

BIO-WASTE ASPECTS IN THE WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

EU waste legislation proposals in the Circular Economy Package: **A unique opportunity to use the untapped potential of bio-waste**

23 March 2017

Taking into account the European Parliament's 14/03 vote on MEP Bonafè's report on the Waste Framework Directive (WFD), the European Compost Network (ECN) would herewith like to inform you of our position on the file. We would be pleased if the European Commission, as well as the Council and Parliament, would take these into consideration during the interinstitutional negotiations.

The EP report on the WFD sends a clear signal towards high quality recycling. ECN feels that the inclusion of a definition of organic recycling and the obligation for separate collection of bio-waste will lead to improved sustainable bio-waste management in Europe. In particular, ECN would like to address the following bio-waste related issues covered by the EP report:¹

Bio-waste comprises up to 50% of the municipal solid waste (MSW) produced in Member States: separate collection and recycling of bio-waste is crucial to meet the overall MSW recycling rates specified in Article 11(2) of the WFD. However, we believe that **strict and enforceable requirements** are needed to ensure the separate collection and recycling of bio-waste. As the Parliament included in their report, ECN also calls for the **removal of the conditionalities** for the separate collection of bio-waste and define precisely in which exceptional cases exemptions could be applied.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Remove the TEEP (*technically, environmentally and economically practicable*) conditionalities to the separate collection of bio-waste and ensure this is recycled appropriately. ECN therefore **supports EP Amendments 14, 53, 54, 55, 84, 90, 91, 93, 156, 157, 161 & 198** and recommends the co-legislators to include these in their provisional agreement.

The EP concluded that their proposals for separate collection of bio-waste (which could not be landfilled or used in incineration plants) would guarantee a 100% recycling of bio-waste. ECN believes the inclusion of a **separate target for the recycling of bio-waste of 65% of municipal biowaste**, in line with the Commission's own recommendations in their impact assessment, would bolster MS actions in this regard and provide a more pragmatic approach to ensure this recycling takes place. Such a target should be combined with a

¹ Amendment numbers referenced in this document correspond with the numbers as used in **Council document 7275/17** of 14 March 2017 on the outcome of the EP's first reading.

common calculation methodology, as proposed by the EP. In order to ensure bio-waste is collected and treated according to the **best available practices**, the Commission needs to **publish guidance on the setting up of collection and treatment schemes for bio-waste**.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Include a separate target for the recycling of bio-waste. The Commission should publish guidance on the setting up of collection and treatment schemes for bio-waste to assist MS.
- Additionally, ECN **supports EP Amendments 223 & 242** and recommends the co-legislators to include these in their provisional agreement.

High quality recycling of bio-waste is necessary, not only to protect the environment but also to guarantee a quality output for the costumers of the products coming out of this recycling. To ensure high quality output, especially in organic recycling plants where there are no sorting operations per se, there is a **need for requirements on the quality of input**. ECN supports a maximum (10%) limit on the non-biodegradable materials entering the final recycling process of separately collected bio-waste. Establishing input- and output-related quality assurance schemes, as suggested by the European Parliament, will help to ensure the organic recycling of bio-waste fulfils a high level of environmental protection and will facilitate to place recycled materials on the European market. Development of quality standards would also assist in this regard.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Establish quality assurance schemes to ensure the organic recycling of bio-waste in a way that fulfils a high level of environmental protection, including standards for the input of bio-waste going into the recycling process.
ECN therefore **supports EP Amendments 50, 55, 177, 237 & 238** and recommends the co-legislators to include these in their provisional agreement.

To effectively measure the sorting and recycling of bio-waste, the introduction of European waste codes for source separated municipal bio-waste as suggested by the European Parliament would be very helpful and is therefore strongly supported by ECN.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Introduce European waste codes for source separated municipal bio-waste.
ECN therefore **supports EP Amendment 201** and recommends the co-legislators to include this in their provisional agreement.

As bio-waste is not covered by any kind of effective incentive scheme, in order to achieve high recycling results, we propose that every Member State shall **mandatorily introduce an incentive scheme dedicated to bio-waste**. In this regard, we support the European Parliament's inclusion of incentive schemes for the separate collection and development of markets for secondary raw materials.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Introduce incentives schemes dedicated to the separate collection and uptake of bio-waste. ECN therefore **supports EP Amendments 19, 60, 102, 105, 162, 207, 223 & 234** and recommends the co-legislators to include these in their provisional agreement.

To further harvest the potential of bio-waste for circular economy objectives, **commercial and industrial bio-waste** should be **separately collected and recycled**. This bio-waste is not covered under the current definition of municipal solid waste but provides a significant resource for soil improvers, biogas and other bio-based applications. The European Parliament asks the EC to consider setting up similar recycling measures for commercial and industrial bio-waste by the end of 2018, which ECN feels should be enforced by concrete targets.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Introduce targets for the separate collection and recycling of commercial and industrial bio-waste. ECN **supports EP Amendments 14, 39, 81, 82, 166 & 174** but recommends the co-legislators to include concrete targets for commercial and industrial bio-waste in their provisional agreement.

Where it comes to **composting**, ECN feel that **each situation asks for a tailored solution** in which no specific form (like home composting as suggested by the European Parliament, composting on site or industrial composting) should be preferred over another.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Ensure the liberty of tailor-made composting solutions rather than prescribing one preferred method over another.

ECN agrees that food waste should be reduced, and supports the EP's calls for an overall food waste reduction target and food waste reduction plans on MS level.

- **ECN's recommendation for the co-legislators:** Include a food waste reduction target. ECN therefore **supports EP Amendments 14, 35, 36, 98, 107, 145, 146, 149 & 212** and recommends the co-legislators to include these in their provisional agreement.

We would look forward to provide you with more detailed (technical) information on our positions. Please let us know if this information would be helpful for you by contacting info@compostnetwork.info.



About ECN

The **European Compost Network (ECN)** is the leading European membership organisation promoting sustainable recycling practices by composting and anaerobic digestion of organic resources and guarding over the quality and safe use of the recovered organic fertilisers/soil improvers.

The European Compost Network is a membership organisation with 66 members from 28 European countries. Members include all European bio-waste organisations and their operating plants, research, policy making, consultants and authorities. ECN represents 20 bio-waste organisations from 13 European countries, 26 companies producing bio-based products, 6 environmental NGOs, 11 academic (research) institutes in environmental, agricultural and natural sciences and three environmental agencies. Through its member organisations, ECN represents more than 3,000 experts and plant operators with a biological waste treatment capacity above 30 million tonnes.