



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

8 September 2009

DEVELOPING A HARMONISED APPROACH TO CARBON REPORTING

FEAD's¹ purpose in developing a harmonized approach to carbon reporting is to improve debate on issues surrounding waste management's carbon emissions and to help policy makers to assess how to optimise the economy's greenhouse gas emission profile.

FEAD members, being active in the field of waste management, are strongly committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with managing the economy's waste carbon. As part of this process, we are currently reviewing a sectoral reporting tool, the EpE protocol², for which international support is being sought.

The waste management industry operates within a dynamic regulated market where technologies to optimise recovery of value from waste will continue to evolve and we are convinced that an annual reporting of greenhouse gas emissions will help policymakers to improve alignment of economic incentives with environmental outcomes.

In managing wastes generated across the global economy, the world's waste management sector is estimated to account for 3% of greenhouse gas emissions, largely through methane emissions from landfill. However, over the last decades the waste management sector has been one of the most effective sectors in reducing greenhouse gas impacts and has reduced its emissions in Europe by 38% compared to 1990.³

As well as reducing its own direct emissions, principally by diverting biodegradable material from landfill, the waste management sector's activities also contribute towards indirect carbon savings made elsewhere in the economy. The use of recycled material in new products, both domestically and abroad, offsets the requirement for energy intensive production from virgin materials, whilst generation of renewable energy helps to reduce the economy's reliance on fossil fuels. To gain a complete understanding of greenhouse gas impact of waste management, it is necessary to have regard to other sectors' carbon savings facilitated by our industry. Waste management operators' activities help to avoid emissions that would otherwise have arisen in their absence.

FEAD believes that any methodology for the allocation of greenhouse gas emissions arising from waste processes should be robust, simple and transparent. To account for the waste management sector's carbon emissions and the associated benefits derived by other sectors from waste management activities, FEAD is striving to establish a common industry standard for reporting emissions.

This annual reporting, based on the EpE Waste Sector Protocol, is broken down into the following internationally recognised categories:

- direct emissions resulting from an operator's activities;
- indirect energy use emissions arising from an operator's purchase of electricity; and
- avoided emissions resulting from a company's activities, including savings made by other sectors.

The principal greenhouse gases included in this reporting are CO₂, CH₄ (methane) and N₂O (nitrous oxide).

¹ FEAD is the European Federation representing the European waste management industry. FEAD's members are national waste management associations covering 19 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.

² EpE- Entreprises pour l'environnement;

In France, the Entreprises pour l'Environnement (EpE) Association drew up a GhG emissions quantification, reporting and verification protocol for industries which is in accordance with internationally recognized standards for greenhouse gas reporting. Three companies, Veolia Environmental Services, Séché Environnement and Suez Environnement, members of EpE, established a Working Group led by EpE. Those three companies as well as other companies active in the field of waste management are applying the protocol today. Also in the UK, the leading waste management companies joined the EpE protocol.

³ ETC/RWM working paper 2008/1: "Municipal waste management and greenhouse gases"