

Brussels, 15th January 2010

CEWEP's contribution to the public consultation on the future EU 2020 strategy

CEWEP (Confederation of European Waste-to-Energy Plants) welcomes the Commission's initiative setting priorities for a ten year horizon: EU 2020 strategy. We believe that it is of utmost importance for the EU to focus on policies which would encourage better use of resources and energy efficiency, in order to improve sustainability and help mitigate climate change.

Waste-to-Energy (WtE) can make a significant contribution to achieving sustainable energy targets, ensuring security of energy supply as well as treating waste that is not otherwise recyclable in an environmentally sound way.

WtE helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by avoiding landfill gas (methane - 25 times CO₂ in mass).

At the same time it replaces the use of fossil fuels which would be used by conventional power plants.

WtE is a cost-effective and reliable sustainable energy source.

The EU 27's renewable energy target to be achieved by 2020 is about 2700 TWh. The gap to be filled (between 2005 and the 2020 binding target) amounts to ca. 1500 TWh. WtE could potentially provide 60 TWh (4%) of this gap.

In order to improve the contribution WtE can make towards creating a competitive, interconnected and greener economy (key priority number 3 for EU 2020) we recommend the following to decision makers on a European and national level respectively:

- **Policies to foster Energy Efficiency** - European policy focuses on the generation of renewable energy. However, distribution is also a key element in order to improve energy efficiency, reduce CO₂ emissions and ensure security of energy supply. There is a major opportunity to use even more energy from waste in the form of heat, if the appropriate linking of heat customers to WtE plants would be encouraged. Therefore we need drivers for improving **infrastructure for district heating and cooling** in addition to **incentives to maximize electricity production from waste**.
- **Electricity grid access** – Waste-to-Energy plants should not be put at a disadvantage in comparison to other renewable energy sources.
- **Recognise that energy from Waste-to-Energy plants is - at least in part - a renewable energy source** (about 50%) as the European Directive on Renewable Energy Sources' definition of biomass includes the biodegradable part of municipal and industrial waste.
- **Diverting waste from landfills** - burying waste means wasting precious energy. The EU Landfill Directive is a good tool to protect the climate, but it must be implemented properly. It is worth noting that some countries have gone further and reduced dependence on landfills dramatically (below 5%) using a combination of Recycling and WtE (Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark).



Please find attached CEWEP's position paper on sustainable energy from waste.

For any questions please contact Dr. Ella Stengler, CEWEP Managing Director, ella.stengler@cewep.eu

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CEWEP represents about 380 Waste-to-Energy Plants across Europe. They thermally treat household and similar waste that remains after waste prevention, reuse and recycling by generating energy from it. This is how they replace fossil fuels, such as coal, gas and oil, used by conventional power plants. At the same time Waste-to-Energy plants help to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions by diverting waste from landfills.