



MUNICIPAL WASTE EUROPE

– promoting public responsibility for waste

Brussels, 31 March 2011

Municipal Waste Europe comments European consultations and policy actions regarding issues related to sustainable development, resource efficiency, renewable energy, and Europe's 2020/ 2050 strategies.

Sustainable development, resource efficiency, renewable energy and Europe's 2020/2050 strategies are essential parts of the European Union development of the future environment. They cover issues of relevance to the waste management sector, especially when seen as a part of a larger system.

There is currently a large number of consultations from different units of the European Commission, Municipal Waste Europe has compiled our comments into one position paper.

Some consultations need specified comments. However, as we consider that most comments are relevant to the general development of the future environment, energy and resource policies of the European Union, all comments are included in the same document.

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We approve publication of this document on the Internet.**

GENERAL COMMENTS

In the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy, Municipal Waste Europe would like to underline the crucial contribution of the waste sector in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, especially through recycling, in making Europe a resource efficient and green society, as well as in securing energy supply making waste a source of energy.

Municipal Waste Europe looks forward for the development of sustainability measures at European level. The waste sector can contribute to the achievement of the 20% renewable energy target and to the broader objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by sustainable waste management, and suitable treatment operations, primarily recycling of materials and reducing the amount of greenhouse gases from landfills as well as limiting biodegradable waste to landfills. Therefore Municipal Waste Europe believes that the role of waste as source of renewable energy should be further stressed and promoted.

Waste can be used in a resource efficient way. Such a way would solve the waste problem and at the same time it would create a waste based resource, such as compost that can be used in agriculture or other recycled materials such as metals. This is especially relevant in the framework of the raw material strategy. Besides, the waste sector is an important source of jobs, and in particular, biodegradable waste treatment should be promoted as it generates green jobs.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Consultation on the preparation of a report on additional sustainability measures at EU level for solid and gaseous biomass used in electricity, heating and cooling – DG Energy C1

(ENER-BIOMASS-SUSTAINABILITY@ec.europa.eu)

Municipal Waste Europe looks forward for additional sustainability measures at EU level for biodegradable waste as a part of biomass when used for energy or transport purposes. Waste is an important source of energy and its potential should be better deployed and assessed towards the renewable energy target. We believe it is important to consider local rules contributing to the development of biomass for energy uses.

Consultation on the Final Assessment of the 6th Environment Action Programme (6th EAP) DG Environment F2

(ENV-6EAP@ec.europa.eu)

Municipal Waste Europe welcomes the waste related measures taken in the 6th EAP and calls for special attention to waste as a priority sector able to provide generously towards the Kyoto and Nagano targets, challenging environmental objectives through already established and proven waste management techniques.

Consultation on the Planned European Commission Communication for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ("Rio+20") DG Environment E2

(ENV-E2-RIO20@ec.europa.eu)

The waste sector can contribute to a green economy and to a sustainable development through recycling or using waste as a source of renewable energy. The waste sector has good potentials to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Municipal Waste Europe calls on the Commission to underline this aspect when setting up the objectives of the forthcoming Sustainable Development Summit. Moreover, we believe that UNCSO should include waste as a new sector where sustainable development goals can be achieved.

Consultation on a Roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe DG Environment F.

(Env-Resource-Efficiency-Survey@ec.europa.eu)

The waste sector has large resource efficiency potential, primarily outside of dedicated waste management operations, through minimising the generation of waste and emphasising life cycle thinking in the production and consumption phase. This will support an increased level of waste re-use and recycling. Municipal Waste Europe believes that this potential should be taken into account when addressing the objective of a European resource efficient society. The national, regional and local

levels have access to tools able to stimulate a resource efficient Europe through the development of services of general interest for waste management.

All incentives need to be tailored to the social aspects of a specific territory. Specific requirement on waste disposal and recycling should be decided at local level taking into account social conditions, as well as geography, demography and life-style factors.

Consultation on Roadmap for a low carbon economy by 2050

Closed 8 December 2010 DG CLIMA A4

(CLIMA-ROADMAP2050@ec.europa.eu)

Although this consultation is closed for comments, it is important that the follow up includes and is included other current consultations.

The waste sector can give an important contribution for building a resource efficient society encouraging a green recovery. The use of biogas from waste is an important source of renewable energy that can help reducing emissions, allowing EU to reach ambitious targets.

Ambitions for a long-term climate policy challenge of reducing emissions by 80-95%, transforming the European Union into a low carbon economy, will strengthen the waste sector if, and only if, the measures does not increase the public sector financial burden for environmental improvement. The polluter pays principle is an essential foundation to the European Union environmental policy. The financial costs must be internalised through the life cycle thinking into an integrated product and producer financial responsibility. The financial risks and costs of a green economy cannot be carried by the public sector alone.

Consultation on a Bio-based economy for Europe: state of play and future potential DG Research & Innovation

(RTD-BIO-ECONOMY@ec.europa.eu)

The waste sector and the biodegradable waste treatment can create green jobs and help developing a bio-based economy. However the term 'bio-based economy' needs to be used carefully to avoid including biomass generated from agricultural lands, which are used for food generation.

Reducing waste and using resources in an efficient way is crucial in order to achieve a bio-based economy. Municipal Waste Europe would like to stress that some actions are more efficient if taken at local level. It is important to leave flexibility for the local level in the choice of the waste management system/operation utilised as a sustainable decision can only be made considering the specific aspects of a territory.

On this and other waste related issues,
please contact the secretary general Gunnel Klingberg, for more information.
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Best regards,

Gunnel Klingberg
Municipal Waste Europe

Municipal Waste Europe is the European association representing municipalities responsible for waste management and their publicly owned waste management companies promoting public responsibility for waste management as a service of general interest.

For more information see www.municipalwasteurope.eu