

Press Release

Aligning the objectives of the EU zero-pollution ambition and the waste management sector

Brussels, 12 May 2021 - FEAD, the European Waste Management Association, strongly supports the ambitious [EU plan](#) to significantly reduce air, water and soil pollution to levels no longer considered harmful to the environment.

Striking a balance between pollution reduction and waste operations means leveraging on the potential of recyclates' markets. For us, **this requires European legislation, especially on products, to be fitted for the objectives of the action plan**, (the 50% reduction target for municipal residual waste, above all). **High quality recyclates can only be achieved if products are “designed out of waste”, by:**

- **introducing mandatory eco-design rules for products.** True recyclability and dismantlability of products, i.e., through mandatory standards at the design stage, represent the main driver to achieve the objectives of the Plan. FEAD strongly supports the actions currently being designed under the Sustainable Products' initiative, notably the Revision of the Eco-design Directive;
- **phasing out substances of very high concern (SVHCs) and establishing a proper methodology on how to deal with legacy substances** (i.e., decision on decontamination and recyclability);
- **properly implementing and enforcing existing and upcoming legislation.** FEAD believes that the ambitious objectives of the Plan can only be achieved if legislation is properly implemented and enforced by competent authorities.

While these long-term policies are set to significantly incentivise zero-pollution, we believe that policies aimed at limiting waste exports on the short term will not facilitate the objectives set by the Action Plan and by the Green Deal. While we agree with restricting exports of non-hazardous untreated waste to countries where environmentally sound management cannot be ensured, **it is essential that waste operators are able to still export processed waste beyond EU borders.**

Peter Kurth, FEAD's President, remarks:

“A generalised restriction of waste exports will leave the EU with a waste problem. As long as policies to incentivise recyclates' markets are not fully implemented, through strong regulatory instruments such as mandatory recycled contents, resulting in a true and necessary shock on demand, limitations to access global markets will hamper circular economy and the development of selective collection and recycling performances in the EU. The fight against illegal trafficking must be intensified.”

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