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Opinion on the Commission proposal for amending six Directives on waste – 10 October 2014
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The Environment Committee and the European Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Denmark wish to make the following comments on the Commission proposal.

Set up targets – not methods

The Committees note that with this proposal the Commission sets up ambitious targets for the action in the EU. It is right to set up targets across the EU Member States. However, in addition to this, the Commission chooses to opt for a specific method regarding bio-waste management – separate collection.

The Committees are of the opinion that it is essential to ensure that the collected waste can be recycled in the best possible manner. Separate collection ensures that the dry waste fractions become cleaner than would have been the case otherwise. But that is only one method. At the moment, a number of technological development projects are ongoing, based on unsorted waste management. The Committees find that it should be up to the individual Member States to decide which method is most suitable.

Reduce the amount of waste

A significant challenge regarding waste management is the amount of waste. If long-term solutions are to be found, a main task is therefore to take initiatives that will reduce the amount of waste. It is important that the Commission should work on how to measure the extent to which waste production is reduced and not only measure on the basis of recycling rates. There is much more to be gained if we can manage not to generate new waste.

Set targets for the quality of recycling

It is important not to measure exclusively on the basis of recycling rates. Waste must be recycled to generate quality products. In order to obtain enough dry waste fractions to make recycling economically viable, it is a

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precondition that there should be collection rate requirements. But it is not sufficient to measure exclusively on the basis of collected amounts of waste. Our ambition should be for recycling to be conducted in a manner that makes it feasible to use the recycled products high in the production chain.

The work towards setting up targets and definitions is, therefore, important and should rightly take place at EU level. However, the final choice of methods should be left to the individual Member States to ensure that we do not create obstacles to technological development.

For further information, please see the statement made by the Environment Committee on 29 May 2013 on the Commission's Green Paper on a European Strategy on Plastic Waste in the Environment, which addresses some of the same issues.

Yours sincerely,

Lone Loklindt

Eva Kjer Hansen

Chair of the Environment Committee Chair of the European Affairs Committee