Waste Framework Directive 75/442/EEC. Follow-up report

2003/2124(INI) - 19/05/2003 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present a report on the implementation of Community waste legilsation. CONTENT : This report deals in particular with the implementation of -Directive 75/442/EECon waste; -Directive 91/689 /EEC on hazardous waste (replaced Directive 78/319/EEC: -Directive 75/439/EEC on the disposal of waste oils; -Directive 86/278/EEC on the protection of the environment, and in particular of the soil, when sewage sludge is used in agriculture; -Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste. The definition of 'waste' and of related waste management terminology, such as recovery and disposal, are essential elements for the implementation of the European waste management policy as well as for the functioning of the internal market in this field. The Commission has taken measures to establish a consolidated European Waste Catalogue (EWC), which is now set down in Commission Decision 2000 /532/EC. Since the previous implementation report for 1995-1997 the Commission considers that a number of Member States (Austria, Italy, Luxembourg, UK) still do not transpose the waste definition correctly into national law. As regards the definition of hazardous waste in particular, the situation has improved since the last report but it appears that there are still a few Member States that have not fully transposed all the elements of this definition. The number of countries that have established separate collection systems for hazardous household waste has increased since the previous report. The report goes on to discuss the hierarchy of principles, which are: waste prevention, recycling, energy recovery and safe disposal. The following points emerge: -From the information provided by Member States, it remains unclear whether and how much waste has been prevented within the EU. According to data supplied on waste generation, it appears that household waste per capita has increased as compared to the previous period while hazardous waste is stabilised. -The success of waste recycling differs widely between Member States. The mean recycling rate for domestic waste for the fifteen Member States is 26% (ranging from 8% to 63%). The mean recycling rate for hazardous waste is also about 27% (ranging from 5% to 77%). This indicates an overall increasing tendency although a number of Member States achieve still modest rates of recycling. Furthermore, available data on packaging indicate an increase in recovery and recycling of packaging waste. -As it is not clear how Member States distinguish between incineration with and without energy recovery, both operations have to be considered together. As regards household waste the mean rate was 23%, with Denmark and Luxembourg reporting rates as high as 58% and 56% respectively. Even with energy recovery though, incineration is generally, according to the hierarchy of principles mentioned above, an inferior option to other waste treatment alternatives further up the waste hierarchy, such asreuse and material recycling. -Despite a decreasing tendency, a good number of Member States continue to rely heavily on landfilling as means of disposing their domestic waste, with the average being 45%. The mean rate of landfilling for hazardous waste is lower (22%) but another 27% in average was reported as ·other treatment·. Most Member States reported that they had attained high degrees of self-sufficiency in terms of waste disposal of around 99%, which essentially restates the position of the previous implementation report for 1995-1997. -As regards waste oils, separate collection is an essential prerequisite for their sound management. The average collection rate has increased compared to the previous period. There is, however, room for improvement as 20% of the waste oils is still illegally dumped or illegally burnt, thus strongly harming the environment. In particular some Member States have to improve significantly their collection rates, setting up more efficient collection systems. The hierarchy of principles for waste oils management · regeneration, combustion and safe destruction/tipping · is still insufficiently implemented. As far as the recovery of waste oils is concerned, the use of waste oils as fuels remains by far the predominant option for the management of waste oils. Regeneration is still very scarce in the EU. In that context, the Commission has launched infringement proceedings against 12 Member States for not giving in practice the priority to regeneration. The main constraints preventing the Member States from giving the priority to regeneration continue to be of an economical nature.