

**'Bio-waste  
Need for EU legislation?'**  
**View of the bio-waste coalition**

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10.06.2009

**Slide 2**

It is a pleasure for me to see you back again and to be the first speaker this morning. As Mr Friedrich told, I am Mieke De Schoenmakere, working for OVAM, the Public Waste Agency of Flanders, where I work in the service 'Europe'.

And I may present to you this morning the view of the bio-waste coalition regarding the need for legislation on EU level for bio-waste.

**Bio-waste coalition - history**

- Established in 2006
- Initiative from Austria, Germany, Portugal and Spain
- Members - Position paper
- Demanding for legislative measures on EU level
  - Discussion on EU-level is not new!
  - Supported by EP, different stakeholders

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## Slide 3

The bio-waste coalition was established in 2006 by initiative of Austria, Germany, Spain and Portugal. It resulted in a group of at the moment 11 member states, asking for legislative measures on bio-waste as the answer on EU level, the approach necessary for bio-waste.

All the members signed a position paper. I will reflect the key issues of this position paper during the presentation.

As we all know, bio-waste has been discussed on EU level for many years. Almost a decade, someone confirmed yesterday: lets celebrate that with that a legislative proposal.

No, just to be serious: it is time to make a clear decision.

The members of the bio-waste coalition are certainly not alone in their call for legislative measures. We are very pleased with the support of stakeholders, representing both industry and civil society. But also European Parliament has asked on different occasions for a specific legislation on bio-waste and certainly has the intention to work on it as we heard yesterday from Ms Brepoels.

All of us welcomed the initiative of the European Commission with the publication of the green paper and the starting up of the Impact Assessment. We are confident that the arguments that we have heard already on this conference will be taken into account.

**Bio-waste coalition - Members**

	<b>Austria</b>		<b>Italy</b>
	<b>Belgium</b>		<b>Portugal</b>
	<b>Cyprus</b>		<b>Slovakia</b>
	<b>Czech Republic</b>		<b>Spain</b>
	<b>Estonia</b>		<b>Germany</b>
	<b>Hungary</b>		

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## Slide 4

In the next slide the member states, being part of the coalition, are shown. As you can see, not only older member states but also new member states are clearly represented in this group. This certainly reflects the fact that not only MS who have already established a system ask for this legislation. As we heard yesterday, the new MS in particular ask for drivers.

**Current situation**

- In a lot of MS, bio-waste isn't managed sustainable, in spite of its huge potential: bio-waste is a needed resource
- Experience in other MS shows that ecological sound and sustainable solutions are feasible

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## Slide 5

In a lot of member states, bio-waste isn't managed sustainable and most of them are still struggling with the goals of the landfill directive that demands to divert bio-waste from landfill, aiming to reduce the negative effect of the methane emissions.

But not only avoiding those methane emissions should be the goal.

Biodegradable waste, that is not going to landfills and that is sustainable managed, can serve many purposes. In that way it is a waste to put all that bio-waste on landfills.

Bio-waste is indeed a needed resource and experience in different member states proves that ecological sound and sustainable solutions are feasible.

**Bio-waste can serve different interests**

- **Bio-waste, a needed resource, can serve different interests if used in the right way**
  - **Achieve the goal of the Landfill Directive: divert biodegradable waste**
  - **Aiming for a resource efficient recycling society**
    - ▶ EU Commissioner Dimas: "The EU needs to become a resource-efficient, recycling society and bio-waste offers great opportunities. Once our resources become waste we must find ways to recycle them..."
  - **Soil protection – climate protection**
  - **Renewable energy – climate protection**
    - ▶ Legislation on bio-waste and Directive on Renewable Energy working together

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## Slide 6

Bio-waste management is indeed a crosscutting environmental issue which not only affects waste management.

There is on the one hand, the reduction of landfilling biodegradable waste by 65% in Europe 15 (EU 15) alone that could save 74 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. So there is no doubt about the fact that achieving the goals of the landfill directive is necessary.

Bio-waste is also especially suited to contribute towards a sustainable resource and waste management at the EU Level.

As European Commissioner DIMAS said "The EU needs to become a resource-efficient, recycling society and bio-waste offers great opportunities. Once our resources become waste we must find ways to recycle them.

Of course, compost deriving from separate collection can substitute mineral fertilizers and peat and it can contribute to a healthy soil and biodiversity. And indirectly a healthy soil can even contribute to fight climate change by means of carbon sequestration.

Compost and fermentation residues derived from separately collected bio-waste, play an important role in the balance of organic matter in soils. And in the future, there will be a higher demand for organic matter, due to growth in intensive plant production in combination with increase in extreme weather conditions as a result of climate change.

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Energy recovery with high energy efficiency, from bio-waste, in the form of biogas or thermal energy will help in the fight against climate change” ...

For that matter we are convinced that a legislative measure on bio-waste isn't in competition with the new Directive on Renewable energy. The two can and must go hand in hand, have to be supplementary to each other for example by combining anaerobic digestion with composting.

So ... does it take courage to say yes to legislative measures on bio-waste? ...Yes, it does, certainly. Because it isn't a simple issue. But it also takes courage to address the challenges we are facing today: climate change; soil protection, fight for sustainable management of waste to protect human beings and the environment. So, why hesitating if bio-waste, managed in the right way, can help us quite a bit?

### Integrated approach

- Existing legislation sufficient?
  - Current situation is the proof
  - Too confusing
  - Lack of integrated approach
- Integrated approach is needed
  - Offering a legal framework, legal certainty
  - Starting point for setting up a policy concerning bio-waste
  - Prevention: raising awareness, providing information, providing support
  - Investments necessary for: raising awareness, starting up/stimulating separate collection, financing installations, information, confidence in the resulting output streams

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### **Slide 7**

The current situation is a clear proof of the fact that existing legislation, linked in one way or another to bio-waste, isn't sufficient enough or is too confusing. None of the regulations is addressing bio-waste treatment specifically. And experience in MS that have already established a system, shows you need a mix of linked instruments reinforcing and supplementing each other

You can't solve complex issues with simple solutions, otherwise we wouldn't have been here.

The green paper reflected that in a lot of member states, it isn't still clear how bio-waste will be managed in the future. Well then, it is time for a clear signal what are the needed options, given by a specific legislation on bio-waste at the EU-level. There is need for an integrated approach.

### **Because**

Member states and their administrations need a legal framework as backup for initiatives in order to implement a sound management of bio-waste and adding to soil protection. They need legal certainty, not only to make the appropriate investments but above all as a starting point for setting up a policy concerning bio-waste, built on different instruments.

Within that integrated approach, prevention deserves a privileged position. Waste that isn't produced, doesn't have to be treated and asks for lesser investments.

Supporting prevention needs a strategy working on raising awareness, giving information and support.

Experience has learnt us that it isn't sufficient enough to only build treatment plants. There is a need for a mix of instruments, all leading to the same goal, working on the same policy 'the ecological sound and sustainable management of bio-waste'.

The investments that are necessary, thus mustn't only cover setting up those installations but certainly also need to cover raising awareness, starting up/stimulating separate collection, information, creating confidence in the resulting output streams.

**An integrated approach: specific elements**

- **Experience in different member states**
  - An integrated approach, chain management, built on different elements, turns out good results!
  - Is the key of success!
- **Prevention**
  - Condition sine qua non
  - Prevention of food waste
  - Home composting
  - Cycle or Smart gardening
  - A lot can still be done!

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## Slide 8

Experience in different member states illustrates that such an integrated approach, built on chain management, turns out good results. It is the key to success.

As I stressed before, prevention deserves a privileged position.

It is a condition sine qua non. Current practices which are successful, are home composting, smart gardening and the prevention of food waste.

In any management of bio-waste prevention certainly needs a lot of attention.

And still a lot can be done!!

## An integrated approach: specific elements

### ■ Specific elements: A combination of

- Targets for separate collection of bio-waste
- Definition and requirements for the input materials
- Control of the treatment process
- Use of a Quality Assurance System
- Control of the output streams and the use of the output streams

guarantees traceability and results in high quality products which are safe to be used on the soil!

### Slide 9

Within an integrated approach, different specific elements can be detected besides of course prevention of bio-waste

The combination of

- a high level of qualitative separate collection targets
- control of the input streams linked with definitions and requirements
- a highly qualitative and controlled treatment process
- the use of a sound quality assurance system
- control of the output streams (linked with standards) and the use of those streams on the soil

guarantees traceability and results in high quality products which are safe to be used on the soil!

**Quality**

- **Producing high quality output streams**
  
- **Separate collection is therefore a pre-requisite**
  - **Good quality**
    - ▶ improving soil quality; protection of the soil
    - ▶ Confidence of the user
  - **Contributing to traceability**
  
- **Taking into account local conditions**
  - **Other priorities, depending on the region**
  - **lack of organic carbon; need for renewable energy**

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## Slide 10

A legislative measure should certainly stress the need for separately collected bio-waste going into the composting and digestion facilities. Because the output streams coming out of those installations, need to be of an excellent quality.

Why would we, while trying to solve one issue (meaning diverting biodegradable waste from landfills) we would want to jeopardise the quality of our soil, groundwater, ...

Additionally, the good quality of the output streams helps creating confidence in their value as for example soil conditioners, ...

Above that, separate collection contributes in traceability throughout the system. And traceability is indeed a crucial element while trying to protect the environment, groundwater and soil.

Separate collection of the bio-waste is therefore a pre-requisite and member states demanding for traceability and a quality assurance system thus do that for a good reason.

But of course, although we are united in the European Union, a lot of diversity can be detected between the member states.

Local conditions can vary substantially as we have heard yesterday afternoon. Consequently priorities are different among regions within the European Union, but even so among regions within one member state. In one region the demand for organic carbon can be very high, in another there is more need for renewable

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energy. We certainly have to take those differences into account. But we don't see any difficulty to include this into legisla measure.

### Slide 11

On the one hand, bio-waste offers thus many opportunities

On the other hand, the diversity between MS is huge, not only regarding local conditions but even so on the approach for bio-waste.

A leg measure on bio-waste could address this: not only providing a firm framework for ms still struggling with the issue but also providing the possibility to go further then what the directive prescribes for ms with a lot of experience

The slide features a green header with the word "Information" in white. Below this, a green square bullet point is followed by the name "Mieke De Schoenmakere". Underneath the name are the organization "OVAM", the phone number "++32 15 284 344", the email address "mieke.de.schoenmakere@ovam.be", and the website "www.ovam.be". At the bottom of the slide, there is a footer containing the number "13", the name "Mieke De Schoenmakere", the date "10.06.2009", and the OVAM logo with the slogan "SAMEK MAKEN WE WERKEN MOOIER".

**Information**

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