



Fédération Européenne des Activités de la Dépollution et de l'Environnement
European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services
Europäische Föderation der Entsorgungswirtschaft

FEAD Bulletin SPECIAL EDITION 2011

FEAD CONFERENCE 2011

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This year's edition of the annual FEAD Conference was again a success in terms of co-organisation by our Finnish member, YYL, presentations and participation. The conference was attended by more than 120 participants from 18 different Member States.



This year FEAD celebrated its 30th anniversary. To mark the occasion, Helsinki not only provided the opportunity to welcome several of its past-Presidents, but also saw the launch of the FEAD brochure *"30 years of interest representation of the European waste management industry"* by Nadine De Greef, Secretary General of FEAD.

(from left to right: Nadine De Greef (FEAD), Carlo Noto La Diega (Italy), Peter Kurth (Germany), Michael Averill (UK), Keith Bury (UK), Norbert Rethmann (Germany), Dominique Pin (France))

Peter Kurth, the President of FEAD, and **Pirjo Rytönen**, President of YYL, opened the Conference and welcomed the participants.

Hannele Pokka, Permanent Secretary at the Finnish Ministry of the Environment gave an insight into the Finnish approach to waste management and resource efficiency.



In its recorded video-message **Janez Potočnik**, European Commissioner for Environment called upon FEAD members, “the professionals in waste management, to share our wealth of experience and best practices”. He was of the opinion that “[...] to achieve the decoupling of our growth from resource use and its environmental impact [...] effective waste management will have a central role”. Commissioner Potočnik concluded “You understand better than most else the value of waste and how to make it more valuable.”



Session I: EU 2020 Strategy – Flagship Initiative on “Resource Efficiency Europe” – Moving Towards a More Resource Efficient, Greener and More Competitive Economy



Rosalinde van der Vlies, Deputy Head of Unit “Waste Management” at DG Environment, provided a comprehensive overview of the Roadmap on Resource Efficiency, which was published by the European Commission on 20th September. Rosalinde van der Vlies opened by explaining the structure of the EU2020 Strategy of which the Flagship initiative on Resource Efficiency from January of this year is one component. The Roadmap on Resource Efficiency, which is to be understood as a strategy document, is part of this Flagship initiative.

One chapter of the Roadmap is dedicated to waste management. In it, the EC has outlined a number of objectives which it plans on putting in place until the year 2020; for instance, the decline of waste generation per capita, the full implementation of the EU waste acquis, the limitation of energy recovery to non-recyclable materials, the virtual elimination of landfilling etc.

Rosalinde van der Vlies went on to indicate the timeline for upcoming waste-related measures of this Roadmap, with actions being foreseen to take place in 2012-2014. In that regard, she highlighted the need for synergies between product and waste policy. She also pointed out the strengthening of Extended Producer Responsibility and the development of economic instruments, which were identified by the European Commission as measures that can boost recycling. Additionally, the Roadmap underlines the re-orientation of EU funding to take into consideration the waste hierarchy. When asked by the audience, Rosalinde van der Vlies explained that even though the Roadmap is not legally binding as such, a link could be created with the future 7th Environmental Action Programme, which has to be adopted in co-decision by the European Parliament and the Council and which will be legally binding.

Attendants of the conference generally provided very positive feedback on the informative presentations given by Rosalinde van der Vlies.

Riikka Manner, substitute Member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee, opined that the era of cheap resources is over and that Europe and the whole world need more efficient resources. She explained that the resource efficiency is, indeed, a strategy document which does not yet contain legally binding measures. She underscored that a coherent approach is needed and estimates that making Europe more resource efficient will also require financial resources, for instance, from the EU's cohesion funding.



On the issue of indicators to measure resource efficiency, MEP Manner expressed concerns that the EC wants to measure progress immediately, whereas in a first step, priority should be given to defining reliable indicators. MEP Manner articulated fears that these provisional indicators will otherwise turn into permanent solutions. In terms of more concrete measures, biomass (i.e. wood) should be given more attention. Concerning resource efficiency targets, these need to be assessed before being made legally binding.

MEP Manner also underlined that she will cooperate closely with Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), the European Parliament's rapporteur on resource efficiency.



Stéphane Arditi from the European Environmental Bureau, developed in his presentation ideas on how waste management can be further transformed into a service industry as a result of the Commission's Roadmap. This includes waste prevention at local level and optimisation processes at the level of companies. A further important aspect that he pointed to is better recyclability and dismantling. He expressed hopes for a stronger involvement of the waste management sector in these discussions.

On the issue of better enforcement and minimisation of substandard treatment, he sees potential for improvement through "peer pressure" between waste companies and cooperation with the civil society, by requiring high quality operation and refining legislative requirements.

In his speech, **Christophe Cros**, FEAD Vice-President, expressed the support of the waste management sector for the Commission's Roadmap, which sets the right trends towards competitiveness and sustainability. He appreciates the fact that our sector was involved in the process that led to the roadmap and that our views were taken into consideration. He explained that, historically, the waste management business has always adapted to changing customer expectations and to a changing legislative framework, moving from disposal to recovery and recycling. Furthermore, Christophe Cros highlighted the importance of better coordination of Producer Responsibility Schemes at the European level as well as development of standards for a more recycling-friendly eco-design. He concluded his speech by pointing out



two shortcomings of the Roadmap: a) An immediate zero-landfill policy, which would lead to more illegal shipments. In that regard, he stressed the importance of the proximity principle, which would require investments in new facilities when opting for a very ambitious landfill policy. b) The second shortcoming was related to a strong call for fair competition between public and private operators in terms of the application of procurement rules, equal taxation and access to subsidies.



Session II: **Economic and Regulatory Framework Conditions: a Pre-Requisite for Competition, Innovation and a European Recycling Society**

Sirpa Pietikäinen, Member of the EP's Environment Committee, gave her views on the right economic and regulatory framework, which can serve as the basis for more competition, innovation and the development of a European recycling society. She called for a true application of the waste hierarchy which could reduce the amount of "actual" waste to zero and the development of a "hierarchy of usage", whereby the use of primary resources would be minimised. Furthermore, the MEP pleaded for a change in accounting rules by obliging companies to include resource use in their accounts and for a shift of taxation on resource use.



In his speech, **Abraão Carvalho**, Head of the Metals, Minerals, Raw Materials Unit at DG Enterprise and Industry, gave an overview on the EC Raw Materials Initiative. This initiative consists of three pillars, with the third pillar being dedicated to recycling. One of the measures not only mentioned in the context of the Raw Materials Initiative but also foreseen by the Roadmap on Resource Efficiency is the Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials. Mr Carvalho informed the attendants that the inter-service consultation on this partnership had been concluded a couple of days before the FEAD conference. The Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials will have five work packages, of which two concern recycling and resource efficiency. In the framework of this innovation partnership the EC will shortly launch two studies – one on pilot plants and another one on material flows.

Christer Forsgren, Head of technology and environmental science at Stena Metall and member of our Swedish member association SRI, presented a number of research & development projects that his company is active in cooperation with different universities (e.g. on the recycling of copper, indium, gallium and selenide from solar cells, microwave pyrolysis of WEEE that is currently landfilled, the recycling of new generation Lithium-ion batteries without Cobalt etc.) Research and development at the level of his company focuses on the recycling of cable plastics, cement kiln fuel from waste and MSW fly-ash washing. Mr Forsgren also alluded to difficulties that need to be overcome, such as the reduction of landfilling, more material recycling and the issue of the recycling of small particles. Christer Forsgren concluded by sharing his hopes for the future trends in waste management: the replacement of waste incineration by pyrolysis and gasification, more recycling of plastics and the recycling of metals presently not recycled.



Mika Aho, Managing Director, St1 Biofuels Oy and member of YYL, gave a specific example, thereby demonstrating how the right regulatory framework can make a direct contribution to more innovation. The Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC) aims at the promotion of renewable energy sources and has set a target of 10% for energy from renewable sources in transport. The same Directive pays special attention to renewable energy from waste, meaning that energy of biofuels produced from wastes, residues, non-food cellulosic and ligno-cellulosic materials would count twice towards this target. The favourable legislative framework of the Renewable Energy Directive played thus an important role in the decision of the company St1 Biofuels Oy to invest in the production of fuel ethanol from waste.



Session III: Better Implementation and Enforcement of the Waste Legislative Acquis

Rosalinde van der Vlies reported on the trends in recycling of municipal solid waste showing a chart of best and worst performing countries and gave an overview of the trends in incineration and landfill across Europe, highlighting that infringement procedures have been launched against 13 Member States for non-compliance with the Landfill Directive. She reported on the poor implementation of waste legislation: 19% of the environmental infringement cases address waste management policy, which is



supplemented with complaints from citizens and questions from the European Parliament. The reasons for the lack of proper implementation of the Waste Framework Directive include inadequate infrastructure and illegal dumping, illegal landfills and illegal shipments of waste, especially of WEEE and ELVs. Rosalinde van der Vlies described the tools that are at the Commission's disposal to improve the implementation of the waste acquis: interpretation guides, Comitology implementing measures, dissemination of best practices, public funding and legislative proposal to strengthen inspection requirements. The Commission can also initiate infringement procedures for non-communication, bad transposition or bad application. She reminded the role of the Commission as 'guardian of the Treaties' and called for the involvement of civil society to help fulfil that role. She informed the participants that the Commission intends to focus its resources on bad performing countries. Rather than creating a dedicated Waste Implementation Agency, as initially considered, the Commission is looking at better cooperation with the European Environment Agency. She explained that two pilot projects were launched by DG Environment to improve the knowledge base for air and for waste and announced the upcoming publication of a Communication on Implementation.



Zofia Tucinska, Chair of IMPEL, highlighted how the Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Legislation is contributing to better implementation. IMPEL aims at contributing to a more effective application of environmental legislation through the exchange of best practices and production of harmonised guidance, tools and standards. One of the clusters of IMPEL is dedicated to waste shipment inspections and aims at maximising the combined resources of the competent authorities. Concretely this is achieved through the exchange of inspectors, national contact point meetings, internet fora, training activities and cooperation with non-OECD countries. Zofia Tucinska is looking forward to a close cooperation with FEAD on better

implementation.

Peter Hodecek, an active member in several FEAD Committees, provided a notable overview of key obstacles for implementation of the waste acquis in Central and Eastern European Member States. He surveyed the ministries of four Member States (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania) concerning the implementation of key legislative acts. The key findings of his analysis include strongly diverging waste management policies, varying interpretations of existing legislation, large differences of existing waste management infrastructure and negative market impacts due to EU funding.

Regarding the Waste Framework Directive, only one of the four Member States has implemented it fully. The five-step waste hierarchy is not systematically considered by local authorities and one Member State implemented a four-step hierarchy. The 2020 recycling targets are considered as not achievable. The Waste Shipment Regulation is assessed as being too complicated and involving too much administrative burdens. Moreover, staff is lacking for controls and inspections; the frequency being maximum twice a year. Very little information is available on illegal shipments due to the lack of inspections. Peter Hodecek reported on the EU funded project 'TransWaste', which allows non-authorized Hungarian 'waste pickers' to collect recyclables and waste for reuse. On the implementation of the Landfill Directive, the diversion targets of biodegradable waste going to landfill will not be reached by these Member States before 2016 and not even by 2020. No financial provisions are foreseen for after-care. He also reported that EU funding is mainly awarded to municipalities or public-owned entities to improve local waste management infrastructure and covers up to 70% of the overall investment costs. Construction of new landfills is actually still funded with European money. Landfill fees, which are an important income for authorities, very often hamper investments in alternative waste treatment technologies. He also highlighted the problem of unfair competition between public entities and private companies due to EU funding. Peter Hodecek concluded that EU funding should not be granted to Member States that do not comply with the waste legislative acquis.



The presentations are available on the FEAD website: <http://www.fead.be/en/events/annual-conferences/>

The Conference was preceded by a visit to the SITA waste treatment facility in Helsinki, which is the first plant in the world to use artificial intelligence robots (Zenrobotics) for the sorting of waste.



The next FEAD event is taking place on **10 May 2012** in the context of the IFAT fair in **Munich, Germany**.