



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

2009/2153(INI)

25.2.2010

OPINION

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on the Commission Green Paper on the management of bio-waste in the
European Union
(2009/2153(INI))

Rapporteur: Salvatore Caronna

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Supports the Commission's initiative on Community action on bio-waste management, promoted through its green paper;
2. Notes that bio-waste accounts for more than 30 % of municipal solid waste; is of the opinion that better management of bio-waste will contribute to sustainable resource management and meeting recycling and renewable energy targets;
3. Believes that bio-waste management should be part of a sustainable waste management cycle aimed at the rational use and conservation of resources and reducing the environmental impact;
4. Reiterates that bio-waste management must be structured in line with the waste treatment hierarchy, namely: prevention, recycling, other forms of waste recovery, including energy recovery, and, as a last option, disposal in landfills (Directive 1991/31/EC, Art. 5);
5. Considers that the optimal decision in favour of a treatment procedure should be taken only in the light of an examination of the local situation (settlement structure, structure of the bio-waste, existing installations, etc.);
6. Stresses that, during energy recovery from bio-waste, attention must be paid to energy efficiency and sustainable development aspects and that these products should therefore primarily be used in the most efficient manner;
7. Stresses that bio-waste management includes waste prevention, recycling, composting and energy recovery, in accordance with the waste hierarchy laid out in Directive 2008/98/EC;
8. Considers mechanical-biological treatment (MBT) to be an effective way of diverting significant quantities of putrescible waste away from landfills for use in composting, anaerobic digestion and energy recovery;
9. Stresses that bio-waste which is free of pollutants needs to be regarded as a valuable natural resource that can be used to produce quality compost;
10. Considers that the future of agriculture also depends on conservation and restoration of soil fertility; notes that the use of quality compost in farming can contribute to preserving land productivity, increasing water retention, carbon storage capacity and reducing the use of synthetic fertilisers; stresses the role of Member States in ensuring the use of quality compost on agricultural land;
11. Stresses the need for clearly defined quality standards on bio-waste treatment and

compost quality in order to avoid the gradual pollution of soils; asks the Commission to assess the option of legislative proposals on qualitative criteria for compost and digestate, which should be based on the prerequisite of separate collection;

12. Points out that the monitoring of gases given off by substances in landfill may be hindered during composting, which may pose a major threat to the environment and the atmosphere; it should be borne in mind that correct composting – particularly of municipal bio-waste – involves protecting groundwater against leachate from the composting plant;
13. Considers that the 'polluter pays' principle should be taken as the basis for compensation for additional costs arising from inputs of pollutants, so that the negative externalities of spreading bio-waste are not paid for by farmers;
14. Reiterates that separate refuse collections are essential in order to comply with the Landfill Directive (Directive 1999/31/EC, Recital 17), provide quality input to bio-waste recycling and improve the efficiency of energy recovery; urges the Commission to support the Member States in introducing waste separation systems and to introduce binding and ambitious targets for the recycling of this waste;
15. Believes a crucial prerequisite for bio-waste incineration to become a viable alternative in the waste hierarchy is that it be coupled with energy recovery;
16. Considers bio-waste to be a valuable renewable resource for the production of electricity and biofuel for means of transport and for feeding into the gas network through conversion of biogas into biomethane (mainly methane – 50% to 75% – and carbon dioxide), and calls on the Commission to analyse and promote ways of using bio-waste to produce biogas;
17. Considers that Community legislation should encourage arrangements which permit biogas to be fed into the natural gas network;
18. Notes that the individual Member States have different existing national legislative measures and different waste management systems and that the use of landfill continues to be the most common disposal method for municipal solid waste in the European Union; calls on the Commission to make greater efforts to enforce and secure the application of the laws on landfilling throughout the Community and to assess the need for a legislative proposal on biodegradable waste as soon as possible, also in order to ensure that bio-waste is prevented from reaching landfill; calls on the Member States to increase their cooperation and their exchange of best practices in the field of bio-waste management;
19. Calls for greater public understanding of the complexity of the waste chain, including education about proper sorting and handling of waste; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote educational measures for the public and particularly at schools in order to encourage sustainable management of municipal solid waste, and to draw attention to the benefits of waste separation; stresses in this context the important role of towns, municipalities and municipal undertakings in advising and informing citizens

about prevention of waste;

20. Calls on the Commission to investigate in what trading areas for bio-waste energy efficiency is greatest;
 21. Notes that the recycling of waste is on the rise in Western Europe, while in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe recycling rates remain very low; calls on the Commission, therefore, to promote environmental policies in the field of waste management aimed at tackling the increased generation of waste.
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RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	23.2.2010
Result of final vote	+: 38 -: 1 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	John Stuart Agnew, Richard Ashworth, Liam Aylward, Christophe Béchu, José Bové, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă, Michel Dantin, Paolo De Castro, Albert Deß, Herbert Dorfmann, Lorenzo Fontana, Iratxe García Pérez, Martin Häusling, Esther Herranz García, Peter Jahr, Elisabeth Jeggle, Elisabeth Köstinger, Giovanni La Via, Stéphane Le Foll, George Lyon, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Gabriel Mato Adrover, Mairead McGuinness, Mariya Nedelcheva, James Nicholson, Rareş-Lucian Niculescu, Wojciech Michał Olejniczak, Georgios Papastamkos, Marit Paulsen, Britta Reimers, Alfreds Rubiks, Giancarlo Scotta', Alyn Smith, Marc Tarabella, Janusz Wojciechowski
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Salvatore Caronna, Spyros Danellis, Esther de Lange, Filip Kaczmarek, Hans-Peter Mayer, Maria do Céu Patrão Neves