factor in environmental protection because it saves resources, including primary energy, allowing the avoidance of emissions from fossil fuel plants, with particular reference to the

reduction of climate-changing gas emissions. In particular, the issue of energy is very important for the countries' development, and it is absolutely necessary, without ideological vetoes, to exploit the amount of energy from waste which cannot be recycled.

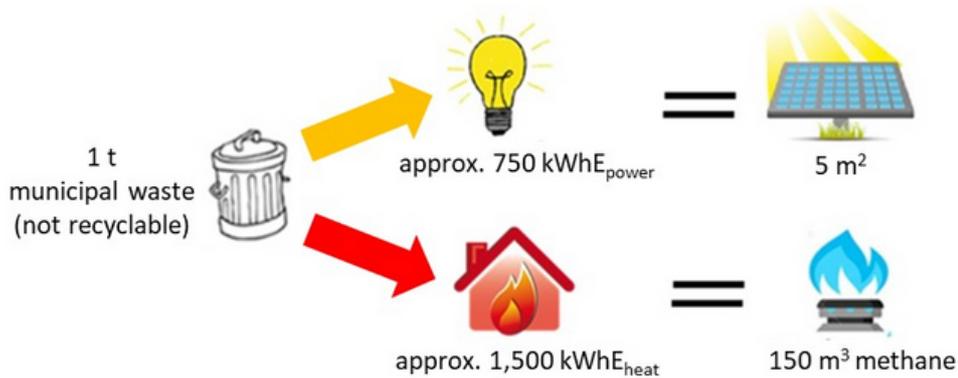
Material recycling activities (metals, paper, glass, plastics, organics) not only reduce the extraction of virgin materials from the natural environment (efficient use of matter) but also usually enables large reductions in energy consumption (efficient use of energy). Industrial processes using recycled materials are less energy intensive than the same processes based on virgin raw materials. Maximising recycling therefore means getting a double dividend and reducing industrial energy consumption.

Italy still has important steps to take to get to at least 65% recycling of municipal waste and the closure of industrial recycling cycles, but realising these goals by 2035 it could be worth 2-3% of national energy consumption: one significant achievement is the primary energy saved through recycling, nearly 24 terawatt-hours (the previous year's savings in Italy were close to 23 terawatt-hours).

Achieving all recycling targets in Italy can add another 10 terawatt-hours, which is equivalent to the primary energy consumption needed to meet the average national domestic electricity consumption of about 7 million Italian households. The main contribution to this saving is to be credited to plastic recycling with a share of more than 40% glass recycling is in second place with 28.8% and then paper with 20.6%.

It is still difficult, not only in Italy, but also in some other parts of the EU, to overcome false preconceptions about energy recovery from waste, downstream of separate collection and recycling, and to concretely evaluate the environmental impacts and contributions, even minimal, considering also that it is a programmable energy source that could reduce as much as possible the energy dependence on primary sources.

From 1 t of municipal waste (not from separate collection), around 750 kWh of electricity could be produced, equivalent to 5 m² of photovoltaic panels or 500 m² of cultivated area to produce biomass (production 20 t/y per ha) and, in addition, up to 1,500 kWh of thermal energy that can be used, for example, for heating buildings, equivalent to 150 m³ of methane.



Graph representing waste-to-energy process ©Copyright Assoambiente

The solutions needed to counter the current energy crisis must not thwart the decarbonisation path defined at the European level: taking into consideration the reduction of climate-changing emissions and the fact that the surface afforestation allows the absorption of about 5 t/y per ha of carbon, or 1.8 kg/y per m² of CO₂ (IPCC report - 2000), the energy recovery of 1 t of municipal waste, as an alternative to disposal in controlled landfills, allows avoiding the emission of (at least) 500 kg of CO₂ equivalent, corresponding to more than 250 m² of reforested area.

Plants that treat waste can produce, depending on the type and technology adopted, both electrical and thermal energy as well as biogas, which in turn can be transformed into electrical or thermal energy or biomethane that can be fed into the gas distribution network or used as automotive fuel to replace fossil fuels. Thanks to the treatment of organic waste, 1.5% of the Italian gas demand can be obtained and with the energy valorisation of waste, large shares of electricity can be generated, equal to the average consumption of 2.6 million households.



Waste to energy plant ©Copyright free

The implementation of policies for the maximisation of material recovery and energy valorisation of waste that cannot be further recycled, would thus contribute to a more virtuous management of the waste (reduction of landfilling), provide a valuable contribution to resource efficiency and energy saving policies, ensure a contribution to the reduction of climate-altering gases and also solve problems of social value, considering that waste management constitutes an activity of public interest.

Buy cheap, pay twice

by Herwart Wilms

Sustainability criteria still do not play the role they should in public procurement. The supposedly cheapest price often has high follow-up costs, which in turn have to be borne by the public sector.

If you buy cheap, you pay twice. This old wisdom of the merchants is now known to almost every consumer who has ever fallen for supposedly cheap offers in online shops. And it applies all the more to the public sector, which, with a huge purchasing power of an estimated 500 billion euros a year in Germany alone, could persuade manufacturers, contractors and service providers to bring more socially balanced, environmentally friendly and resource-saving products and offers onto the market.

Yes, sustainably produced products are somewhat more expensive because environmentally friendly and resource-saving production processes are more costly. On the other hand, sustainable products and services avoid ecological follow-up costs that have to be borne by the general public and thus by the public purse. The overexploitation of people's natural resources costs us all dearly.

Moreover, sustainable products save energy. The potential is enormous: the European Commission estimates that sustainable products can save around 132 million tonnes of primary energy by 2030.

'The European Commission estimates that sustainable products can save around 132 million tonnes of primary energy by 2030.'



Herwart Wilms

Managing Director,
REMONDIS, Germany
FEAD Vice-President

This is equivalent to about 150 billion cubic metres of natural gas, almost the entirety of the EU's Russian natural gas imports. For a more resilient, independent Europe that wants to combine freedom and sustainability, the public sector as a buyer is an important strategic driver.

In the first half of 2021, sustainability criteria played a role in just under 11,000 procurement transactions of almost 87,000 public contracts and concessions.

Public procurement is still purely a price competition

So, there are plenty of reasons for the public sector to focus on sustainability criteria in its procurement processes. Unfortunately, however, this still happens far too rarely:

According to the *procurement statistics of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology*, for the first half of 2021 (only available in German) – the first and so far only statistical evaluation of procurement procedures in Germany – sustainability criteria only played a role in just under 11,000 of the almost 87,000 public contracts and concessions. This corresponds to a share of just 12.5%. In terms of contract volume, the federal, state and local governments awarded 31.5% of the total volume with sustainability criteria. In almost 60 per cent of the cases, the only award criterion was price or cost.

If these findings from the public statistics are already sobering, the overall picture becomes even more clouded when analysed in depth. Scientists at the University of the Bundeswehr Munich, for example, investigated what influence sustainability criteria actually have in the award procedure. For this purpose, they took a closer look at the documents of 160 award procedures in the field of cleaning services, cleaning agents and cleaning equipment. The result was that sustainability criteria had an average influence on the decision for a bidder of just over 2%.

Centrally defined sustainability criteria as a positive catalogue

There is no lack of political targets. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has already defined the topic of sustainability in public procurement as a significant goal of the United Nations. The EU wants to introduce binding minimum criteria for green procurement with the Circular Economy Action Plan. And in Germany, the Waste Management Act has already obligated federal public bodies to engage in green procurement since 2012. The Circular Economy laws of the federal states contain comparable requirements for state authorities and municipalities.



Miniature shopping bags ©Copyright free

Last year, the General Administrative Regulation on the Procurement of Climate-Friendly Services (AVV Klima) was added. But nothing has changed so far. In fact, public procurement and concession procedures are still pure price competitions. The cheapest bidder gets the contract.

If one assumes that the contracting authorities have no malicious intent, one possible reason could be found in the sometimes vague and not very concrete specifications for the operational level – combined with the fear of doing something wrong in the award procedure. It is true that the Federal Environment Agency lists numerous procurement guidelines, recommendations for action, life cycle assessments and product certifications in its database “Environmental Criteria”, which can support public contracting authorities in green procurement. But this is not concrete enough to have a market-penetrating effect on both sides of the market – suppliers and demanders. What is missing is a concrete, legally secured positive catalogue of the sustainability standards that products and service providers must meet in order for the public sector to be allowed to procure or commission them at all.

Such concretely formulated framework conditions would send a clear signal to the market : the public sector would know exactly which sustainability standards products and service providers have to meet in order to carry out an award procedure in a legally secure manner.

Suppliers, in turn, would know exactly which standards they or their products must meet in order to even be considered for the public sector. From now on, no company that wants to keep the federal government, the states and the municipalities as customers would be able to avoid the issues of climate protection, biodiversity and circular economy. Sustainability criteria would no longer be merely the fig leaf of de facto price competition.

A positive example of this kind of catalogue is the minimum standard for recyclable design by the Zentrale Stelle Verpackungsregister (Central Agency Packaging Register – ZSVR). In this standard, the ZSVR defines annually, in agreement with the Federal Environment Agency and the expert group “Recyclable Design”, which packaging is considered recyclable, and which is not. Manufacturers who wish to place only recyclable packaging on the market can use these standards as a guideline. The basis of the minimum standard is Section 21 of the Packaging Act, which is intended to provide manufacturers with incentives to both improve the recyclability of their packaging and increase the proportion of recycled material by means of staggered licence fees. Decried for years as a toothless tiger, Section 21 of the Packaging Act has had a market-shaping effect in the packaging sector simply by defining the minimum standards and its annual further development. Packaging manufacturers now know what is considered recyclable and can adjust their product policy accordingly.

[Sustainability standards for the top ten](#)

We also need comparable clarity in green public procurement. Only if the sustainability criteria are clearly and unambiguously defined at a central point, the rules are unambiguous: for the manufacturer or supplier, a deviation means a practical exclusion from the market. The contracting authority, in turn, must expect a review procedure if the criteria in the award procedure deviate from the centrally defined sustainability criteria. It is by no means necessary to define sustainability criteria for all products demanded by the public sector. For a start, it would be sufficient to define sustainability standards for the ten most frequently demanded products and services.

Resistance is to be expected when implementing a clear sustainability course in public procurement. After all, the fat years of surplus government revenues and negative interest rates for government bonds are over. The Corona crisis, the Ukraine war, the accommodation and care of traumatised war refugees as well as persistently high energy prices are clearly making themselves felt in the national budgets. Money is no longer so loose, although schools need to be renovated and infrastructures need to be renewed. For the third time in a row, the Federal Republic of Germany failed to meet its fiscal sustainability target last year, thus saddling future generations with new debts. In order not to burden future generations even more, we should pay more attention to sustainability in public procurement.



The missing link between the European Taxonomy and Waste-to-Energy technologies

The Landfill Directive and the need for investments

by Elena Maggioni

At A2A, Italy's first operator in waste collection and management, a force of 14,000 strives to contribute to Italy's green transition. We are proud to provide our environmental services to about 4 million citizens with **70% of waste sorted at the source**, and to process 3,4 Mton of waste every year in over 40 facilities spread across the country. Indeed, we manage all the essential environmental services in the cities of Milan and Brescia, and in several other cities in Italy. Our integrated waste management system enables about **100% of our collected waste to be recycled or used for energy production**. It is not by chance that the city of Milan holds the world record for the number of citizens provided with an organic waste collection service.

Increasing circularity is a mission that we embedded in our **ten-year Strategic Plan to 2030**, which lays out how the next "decade of action" will make both energy transition and circular economy - the two pillars of our strategy - concrete realities. Our goal is to achieve **net-zero emissions by 2040**, giving our tangible contribution to the creation of a more sustainable future for Europe.

Fully subscribing to the European Union's climate goals, we are well aware that the implementation of the Green Deal will not be reached only by defining clear targets, but also through the establishment of a financial environment able to **channel investments in the development and**

deployment of green technologies. This is why, to implement our ambitious environmental plan, we are **investing over 16 billion euros within 2030**. Our projects are already 85% aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals and 65% with the **EU Taxonomy**.

In other words, we are committed to sustainable growth. We are convinced that **investments in sustainability will deliver jobs and a solid future for both our company and the communities we proudly serve**. However, the scale of the challenge we face requires a tremendous financial effort that needs the **full commitment of public and private financial institutions**.

Indeed, to implement our ambitious plan, we rely on financial markets. On 24 January 2023, A2A announced its entry into the **Nasdaq Sustainable Bond Network**, a platform on sustainable finance that will allow the Group to get in touch with a wide network of potential international investors attentive to sustainability issues.

The **European Taxonomy**, along with new reporting obligations and financial regulations, such as the EU **Green Bonds Regulation**, aims precisely at fueling the transition by mobilising private and public capitals towards the activities we need for our green transition. While the taxonomy remains a work in progress, to be expanded and integrated in the future, we believe that **some changes are needed as soon as possible** to clarify its interpretation and



Elena Maggioni

Head of Business
Development and
Transformation at
A2A, Italy

and implementation, **making sure that all the activities that can offer a significant contribution to the EU's climate and environmental objectives can do so right away**. This is especially true for activities related to **Waste-to-Energy**.

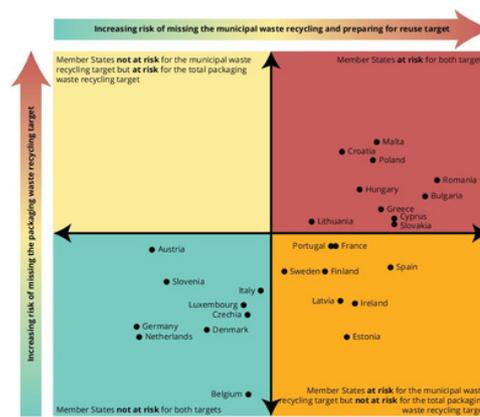
The **Early Warning Report** on waste management,^[1] published by the European Commission, identifies a general lack of implementation of the Landfill Directive. The legislation obliges Member States to reduce the **landfilling of municipal waste to a maximum of 10% by 2035** and

introduces a ban on the landfilling of separately collected waste, including biodegradable waste. The Report, in line with the Waste Framework Directive (WFD), defines landfilling as “the least preferable waste treatment option” and identifies **13 Member States that are at serious risk of missing the target**. Even worst, at the end of 2021, **1995 illegal or substandard landfills were still operating** and had to be rehabilitated or adapted to EU standards.[2]

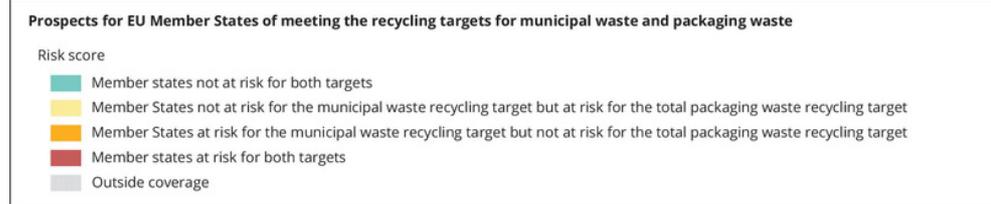
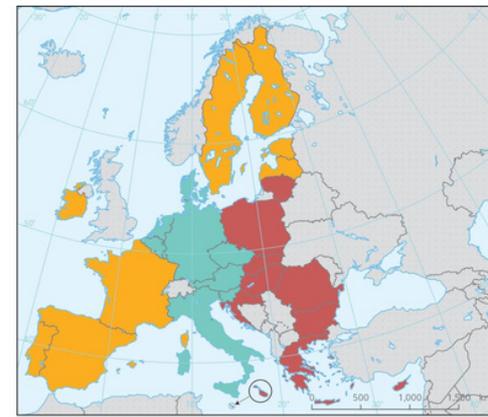
With **considerable divides** at both European and national levels, the share of waste directed to landfills varies from 89% in Malta to 0% of the best-in class Sweden and Belgium. Member States that are fully aligned with the targets are those who invested in both recycling and Waste-to-Energy capacities. In line with the Report’s findings, a study[3] by the European House Ambrosetti also shows a **negative correlation between energy recovery and landfilling**.

Investments in **Waste-to-Energy** are not only a tool to reach our European goals under the Landfilling Directive. They are also **good for our emission reduction and climate mitigation efforts**. Talking a quick look at the environmental performance of the waste sector in Europe, in 2020, the waste sector accounted for **3% of the total CO2 emissions**, of which 24% were emitted by Waste-to-Energy plants and **59% by landfills**.

Moreover, **energy recovery reduces the use of fossil fuels for energy and heat production** (e.g. for district heating) and can thus contribute to the decarbonisation of energy production. By recovering energy and heat from energy-intensive production cycles and from waste treatments, A2A is proud to satisfy the city of Brescia’s heat demand entirely in an affordable and sustainable way. Indeed, the system allows us to replace fossil fuels (over 150,000 TOE saved every year in Brescia); reduce CO2 emissions (908,000 tons of CO2 avoided in Brescia in 2021), NOx, SO2 and PM10 emissions.



Reference data: ©ESRI



Graph of prospects for EU Member States of meeting targets ©Copyright Early Warning Report [4]

Finally, our plant in Brescia enabled the **zeroing of landfilling**: 75% of the waste we collect is recovered and transformed into material and the remaining 25% is treated through energy recovery.

Finally, when assessing waste incineration under the Taxonomy Regulation, the principle of so-called **self-sufficiency in waste disposal** under Article 16 WFD must be considered. The proposal for a revision of the **Waste Shipment Regulation** echoes the self-sufficiency principle. According to self-sufficiency principle, Member States are obliged to maintain an adequate network of plants for the treatment of their municipal waste. If the incineration for energy recovery of municipal waste under the Taxonomy Regulation were to be generally regarded as contrary to the circular economy and therefore as unsustainable, this would run contrary to the legal obligation of the Member States to create and maintain a sufficient waste treatment capacity.

As data and research show, **energy recovery remains the most effective way to treat the non-recyclable share of our municipal waste**. It enables the recovery of the highest possible amount of resources from waste, in line with the WFD’s waste hierarchy, and the reduction of landfilling – the worst waste treatment solution from both an environmental and climate perspective. With no third alternative in sight, the **exclusion of Waste-to-Energy activities from the EU Taxonomy does not appear to be justified** by neither legislative coherence nor scientific reasoning.

In the coming years, in our “decade of action” companies like A2A will need to make right investment decisions to ensure we can collectively meet our climate goals. Clarifying that Waste-to-Energy can play a positive role in this respect is critical to ensure that the necessary financial resources are channeled into this much needed technology for our green transition.

[1] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/waste-early-warning-report_en

[2] This figure is based on the number of illegal or substandard landfills which are subject to ongoing infringement procedures.

[3] <https://www.ambrosetti.eu/news/da-nimby-a-pimby-economia-circolare-come-volano-della-transizione-ecologica-e-sostenibile-del-paese-e-dei-suoi-territori/>

[4] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/waste-early-warning-report_en

FEAD's Comments

From the Early Warning Report to textile recycling and waste shipments

Articles by FEAD, European Waste Management Association



A strong recycling industry for textiles

by FEAD

This article was originally published by fead.be on 27 April 2023

Reacting to the vote in the European Parliament's ENVI committee on 27 April 2023, FEAD raised strong concerns about restricting recycling markets under the 'close loop recycling' mantra. Reduced markets for recycled products lead to lower recycling rates and to lower quality of the recyclates. In contrast, mandatory recycled content targets for textiles pull the demand for quality recycled fibres, boosts end-markets for separately collected textiles and triggers further investments to scale up textile recycling.

Textile waste ©Copyright free

Whilst welcoming the Parliament's view to ensure long-lasting, reusable, repairable, recyclable, and hazard-free textile products in the EU market, **FEAD highlights the need for a robust framework to create and scale up a strong recycling industry for textile waste, which is an essential component of a sustainable and circular textiles strategy.**

While we strongly supports the call for reliable data and benchmarks to establish the right (phased) targets, we also regret that the Parliament maintains specific separate targets. We consider that combined targets (for reuse and recycling) would avoid complicated legislation and bureaucratic administration.

"We need a robust framework to create and scale up a strong recycling industry for textile waste, which is an essential component of a sustainable and circular textiles strategy".

FEAD has warned the EU legislator that the promotion of specific enterprises as 'partners' in the collection and waste management obligations and targets, distorts the market and puts at risk the quality of the treatment. We emphasise that, to ensure a level playing field and the environmentally sound management of textile waste, **only permitted companies can be allowed to treat the waste in line with EU legislation.** Stressing the fact that textile waste is still falsely labelled as second-hand goods, we strongly agree with the need to establish rules to distinguish between used goods and waste to ensure safe and sound management of the waste. To facilitate the recycling of waste to introduce secondary raw materials into the circular economy, we underline the importance of waste shipments and strong end-of-waste criteria for textiles. To achieve sustainable textiles in Europe and beyond, FEAD underlines its commitment to working with all stakeholders to promote a more sustainable and circular future for textiles.

Redefining waste management: FEAD's vision for a thriving circular Europe

by FEAD

This article was originally published by fead.be on 9 June 2023

F EAD pledges the commitment of the waste management industry to enhancing recycling targets, after a Commission report showed that a significant number of EU Member States fall behind in achieving them. The Early Warning Report (EWR) published on 8 June highlights the pressing need for stronger efforts to meet the recycling objectives and underscores the crucial role of the waste management industry in achieving a sustainable circular economy.

According to the EWR, only nine out of the 27 EU member states are projected to meet the targets of preparing for reuse and recycling 55% of municipal waste and recycling 65% of all packaging waste by 2025, raising concerns that the objective of recycling 60% of municipal waste by 2030 may be at risk, particularly in the challenging area of plastic packaging recycling.

Progress is still needed

As the report highlights that there is still progress needed, FEAD agrees that high capture rates and the quality of separate collection are essential preconditions for preparing for re-use and recycling. The waste management industry is ready to cooperate with national and local authorities and make all necessary investments to enhance recycling rates, but a robust legislative framework that creates a stable market for recycled materials is essential.

SITUATION TODAY



A snapshot of the situation today as stated by the EWR ©Copyright FEAD

The publication also provides a preliminary assessment on the target of reducing landfilling of municipal waste to below 10% by 2035. With eight countries exceeding 50% rates, FEAD stresses the urgency to deploy all available municipal waste treatment technologies with the needed capacities. Achieving the targets of the EU waste legislation requires the support of European institutions and Member State authorities, which must give priority to sorting, recycling and energy recovery plants.

FEAD's workshop

To delve into the report's findings, FEAD is pleased to announce its event on 6 July, featuring Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, the Commission's Director of Circular Economy, who will analyse the EWR. The event, titled "How to make the circular economy work? A new alliance between the waste management sector and the manufacturing industry", will bring together industry experts, policymakers, and stakeholders for insightful discussions on overcoming the challenges faced by EU Member States, and the potential role of a (new) collaboration between the waste management and manufacturing industries. As a testament to its firm commitment to a circular economy, FEAD will conclude the event presenting its strategic vision for the future of the waste management industry for the upcoming years.

The Circular Economy requires both demand and shipping options

by FEAD

This article was originally published by fead.be on 18 January 2023

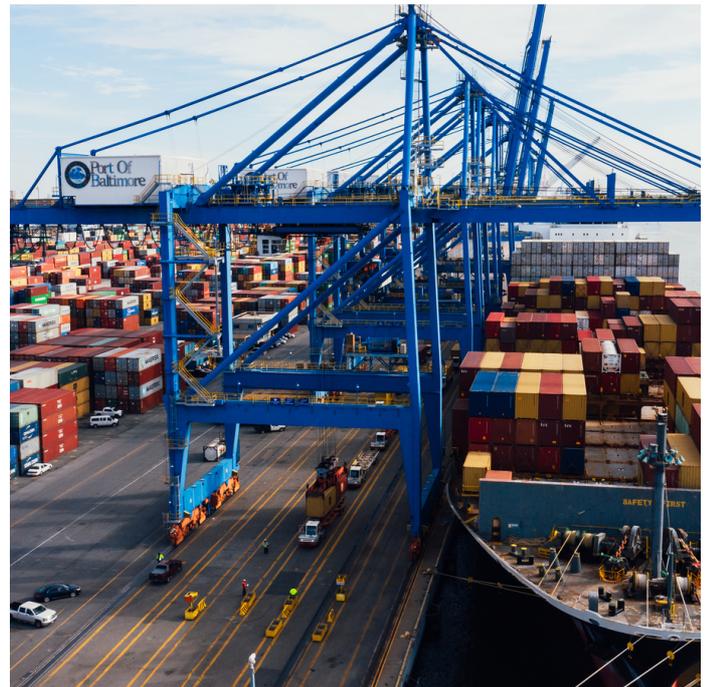
With a large majority, the European Parliament adopted yesterday its position on the Waste Shipment Regulation (WSR) revision. It includes improvements on intra EU shipments but maintains tight rules on waste exports to the industry's concern.

The adopted position provides more legal certainty and harmonisation goals. FEAD welcomes the extension of confirmation deadlines for facilities to two working days, the acknowledgment of persistent and normalised delays in the authorisation processes, and the obligation for all Competent Authorities to accept documentation in English. However, FEAD believes this was also a missed opportunity for needed reforms that will further boost the circular economy in the EU, e.g., by strengthening the role of pre-consented facilities. To underline MEP Weiss' words, what we aim for is to have an 'EU single market for waste'.

The exports regime proposed by the Commission is largely seen as a de facto export ban. FEAD reiterates that it remains essential to safely ship non-hazardous 'green listed' waste, which is a commodity, beyond EU borders to be integrated as secondary raw materials in manufacturing processes. The extreme administrative burden that is intended to be put on third countries to be able to receive such 'green listed' waste will have a disproportionate deterrent effect, while sound environmental management, transparency, and traceability can be equally and sufficiently ensured through audit procedures.

In particular, FEAD is very concerned about the outcome of the vote related to plastic waste shipments. FEAD favours positive rules that allow for safe and traceable shipments of plastic waste within the EU, considering the specificities of the EU single market and the EU waste management industry, and outside the EU to the countries where industries using them are located. As rightly pointed out by Commissioner Sinkevičius, the WSR regime needs to be in line with international law, where trade restrictions are only allowed for environmental protection reasons and provided that there are no less trade-restrictive alternative measures available to achieve the same objectives.

In this case, the Basel Convention COP 14 already introduced new and strict waste codes for plastics to enhance the control of the transboundary movements of plastic waste, which entered into force in 2021, and that have led to a factual decrease in exports. Exporting those plastic wastes does not negatively impact the environment, while not doing so will result in the lack of recycling opportunities because there is not enough demand for it within the EU.



Port of Baltimore ©Copyright free



Cargo containers ©Copyright free

Within the EU, facilities are becoming highly specialised, and no Member State has all the facilities to treat all waste streams. Removing references to the EU plastic waste codes will lead to certain plastic wastes no longer being classified as 'green-listed waste' and being consequently subject to the prior-informed consent procedure with its associated heavy administrative burdens and costs. In the EU, collection, sorting and recycling often occur in different Member States, meaning that plastic waste shipments that are currently destined for intra-EU trade and recycling will be severely affected by these significant new hurdles. Long-term and uncertain controls present a barrier to the recycling and recovery markets in the EU, which is counterproductive to the goal of circular economy.

Call to the EU legislator

Illegal waste shipments and waste criminality have rightly drawn public attention, which has associated them with the need to end waste shipments altogether. However, illegal practices mean that the existing rules are circumvented, so that bans and increased financial and administrative burdens will not end such damaging practices, hampering the circular economy instead.

This reality not only damages the image of our sector, but also creates an uneven level playing field. We therefore call on the EU legislator to reinforce controls and enforcement measures, to improve traceability and cooperation among Member States, and to establish strong harmonised end-of-waste criteria and criteria to distinguish between used goods and waste.

In conclusion, to transition to a circular economy, FEAD calls for a strong demand of secondary raw materials and safe waste shipments with clear, efficient, and harmonised rules, to enable the re-incorporation of those valuable materials back into the circular economy.

'While we are pleased with the steps taken by the European Parliament towards an EU single market for waste, it is important to recognise that it was also a missed opportunity for needed improvements, such as the reinforcement of pre-consented facilities.'

In terms of exports, we must avoid a de facto ban, and work with a more nuanced waste-stream-specific approach and reasonable administrative burdens for third countries.'

Non-hazardous 'green listed' waste is a commodity and, when there is no sufficient demand in the EU, it must continue to be possible to ship it outside the EU, where it will be reincorporated in manufacturing processes'.

Claudia Mensi, President of FEAD

EVENTS

Discover the latest events covering the Circular Economy

Ecomondo 2023: ecological transition has its own ecosystem

Article by Ecomondo



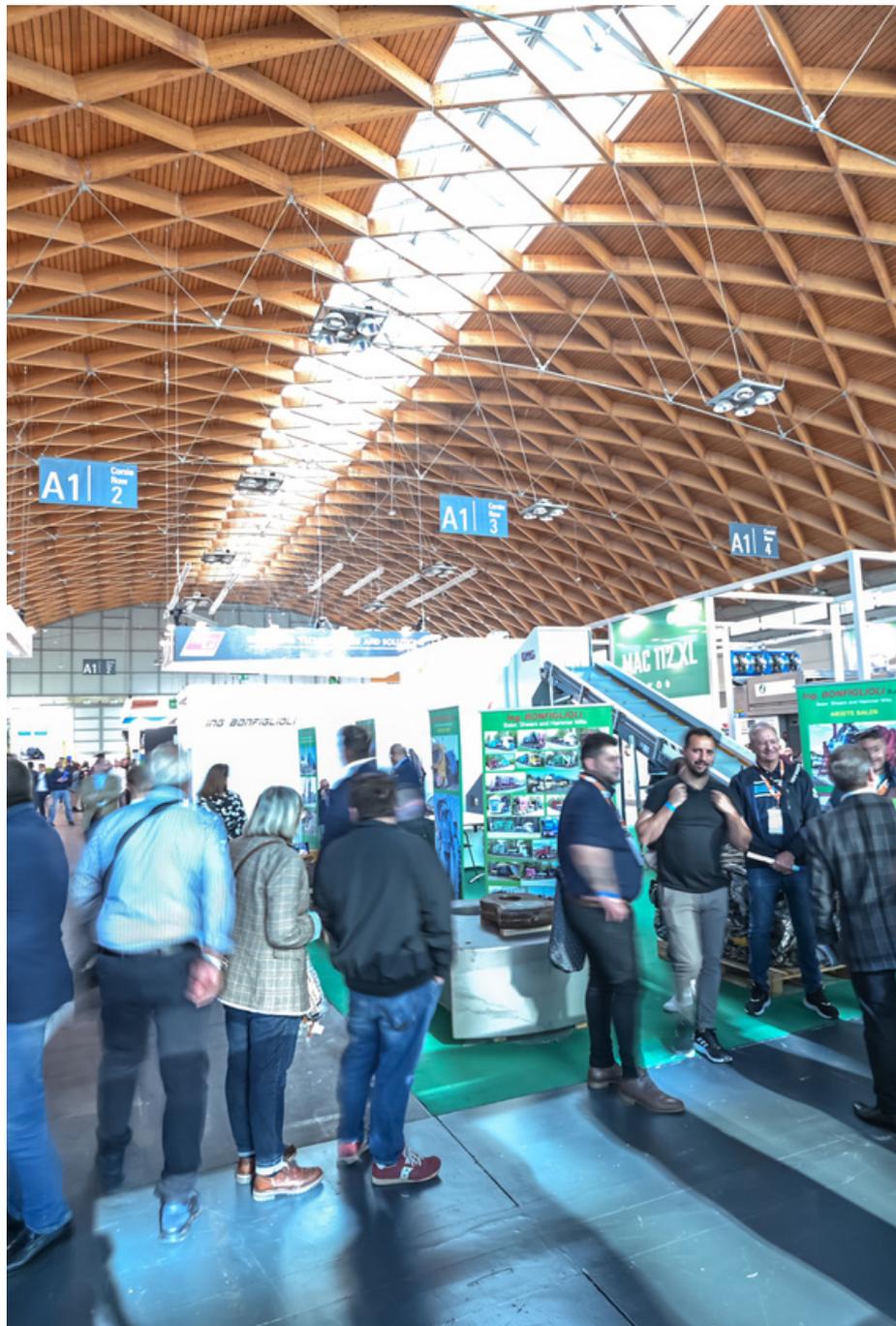
Ecomondo 2023: ecological transition has its own ecosystem

by Ecomondo

Six themed macro-areas, a single ecosystem for ecological transition. Ecomondo, Italian Exhibition Group's international trade show for industrial technologies and services for the circular economy, will be opening the doors of its 26th edition from 7th to 10th November at Rimini Expo Centre with a new payoff: The Ecosystem of the Ecological Transition. From exploiting waste to make further resources to the regeneration of soil and agro-forestry and food ecosystems, from energy obtained from biomass to the use of waste as secondary raw materials. And more still: the entire integrated water cycle and environmental monitoring, protection of the seas and aquatic environments in their essential function for human sustenance and economic activities. This is the exhibition layout with which Ecomondo will be presenting the most innovative technologies for sustainable competitiveness to the market.

The water supply chain and Sal.Ve for Ecological service vehicles

Waste as Resource, Sites & Soil Restoration, Circular & Regenerative Bio-economy, Bio-Energy & Agroecology, Water Cycle & Blue Economy, Environmental Monitoring & Control: these will be the themed exhibition areas at Ecomondo 2023. Two sectors will be highlighted from among and alongside these: the specific "Water" area and the new edition of SAL.VE. In the former, visitors will find the entire water resource supply chain: from capture to restitution and reuse with a focus on digital transformation, which



Stands during Ecomondo's past edition ©Copyright: Ecomondo

is now a key element in improving its management. Top national and international utility service companies and trade associations, including Utilitalia, will be featuring in this area with a programme of seminars. In the biennial SAL.VE area, organised in partnership with ANFIA, leading manufacturers will be exhibiting vehicles for ecological waste collection and disposal services as well as urban sanitation.

Districts for "Beacon" circular economy projects

Ecomondo will provide space at the Expo Centre for three industrial districts for which the Ministry for the Environment and Energy Security (MASE) has given the go-ahead with a contribution to 160 "beacon" projects for the circular economy. Rimini will therefore feature the WEEE District with a specific focus on repowering technologies and new systems for recycling waste from electrical and electronic equipment, photovoltaic panels and wind turbine blades. In the PAPER District, the focus will be on systems for the collection, logistics and recycling of paper and cardboard in cooperation with COMIECO. Lastly, a themed itinerary will be dedicated to the production of plastics with a focus on recycling systems and marine litter.

DISTRICTS FOR "BEACON" CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROJECTS

The textile industry has been identified as a key value chain for which the European Union has foreseen actions to promote its sustainability, circularity, traceability and transparency. Key factors are eco-design requirements, producer responsibility schemes and labelling systems. In Rimini, ample emphasis will be placed on the entire supply chain: from production to post-consumption. The objective of all stakeholders is to provide answers to these challenges by providing information about ongoing projects and ultimate goals as well as promoting new business models in order to outline the state of the art of textile waste management in Italian municipalities.



ECOMONDO AND START-UPS, MISSION: TO INNOVATE

Ecomondo as an incubator and facilitator of innovative projects: the Start-Up and Scale-Up Innovation area in the new East entrance will be back and further extended. Companies and investors will have a new and larger platform for dialogue in order to cultivate the new generation of innovative businesses. all-round innovation.

BLUE ECONOMY: CIRCULAR AND REGENERATIVE

From fishing and aquaculture to the regeneration of ports and coastlines and seawater desalination technologies: the blue economy will include all traditional and emerging economic sectors linked to the development of Italian and Mediterranean marine resources.

THE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME AND EVENTS

Ecomondo will offer its community a full programme of conventions and conferences organised under the aegis of the Technical-Scientific Committee, directed by Professor Fabio Fava from Bologna University, in collaboration with the event's main institutional and technical partners, together with the international board that includes experts from the European Commission, OECD, FAO, UfM, EEA, ISWA. Top topics will be dealt with in an attempt to transmit even more knowledge transmission to the Ecomondo community: the priorities of the European Green Deal, the circular economy, the regeneration of polluted areas and ecosystems, the protection of soils and seas and of the Mediterranean in particular. Case studies, public policies, public funding available for businesses, citizen engagement.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The Ministry for the Environment and Energy Security, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and ITA, together with the increasing participation of executives from the European Commission, will be joined by CONAI, Utilitalia, CIB, CIC, CONAU, Assoambiente, Cisa Ambiente, the Foundation for Sustainable Development and National Green Economy Council as institutional partners of the event, as well as the Kyoto Club, Legambiente, Federazione ANIE, FIRE, ANFIA, ISPRA, Water Europe, ISWA and WBA.

FURTHER PUSH TOWARDS INTERNATIONALITY

With a 58% increase in foreign visitation compared to 2021, the involvement of profiled operators from the Balkan area, non-EU Europe, North Africa (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia), Senegal, Ivory Coast, Angola, Ghana, Rwanda, the Middle East, as well as Canada, Latin America, the United States and China will continue for the next edition. The second edition of the Africa Green Growth Forum will be staged thanks to the contribution of prestigious international agencies, inter-governmental institutions, such as the Union for the Mediterranean and UNIDO, non-profit organisations, including Res4Africa, Business Council for Africa, which will present the technological framework and opportunities for growth and development in the African continent.

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