



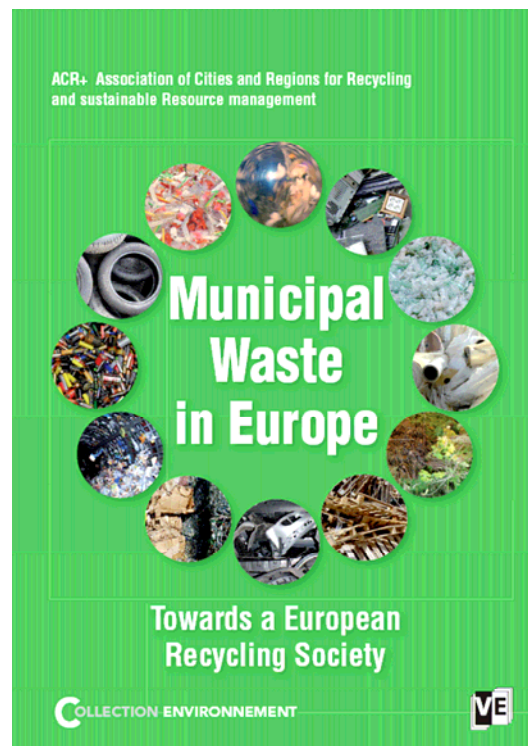
PRESS KIT

Tuesday September 15, 2009

**THE ASSOCIATION OF CITIES AND REGIONS FOR RECYCLING
AND SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (ACR+)**

**LAUNCHES FOR THE FIRST TIME,
WITH THE SUPPORT OF SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT AND SITA:**

**A TOOL FOR EUROPE TO AID DECISION-
MAKING IN MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT**



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THE WORK IN A FEW WORDS...

After several years of studies and data gathering, the Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and Sustainable Resource Management (ACR+) is publishing, with the support of SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT and its waste subsidiary SITA, an analysis of the European waste prevention and recycling problem. The study includes, in particular, data on the various waste management models in the 27 European capitals. The book *Municipal Waste in Europe – Towards a European Recycling Society*, published by Victoires Editions, brings together Europe's waste management policies and outlines the challenges which public authorities need to address.

What are the problems posed by municipal waste in European cities?
What operational decisions need to be taken to manage these waste streams properly?
What are the latest policies and laws?
Each of these questions is addressed in this publication.

The authors have set out to describe – in both quantitative and qualitative terms – the “waste mountain” which confronts public authorities across Europe, and to highlight the many challenges it presents.

The book systematically analyses European policy, in particular the EU Waste Framework Directive of 22 November 2008. This is supported with analyses of the different approaches to source reduction, the organisation of collection systems and the choices to be made between waste treatment options, while considering associated costs.

This book contains a wealth of useful information which will make it an essential reference work. The European network ACR+ (Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and Sustainable Resource Management – www.acrplus.org) was able to undertake this review thanks to 15 years of international work addressing the challenging question of municipal waste management.

The book *Municipal Waste in Europe – Towards a European Recycling Society* focuses on the three key questions confronting local and regional public authorities in waste management.

• What is the nature and scope of the problem posed by municipal waste?

Chapter 1 highlights the main waste streams confronting European public authorities. It clarifies the size and nature of the “waste mountain”.

Chapter 2 emphasises the multiple aspects of the waste challenge to be taken up. It deals with pollution issues as well as with wastage of resources; what is involved is developing legal, economic and educational instruments.

• What policy directions are needed and what legal framework is needed for compliance in waste prevention and management?

Changes in European policy on waste are analysed in **Chapter 3**. A summary is presented with a view to identifying key waste management principles to be applied at each tier of authority.

Chapter 4 provides a deeper analysis of the new European framework regulation on waste, while Chapter 5 provides a summary of the main European Directives in this field.



- **What key operational choices need to be made for best results in municipal waste reduction?**

Chapter 6 develops the various priority approaches for reducing waste at source. **Chapters 7 and 8** tackle issues in organizing waste collection and the options opened up by the various treatment processes. Finally, **Chapter 9** summarises the issue of costs and financing.

This comprehensive study of **over 250 pages available in French and English** is illustrated with photos, tables and diagrams. It covers the key challenges in the problem of waste management, the European legal context, broad management principles, collection methods, waste treatment techniques and questions of cost. It also discusses the concrete application of concepts such as sustainable consumption and dematerialization, and examines the legal, economic and educational management tools.

AUTHORS:

The book is based on contributions from all the members of ACR+ and in particular from its Board of Directors. Its precise content and final editing is the result of a team of seven people: Jérôme Bodart, Gabriela Collado, Yves Decelle, Olivier De Clercq, Jean-Pierre Hannequart, Francis Radermaker and Kit Strange.

WHERE TO FIND IT:

The French version is available **in bookstores in Belgium and France from 30 September**. You can also order it online from www.victoires-editions.fr or www.environnement-online.com, or buy it directly from the Victoires-Editions shop (38, rue Croix des Petits Champs 75001 Paris).



KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THIS BOOK

A COMPLEX REALITY

The complexity of the waste problematic stems as much from an environmental dimension as from a legal or technological, or even economic or educational perspective. Whichever viewpoint is considered, the primary message of ACR+ is the necessity for an approach which fully integrates the "resources-products-waste" cycle. Phrased differently, addressing issues of municipal waste calls for a return to the roots: to look at product policy and even at policies for the sustainable use of natural resources.

MANY "R" TO IMPLEMENT

The major actions to be developed can be described as a series of "Rs": not only Recover and Recycle, but also Reuse, Repair and Rethink the use of natural resources.

And logically, a hierarchy including at least five levels should form the foundation of policy and law relating to this domain. In conformity with the prescriptions of the new European Framework Directive, the following steps are needed, in descending order of priority:

1. Prevention
2. Preparing and reuse
3. Recycling
4. Different forms of recovery, notably energy recovery
5. Disposal.

MULTI-INSTRUMENT APPROACH

Another fundamental message of ACR+ is the necessity for public authorities to combine all those instruments potentially at their disposal, in a complementary way. With waste, it is important to use carrot and stick tactics, and above all to provide information together with economic incentives and legislation.

EUROPE AS DRIVING FORCE

From a legislative perspective, Europe is certainly the prime driver.

Unfortunately however, we still have a long way to go to achieve a single EU regulatory act on waste management, even though a somewhat coherent set of specific legal instruments are already in place. With the new Framework Directive, the following basic principles can serve as references:

- Waste constitutes "secondary raw materials"
- Priority must be on reducing waste at source, including the reuse of products
- "European recycling market" exists as an objective
- "Polluter pays" and "extended producer responsibility" are key concepts.

THE CULTURAL DIMENSION

It is essential, particularly at the local and/or regional level, to recognise the cultural dimension of waste. It is therefore vital to develop strategies for information, awareness and education in ecologically responsible behavior – sorting waste is certainly useful, but we also need to sort our purchasing!



THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

From an operational point of view, multiple approaches need to be combined and fully integrated:

- First of all, we need to address how the collection of certain waste is organised in order to ensure that public health is protected
- The next stage is how to limit the quantity of waste disposed and clean up illegal disposals
- The question of choosing appropriate waste management procedures goes hand in hand with the question of selecting appropriate technologies. (The concept of complementary treatment systems is essential if we want to ensure optimal management.)
- At the same time as considering treatment options, questions must be raised about optimal methods of selective collection, of dry recyclables as well as of organic material.
- The development of recycling as a new market involves putting various public initiatives in place, including:
 - a) Differential tariffs for waste collection
 - b) Higher taxes on waste sent for disposal or incineration
 - c) Mandatory quantified goals for certain types of recycling (including paper, plastic, metal, glass... and bio-waste)
 - d) Regulations establishing the extended responsibility of producers (including full financial responsibility)
 - e) The inclusion of specific "recyclability" criteria when drawing up contracts
- The sharing of responsibilities – material and financial – between the public and private sectors, but also between the various players (producers/distributors/consumers/recyclers) is an important element to take into account. The same holds true for the carbon footprints of all waste management operations, including waste prevention initiatives.
- Lastly, priority must be given to implementing a waste prevention strategy (with quantifiable and measurable objectives, if possible) if we want to tackle the growing quantities of waste and influence the behaviour of citizen-consumers.



ACR+ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN WASTE POLICY

The Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and Sustainable Resource Management (ACR+), considers European waste policy to be on the right track to the extent that it increasingly incorporates the "resource-product-waste" cycle. Also, to the extent that it creates incentives for prevention and recycling, and its laws confirm the primacy of prevention and recycling in waste management methods.

Having said that, the "better regulation for waste" process, and in particular the implementation of the new framework directive (Directive 2008/98 of 19 November 2008) still raises many questions. The agenda of future initiatives remains to be defined and many legal details still to be worked out currently depend on committee work.

In truth, ACR+ regrets that certain European prescriptions are ultimately formulated in the form of recommendations, and their implementation depends on the good will of member States, or are formulated in such a way as to virtually lose all their mandatory character, having been subordinated to technical and economic feasibility factors as well as environmental.

Local and regional authorities really need true harmonisation at the European level. Thus, as of today, they are waiting for more concrete indications of their waste prevention obligations, particularly in terms of targets. They also want more precise European legal prescriptions on the extended responsibility of producers. And they are pleading for clear legal and technical direction in bio-waste management.

ACR+ also emphasises the need for stronger policies to achieve a real "European recycling society". The fact is that energy recovery from waste today is benefiting from new support mechanisms (green certificates, in particular) while recycling is hampered by the economic crisis and a broad variation in raw materials prices.

However, it goes without saying that recycling and prevention are strategic elements in European thinking on the preservation and control of resources, including how to reduce Europe's dependency and improve Europe's competitiveness.

SOME FIGURES

- European municipal waste production varies from about 800 kg/pers/yr in Denmark to 300 kg/pers/yr in the Czech Republic.
- On average, each European citizen produces about 600 kg/yr of municipal waste, but each person's consumption generates an additional three metric tons of industrial waste and involves the importation of 16 metric tons of material, while the total resources used to satisfy this consumption is about 50 metric tons.
- According to various work conducted by ACR+, the 600 kg/pers/yr of municipal waste can be reduced by about 100 kg as follows:
 - 40 kg less of organic waste
 - 15 kg less of paper/cardboard waste
 - 25 kg less of packaging waste
 - 20 kg less of bulky and other various waste.
- As for the efficiency of municipal waste recycling, it can be noted that the 50% mark has already been passed by the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.
- Cost challenges vary greatly as the average cost of waste treatment in Europe is between 36 and 180 euros/pers/yr.



ACR+ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN WASTE POLICY

Reconciling legitimate aspirations to improving the standard of living and understanding the finite character of natural resources is the whole challenge of implementing sustainable development. This is the constant which has coloured European society for a number of years. Affluence is accompanied by a significant increase in waste production, putting the environment at risk and thereby also its development model.

Thus, the entire challenge of European waste policy is the reconciliation of **economic development with the preservation of resources**. To do this, the European Union has decided to emphasise two major aspects: waste recycling and waste prevention, while maintaining flexibility in the implementation of the waste treatment hierarchy to allow for local specifics. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT salutes this initiative and fully adheres by implementing this policy in its waste management activities and by participating in discussions to develop regulations.

The waste prevention policy is only recent, but it already includes innovative principles. **The notion of life cycle analysis** is diffusing little by little through specific regulations to certain waste streams (packing waste and used oils, in particular). The recent revision to the Directive on eco-design should also help extend this concept to all energy-linked product development processes.

SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT is happy to see these advances, and hopes that implementation measures allowing minimum environmental requirements to be set for bringing products to market will be adopted as soon as possible. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT also supports extending the scope of the eco-design Directive to all products in the near future.

However, sustainable waste management first needs to be reintroduced into the production cycle as an aspect of product quality. This is why **the promotion of recycling is a key issue and one of the pillars of European waste policy**. In addition to the long-term benefits of efficient natural resource use, recycling can be an important growth lever, in particular by creating local employment. It is therefore fully in line with the initiative set in motion by the Lisbon strategy.

SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT salutes the recent evolution of European regulations on recycling, and will support the development of this activity. In particular, the next step should be to define the criteria for identifying successfully recycled waste: The definition of common quality standards for recycled raw materials should make the market more fluid, provided they are guaranteed to be complementary with REACH regulations. A duplication of regulatory requirements would risk endangering the economic viability of the sector. The green book on bio-waste management in the European Union is also heading in the right direction by encouraging organic waste to be returned to the soil.

Nevertheless, the impact of these regulations remains limited, which seems regrettable in light of the great benefits which a strong recycling market in Europe would bring. This is why **SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT suggests implementing economic instruments to support demand in secondary raw materials**. These could be **in the form of more stringent criteria for public green markets, or the introduction of quotas on manufacturers for incorporating recycled products** in line with the practice in the green electricity market (green "recycling" certificates).

Furthermore, **SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT promotes the rapid harmonisation of the methods for calculating recycling targets**, as set out in the Framework Directive on waste.

From a general point of view, let us remember that **implementing homogeneous regulations and respecting free competition encourages the development of a recycling industry, thereby working to achieve the European Union's environmental objectives**.



WHY DO SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT AND SITA, ITS WASTE SUBSIDIARY, SUPPORT THIS WORK?

Christophe Cros, Senior Executive Vice President of SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT, replies:

Although it is not the most important waste stream in terms of quantity, municipal waste is highly emblematic, a proxy for society's consumption. At the household level, the individual – simultaneously a citizen, consumer, tax-payer, voter, parent etc. - is faced with the creation and day-to-day management of municipal waste. This brings with it a multitude of environmental impacts caused by these activities, and by the financial, environmental and social choices involved.

This experience is nowadays nurturing a growing environmental awareness and a legitimate demand for high quality services designed to manage waste effectively, while respecting the quality of the environment, both locally and beyond.

Meeting this expectation constitutes a challenge that is more complex than at first appears. Ultimately, solutions that are often well-established and proven, always need to be finely tuned to the geographic, cultural and economic conditions prevailing in each country, in each region or in each town.

Faced with this challenge, Europe now has many statutory obligations –the most stringent in the world - self-imposed over more than thirty years. The new waste framework directive confirms and reinforces this goal.

Public protagonists in the field of waste management and private partner companies ensure its deployment through a choice of pragmatic solutions in response to extremely practical questions: Will the citizens play their part in sorting recyclables at home? What are the practical limits to materials recycling? Does mechanical biological treatment constitute an environmental added value? Is energy recovery efficient? What position does landfill disposal occupy?

Better choices can be made thanks to shared knowledge, experience and expertise. ACR+ has taken the initiative of organising this exchange and of promoting it via its European network. Lessons can be learned from the chapters in this book, enabling the different parties involved, be they technicians, decision-makers, politicians, public authorities or private enterprises, to take a critical look at the means of analysis and the parameters to be considered when managing municipal waste.

Managing this waste properly is a matter of choice for all parties within society and none of those involved will wholly recognise their positions in each of the conclusions presented in this work. Nevertheless, this combination of viewpoints is essential if they are to make informed and responsible decisions. This comparison will help all the parties involved to play a more relevant role in identifying solutions designed to meet local authority requirements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate ACR+ for its judicious and valued initiative, one which SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT has been delighted to support.



ACR+: AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF PLAYERS IN WASTE MANAGEMENT

ACR+ is an international network of some 100 members in 20 countries with the common objective of sustainably managing waste and resources through prevention, re-use and recycling. ACR+ members are essentially local and regional authorities, as well as national networks of local authorities representing some 1,100 municipalities. The association aims to promote the exchange of information and experience on all themes related to municipal waste management. ACR+'s studies, bulletins, conferences and seminars allow members to discuss and confront problems and solutions with other players in waste management in Europe and elsewhere.

SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT, THE WORLD'S LEADING PLAYER IN ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Natural resources are not infinite. Each day, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT (Paris: SEV, Brussels: SEVB) and its subsidiaries deal with the challenge of protecting resources by providing innovative solutions to industries and to millions of people. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT supplies drinking water to 76 million people, provides wastewater treatment services for 44 million people, and collects the waste produced by 51 million people. With 65,400 employees, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT is the global leader dedicated exclusively to environmental services, present on five continents. In 2008, SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT reported revenues of 12.4 billion euros. SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT is a 35%-owned subsidiary of GDF SUEZ.