

Waste management: Community strategy

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OBJECTIVE: the Commission communication aims at reviewing the Community waste strategy introduced in 1989 and to adapt it to the requirements of the next five years. It is followed by a draft Council resolution on waste policy. **SUBSTANCE:** the proposed review confirms the following hierarchy of principles established by the strategy document of 1989: 1. prevention of waste; 2. recovery; 3. safe disposal. The implementation of this hierarchy should be guided by considering the best environmental solution taking into account economic and social costs. - As regards prevention: emphasis will be laid on the following measures: promotion of clean technologies and products; reducing the hazardous character of waste; development of technical standards and Community rules limiting the presence of certain dangerous substances in products; promotion of systems for re-use and recycling; promotion of economic instruments capable of influencing waste prevention; development of eco-audit and eco-label schemes; consumer information and education campaigns; - as regards recovery: preference should be given to the recovery of material over energy recovery operations; - as regards final disposal: care should be taken to avoid incineration operations without energy recovery. The Commission will present a new proposal for a Directive which will fix strict requirements for authorizing landfill sites. The new strategy will also propose that the principle of producer responsibility should now be integrated in all measures adopted by the EU under its waste management policy. As regards shipment of waste: the Commission proposes actions designed to encourage cooperation between Member States aimed at further reducing illegal shipments of waste and related criminal activities. Finally, to achieve the targets set, the Commission calls for the employment of the following instruments: regulatory and economic instruments, reliable and comparable waste statistics, waste management plans, implementation of existing legislation, and impartial application of life-cycle analyses and eco-balances.