



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

Brussels, 1 March 2010

PRESS RELEASE

FEAD organizes visit to the Attero composting and anaerobic digestion plant in Venlo

On Friday, 26th of February, FEAD organized a visit to the Attero composting and anaerobic digestion plant in Venlo, the Netherlands, upon suggestion of **Mr José Manuel Fernandes** (Portugal, EPP), Member of the European Parliament and Rapporteur on the "Green Paper of the Management of Bio-waste in the European Union".

Against the background of the on-going debates about the need for a European legislative act on bio-waste, FEAD members provided the Rapporteur with presentations on best practices of bio-waste management in their respective countries. Among the participants were also **Mr Bartosz Zambrzycki** and **Mr Michel Sponar** from the European Commission, DG Environment, **Ms Pilar García Doñoro** from the Spanish Permanent Representation, **Ms Mieke De Schoenmakere** from the Flemish Public Waste Agency and **Ms Stefanie Budewig** from the German Ministry for the Environment.

The aim of the visit was to give an insight into the technical aspects of a modern bio-waste treatment facility. **Mr John Van Haeff, Attero**, explained how the composting plant in Venlo had successfully been extended with the construction of a digestion installation. During the visit to the installation it was demonstrated how in addition to the production of compost from organic waste, natural gas from organic waste digestion is converted into green electricity.

During a luncheon debate, **Ms Nadine De Greef**, FEAD Secretary General, gave a presentation underlining the benefits and need for EU-legislation on bio-waste. "A lack of legal certainty is a huge obstacle to innovative technologies and making the appropriate investments", she said.

Mr José Manuel Fernandes, MEP, is convinced about the need for a dedicated directive on bio-waste. "We need an efficient, sustainable and flexible Directive based on existing legislation but more ambitious for the future", he said.

The Rapporteur also stressed the importance of high quality compost in the fight against soil erosion and is convinced that end-of-waste criteria for bio-waste will lead to high quality compost. "Encouraging separate collection has a pedagogic component and calls upon the environmental conscience which all of us should have", he said. **Mr Fernandes** supports the idea of different levels of quality for compost depending on its application and is in favor of a larger definition of bio-waste in order to account for the existing practices in different member states. He is also interested in better exploring the concept of bio-waste prevention.

Though the final results of the on-going impact assessment are not yet available, both EC representatives reported that some member states, compared to others, do have a well performing bio-waste policy. They underlined the importance of the subsidiarity principle in this matter. It seems that the European Commission would rather focus on better enforcement of existing legislation than applying its right of initiative on the bio-waste issue.

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VÖEB, Austria
YYL, Finland

Ms Pilar García Doñoro, from the Spanish Permanent Representation, expressed her disappointment about the EC's position. "I very much welcome the fact that the European Waste Management industry is strongly advocating for the need of EU legislation on bio-waste", she said.

The Rapporteur, **Mr José Manuel Fernandes**, invited all attendees to join him at the upcoming seminar in the European Parliament on 2 March 2010 entitled "Managing bio-waste in the EU...What Next?"

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Note to the editor:

FEAD is the European Federation representing the European waste management industry. FEAD's members are national waste management associations covering 20 Member States. They have an approximate 60% share in the household waste market and handle more than 75% of industrial and commercial waste in Europe. Their combined annual turnover is approximately € 54 billion. FEAD represents about 3000 companies with activities in all forms of waste management. These companies employ over 295000 people who operate around 1800 recycling and sorting centres, 1100 composting sites, 260 waste-to-energy plants and 1100 controlled landfills. They play an important role in the determination of the best environmental option for waste management problems.