

Annual Report 2018 of the European Compost Network ECN e.V.

The activities of ECN focussed mainly on three areas and the subjects were addressed in different Task groups:

1. Area 'European Policy'
 - TG Circular Economy
 - TG BREF
 - TG Fertiliser Regulation
 - TG ABPR
 - TG Compostable Materials (founded in 2018)
 - TG Soil & Organic Matter (founded in 2018)
2. Area 'Quality Assurance for Compost and Digestate'
 - TG Quality Assurance
 - TG Growing Media and Horticulture
3. Area 'Research and Market Development'

The **TG Soil & Organic matter** has 16 members and the Kick-off meeting took place in October in Bochum (DE). The goals are:

- Raise awareness of the importance of soil organic matter;
- Strengthen the organic cycle;
- Demonstrating the benefits of Soil organic matter.

An outcome of the meeting was the intention to develop a series of factsheets on the 'sustainable use (application) of compost and digestate to improve soil organic matter'.

Timeline: Finished by End of Q2 2019.

The **TG Compostable Materials** has 20 members and the Kick-off meeting took place in October in Milan (IT). The main goal is to develop a Position paper on the following topics:

- Introduction and definition of compostable materials with reference to EN standards;
- Functionality and suitability of compostable bags for facilitating separate collection of biowaste;
- Requirements for compostable materials in composting and anaerobic digestion;
- Packaging materials from restaurants and shops, de-packaging materials.

The first draft is expected mid of March 2019.

The TG ABPR worked on the **EFSA** (European Food and Safety Authority) application for alternative time-temperature profiles for composting. A first draft was submitted on 14 October 2018 and an internal TG ABPR meeting took place in Cologne (DE) on 18 December. The final draft is expected mid of March 2019.

The Task Force '**Communication and Events**' worked in cooperation with the different task groups, the ECN Board and the Executive Director and is responsible for the communication work of ECN.

Area Quality Assurance

In 2018 two new conformity assessments were conducted and the conformity labels were rewarded:

- Consorzio Italiano Compostatori CIC - Italy
- Compost & Biogas Association Austria

Two renewal of assessments were done in 2018 successfully:

- Audit VLACO
- Audit BGK



KBVÖ Austria



BGK Germany



VLACO Belgium



CIC Italy

Communication work

In 2018 ECN published and distributed two different publications to its members. The ECN NEWS (2 editions) and ECN E-Bulletin (11 editions). Two position papers (Circular Economy/ Fertiliser Regulation), 3 factsheets and 3 press releases were published.

Moreover the 3rd edition of the ECN QAS Manual was released in 2018 and the 'ECN Guidelines for use of quality compost in growing media' were finalised by TG Growing Media and Horticulture.

All publications are available on the ECN website:

<http://www.compostnetwork.info/publications>.



ECN's Policy work

In 2018 ECN's Policy work was again mainly focussed on the revision of the waste proposal and the fertilisers proposal in the EU Circular Economy Package. Another subject on ECN's agenda was the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The subject EU Bioeconomy was also part of ECN's work schedule.

EU Waste Proposal

With regard to the Commission's proposal ([COM \(2015\) 595 final 2015/0275\(COD\)](#)) the ECN published the [position paper](#) 'EU waste legislation proposals: A unique opportunity to use the untapped potential of bio-waste' on 30 May 2016. This position paper provided the basis for the follow-up discussion with the Commission (DG Environment), the European Parliament and the Council during 2016 and 2017. Several meetings with the Commission, the Members of the European Parliament, the attachés of the Permanent Representations of the Member States and the responsible policy departments on national level took place.

ECN's position was successfully taken up in [the report of the Environment Committee \(ENVI\)](#) of the European Parliament Committee. The ENVI vote took place on the 24 January 2017. The members of the European Parliament adopted the ENVI report with great majority on 14 March 2017 and gave a clear signal towards high quality recycling. To convince the EU Council of the importance of the waste hierarchy and to promote high quality recycling by setting clear rules



for calculating the recycling targets in the ongoing discussions, the European Compost Network (ECN) sent together with six stakeholders ([EEB](#), [EuRIC](#), [CEWEP](#), [CEEP](#), [ETRA](#), [PRE](#)) a [joint statement](#) in June 2017 to the EU Council and the EU Commission.

With regard to the revision of the Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive also a [joint recommendation](#) (ECN, ([EEB](#), [CEWEP](#), [CEEP](#), [MWE](#))) for the monitoring and analysis of the viability of future targets on reuse, recycling and landfilling of commercial and industrial waste, co-signed by local authorities, public service providers, environmental organisations and waste operators was sent to the European Council and the European Parliament.

To emphasise the ECN position, ECN organised a workshop in Brussels on the 6 September 2017. The successful ECN Policy Workshop in September 2017 was timed to coincide with trilogue discussions about bio-waste in the revised Waste Framework Directive (WFD). Over 80 delegates heard from representatives of the European Commission, European Parliament, member states, industry organisations and municipalities about bio-waste and revisions to the Waste Framework Directive.

ECN has shared ahead of the final trilogue discussion under the Estonian presidency recommendations with regard to specific articles which are of great importance to bio-waste. These [recommendations](#) were published on 14 November 2017.

On 18 December 2017 the Commission, Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement at the last trilogue meeting on the waste legislative proposals.

On 27 February 2018 the environment committee (ENVI) of the European Parliament has approved the texts of the Circular Economy Package, which were agreed during the trilogue negotiations, following a similar vote in the Council (Coreper I) a few days earlier. After the Council and the Parliament agreed the new Circular Economy legislation entered into force on 04 July 2018:

- [Waste Framework Directive](#)
- [Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive](#)
- [Landfill Directive](#)
- [End-of-life vehicles, waste batteries and accumulators and WEEE directives.](#)

Member states have to transpose the new legislation until 4 July 2020.

Joint workshop ‘The Road to an urban Bioeconomy’

To support the role of bio-waste in the process of implementation ECN co-organised the workshop ‘**The Road to an Urban Bioeconomy**’ in Brussels, 28th May 2018. Together with more than 80 delegates the participants discussed the barriers and solutions that are likely to be encountered along the way. Representatives of the European Commission, [EUROCITIES](#),

European Compost Network, [Urban Agenda Partnership for Circular Economy](#), [Municipal Waste Europe](#) and the [City of Oslo](#) spoke about research, innovation and successful case studies for improving bio-resource management in urban areas. As an outcome [nine recommendations](#) were identified to achieve the new agreed bio-waste targets and sent as a joint letter to the EU Commission to elaborate a better framework for bio-waste in a circular economy in Europe.

In September 2018 Eunomia was contracted for ‘Study to support the Implementation of Reporting Obligations Resulting from the New Waste Legislation Adopted in 2018’.



Fig.1: Status and action on EU Waste Proposal

The survey was distributed to ECN’s members and ECN supported the consultation by attending meetings and telephone interviews with EUNOMIA. The draft, which came out as a result is supposed to be adopted until 31 March 2019.

Moreover, ECN had a meeting with DG ENV on 10 October 2018 on recommendations to elaborate a better framework for bio-waste in a circular economy in Europe.

EU Fertilisers Proposal

With regard to the Commission’s proposal ([COM \(2016\) 157 final](#) 2016/00084(COD)) the ECN published the ‘[ECN position paper on the Proposal for a Fertilising Product Regulation](#)’ on 17

May 2016. This position paper provided the basis for the follow-up discussion with the Commission (DG Grow), the European Parliament and the Council during 2016 and 2017. Besides the publication of the [draft report](#) on the proposal for a fertilising product regulation by the rapporteur MEP Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz of the IMCO Committee on 14 March 2017, the [ENVI](#) and the [AGRI](#) Committee published their opinions at the beginning of February.

After the vote on the opinions of the [ENVI](#), [AGRI](#) and [INTA](#) Committees on the Commission's [proposal for a fertilising product regulation](#) the considerations on amendments in the IMCO Committee took place on 21 June 2017. ECN published [recommendations](#) to the [compromise amendments](#).

After the vote on the opinions of the [ENVI](#), [AGRI](#) and [INTA](#) Committees on the Commission's [proposal for a fertilising product regulation](#), the IMCO Committee published its [final draft report](#) on 25 July 2017. The first reading in the Plenary took place on 23 October 2017. If adopted as such, the report would have led to the exclusion of bio-waste materials for CE marked fertilising products, and thus would position the Parliament against overall Circular Economy goals. ECN called upon the MEPs to consider making the necessary changes to these and other aspects in the report, following the suggestions as included in the [ECN recommendations ahead of the Plenary vote](#), in order to fulfil the shared objective of ensuring recycled bio-waste and other secondary raw materials will be part of CE fertilising products. As several amendments of the Parliament were **still incompatible with the overall objective to increase the use of recycled nutrients**, the European Compost Network (ECN), the European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services (FEAD) and Municipal Waste Europe (MWE) have co-signed a [joint statement](#) in October 2017 on the most controversial aspects for the recycling of biowaste into high value fertilising products.

The European Compost Network stressed that harmonised and reliable criteria for compost and digestate, which will be placed as organic fertilisers and soil improvers on the European market should be set. These should be based on the [technical proposal on end-of-waste criteria](#) for compost and digestate, worked out by the Joint Research Institute 'IPTS' of the European Commission.

Following the European Parliament's 24/10 vote on the CE marked fertilising products proposal and with regard to the starting interinstitutional negotiations on this file, the European Compost Network (ECN) published an [updated position paper](#) with specific recommendations on several elements of the proposal which are still incompatible with the overall objective to increase the use of recycled nutrients.

At the end of the Estonian Presidency (20/12/2017) the Council agreed on the mandate for drafting the fertiliser regulation to improve the existing rules for placing fertilising products on

the European market. The proposal sets out requirements for placing fertilising products on the EU market. These requirements will include obligatory maximum contaminant levels, the use of defined component material categories and labelling requirements. This mandate enabled the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council to start the negotiations with the European Parliament, Council and Commission on this file in 2018. Before the trilogue negotiations started, ECN published its position paper: [ECN recommendations ahead of the trilogue negotiation on EU-Fertilisers Regulation](#).

Several meetings with the Commission, the Members of the European Parliament, the attachés of the Permanent Representations of the Member States and the responsible policy departments on national level took place and the whole process was followed up in 2018. ECN organised meetings or took part in meetings with

- DG Grow (10/07/2018)
- Austrian EU presidency (18/07; 27/07: 29/07/2018)
- EU Fertiliser Working Group Meeting (8/11/2018)

The last trilogue negotiations took place on 20 November 2018 and a compromise for Cadmium limit was reached which is now part of the EU Fertiliser Proposal. The final adoption in the Council and in the EP plenary is expected at the end of March 2019. There will be the possibility to revise the annexes after adoption of the legislative text and ECN will follow-up the debate.

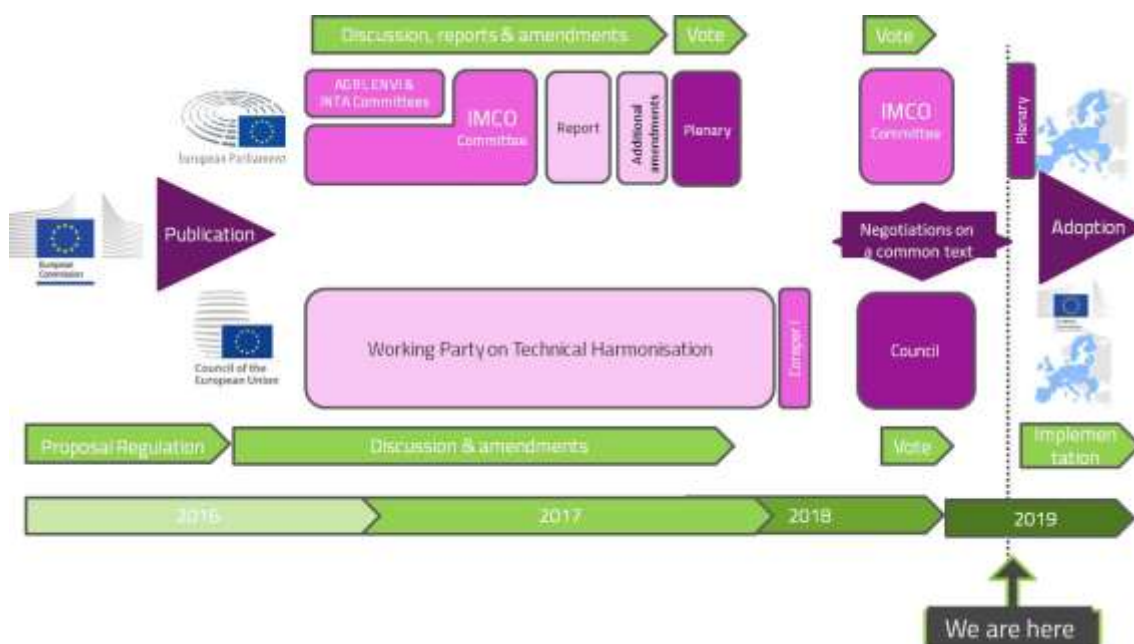


Fig.2: Status and action on EU Fertilisers Proposal

Commission’s legislative proposal on the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Based on the Commission’s communication ‘[The Future of Food and Farming](#)’ (see [ECN News 01 2018](#)) the European Commission published the legislative proposals on the future of food and farming on 1 June 2018. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is one of the EU’s oldest policies, providing subsidies to Europe’s farmers since 1962. Whilst the current CAP aims to support the agricultural sector to produce a secure supply of quality, safe food, it is in need of modernisation to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose for the 21st century. The future CAP should support European farmers and ensure Europe’s food security, while ensuring a resilient, sustainable and competitive agricultural sector.

ECN discussed the topic how the benefits of compsopt and digestate application in relation to soil organic matter can be taken into account under the CAP review with DG AGRI on 6 March 2018.

CEA/TC 223 Soil improvers and growing media - EU Fertilisers Regulation

A meeting of the Technical Working Group took place on 8/9 April 2018 including the expected mandate for standard developments for soil improver and growing media according to the upcoming EU Fertilising Products Regulation.

A meeting of WG4 ‘Analytical methods’ took place on the 8 April 2018. The subject was to discuss the revision of the OUR method.

Meetings and events

The following tables list the different organised meetings, conferences and events that took place in 2018 with ECN involvement.

ECN Internal Meetings

Board Meetings	
Date	Place
12/03/2018	Brussels (BE)
06-07/09/2018	Brussels (BE)
29/11/2018	Leeuven (DE)

ECN Annual Meeting	
Date	Place
29/05/2018	Brussels (BE)

Task Group Meetings		
Task Group	Date	Place
TG 'Soil & Organic matter'	04/10/2018	Bochum (DE)
TG 'Compostable materials'	15/10/2018	Milan (IT)
TG 'ABPR'	18/12/2018	Cologne (DE)

ECN EU Policy Workshop		
Task Group Circular Economy	Date	Place
The Road to an Urban Bioeconomy	28/05/2018	Brussels (BE)

Other Conferences, Meetings, Events

International Conferences and Events supported by ECN		
International Waste Conference in Russia	15-16/02/2018	Moscow (RUS)
Nordic Phosphorus Network	5-6/04/2018	Oslo (NO)
RHP Exchange meeting	25/10/2018	Venlo (BE)
Conference QAO for Compost of Saxony and Thuringia	19/09/2018	Meerane (DE)
Bad Hersfelder Biomasse Forum	06-07/11/2018	Bad Hersfeld (DE)
Symposium on EU Fertiliser Regulation	29/11/2018	Leuven (BE)

International, European and National Workshops and Meetings		
European Biogas Conference	25-26/01/2018	Antwerps (BE)
Circular Economy Stakeholder Conference	20-21/02/2018	Brussels (BE)
DG ENV Stakeholder Meeting	24/09/2018	Brussels
ECOMONDO	6-9/11/2018	Rimini (IT)