

Waste Management: combining circular economy with the zero-pollution ambition

Press release

Brussels, 01 June 2021 – In response to the EU’s zero-pollution ambition, FEAD has held a successful online debate on the role waste management can play in combining circular economy and zero-pollution objectives at EU level.

The debate, initiated by FEAD President, **Peter Kurth**, was joined by representatives of the EU institutions: **Luis Carretero Sánchez**, Legal Officer at DG ENV, **Lorenzo Marotti**, Scientific Support Officer at ECHA and **Axel Singhofen**, Advisor to the Greens/EFA. Representatives of FEAD’ company members, **Claudia Mensi** (A2A Ambiente) and **Sebastian Schormann** (REMONDIS Electrorecycling) presented a pragmatic overview on how different policies have and will impact the waste management sector.

Discussions touched upon policy elements essential to realise the objectives of the zero-pollution ambition plan. In particular:

- **how to combine circular economy and zero-pollution objectives:** achieving circularity through increasing recycling targets while meeting net zero “pollutants” in recycles can represent a challenge at this stage. Establishing consistency between recycling targets and rules on chemical substances’ thresholds is crucial to move in the right direction. To this regard, the waste management sector renews its commitment to “quality recycling” and to addressing the issue of recycling waste that contains legacy substances.
- **the need for effective and speedy implementation tools:** the availability of concrete, usable and additional information on products, combined with appropriate and strict eco-design rules, aiming in particular at phasing out hazardous substances from products manufacturing, represent a key success factor to both circular economy and zero-pollution objectives.

In conclusions, participants agreed that achieving sustainable and circular societies, matching both circular economy and zero-pollution ambitions, requires tailored and targeted policies which must be fully implemented all along the life-cycle of products.

In this regard, **FEAD President, Peter Kurth** stressed that:

“For the waste management sector, combining zero-pollution and circular economy ambitions will require striking a balance between companies’ investments and tackling harmful chemicals in products. Consistent efforts all along products life-cycle, from the design of sustainable and recyclable products phasing out harmful substances to their end-of-life, need to be enhanced. Policies putting forward consistent and feasible rules are pivotal”.

FEAD warmly thanks the panelists for their participation and collaboration with FEAD and welcomes the large interest expressed by attendees across Europe.

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