

Press release

The private waste management sector reacts to the new EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability

Brussels, 15 October 2020 - Yesterday, the European Commission adopted the new [EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability](#), as a first step towards a "zero-pollution ambition for a toxic free environment" in the context of the EU Green Deal.

The European private waste management sector, represented by FEAD, acknowledges the efforts made by the European Commission and **supports this new strategy**. It is of paramount importance to our sector that the use of harmful chemicals in EU and imported products must be phased out as to guarantee quality recycling and secondary raw materials. More specifically, FEAD would like to stress the following points:

- FEAD fully supports the idea that a well-functioning market for secondary raw materials requires safer materials and products, and a more adequate disclosure of information on the chemical content of products. Yet, we believe that such information should be complemented by a **practicable and risk-based guidance for waste operators**. The latter should help bridge the gap on missing information related to which chemicals are found in the different waste streams and how the latter can be treated in a safe and environmentally sound manner.
- To support this transition, regulatory actions should be followed by **appropriate incentives**, namely subsidies or fee-based mechanisms on products, to help finance innovative technologies to better detect the presence of legacy substances in waste streams composed of products often dating several years, thus busting decontamination.
- While ambitious targets push for more recycling, a qualitative approach is also needed. This is because recyclers continuously invest in the downstream section of the value chain. Guaranteeing return on present and future investments also means **ensuring the proper implementation and enforcement of the relevant international and EU legislation at all stages and by all actors**. Specific attention should be given to imported goods, especially through online sales, which represents a challenge.
- Moreover, it is relevant to point out that, among the mentioned instruments to foster sustainability and efficiency (p.7), energy from waste sources, are renewable energy sources.

In response to the publication, **FEAD President, Peter Kurth**, comments:

"EU needs to combine high recycling targets, and the reinforced priority given today to quality and safe recycling. To achieve these objectives, we should strike a balance between giving visibility to our companies' investments and tackling harmful chemicals in products. Waste management companies are key allies to achieve the objectives of the Circular Economy Action Plan. The EU must keep in mind that our sector needs clear and practical rules to guarantee high-quality secondary raw materials".

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