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End of waste criteria and resource efficiency: two ongoing debates closely followed by GEIR in Brussels

On 10 December 2010, marking the deadline for EU Member States to transpose the revised Waste Framework Directive adopted in Brussels in 2008, Mario Mauro, Member of the European Parliament, submitted a question to the European Commission on end of waste criteria. More specifically, the MEP asked about the definition of the end of waste criteria, which determine when a waste ceases to be waste and stops being subject to EU waste legislation. Under the Waste Framework directive, Member States are allowed to develop such criteria, if they are not defined yet at the EU level. This has already been done by Ireland for tyre bales and by the UK for waste lubricating oils (WLO).

Referring specifically to Article 6 of the Waste Framework Directive, Mr. Mauro asked: "Which actions are concretely being taken by the European Commission to ensure that end of waste criteria developed by Member States comply with EU health and environmental standards." Citing the example of end of waste criteria developed by the UK for WLO through a Protocol for Processed Fuel Oils, he said that "scrutiny is needed to ensuring that these national criteria are consistent with other EU environmental legislation, including in terms of harmful emissions to the air, and do not negatively impact public health or the environment".

This question comes at the end of a series of written questions tabled by several MEPs on the issue of end of waste for several waste streams, including Waste Lubricating Oils. On 22 February, the European Commissioner for Environment, Mr. Potocnik, replied to Mr. Mauro's question, highlighting several points:

- The development of harmonised end-of-waste criteria for waste streams of major importance for European recycling markets is one of the priorities of the Commission.
- Ireland withdrew its proposal for end of waste criteria for tyre bales, after the Commission protested on its compliance with EU legislation
- The Commission has, in October 2010, submitted a proposal for a regulation on end-of-waste criteria for iron and steel scrap and aluminium scrap to the Council for adoption. Work on other material streams, such as copper scrap metal, paper, glass and compost from bio-waste treatment is ongoing.
- The European Commission will further inquire the compliance of the UK quality protocol on end of waste criteria for the production and use of processed fuel oil (PFO) from waste lubricating oils with the legal conditions laid down in Article 6 of Directive 2008/98/EC.
- According to Article 6 (1) (d) of the Waste Framework Directive, releasing recovered materials from the scope of waste legislation **shall not lead to overall adverse environmental and human health impacts.**



GEIR

Groupement Européen de l'Industrie de la Régénération - The Re-refining Industry Section of UEIL

Another key issue closely followed by the waste oils re-refining industry in Brussels is Europe's **Resource Efficiency strategy**¹, one of the flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 agenda for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

At the end of February, the European Commission opened a stakeholder consultation on a number of policies to boost resource efficiency in the EU, as it is currently preparing an [action plan](#) for this summer. Stakeholders are being asked to pick the most effective measures to deliver progress, including tax incentives for resource-efficient companies or indicating the resource efficiency of products on labels.

As confirmed during their General Assembly on 11 March 2011, GEIR is willing to resolutely engage with the EU community to show the re-refining industry's contribution to a resource efficient Europe, including through Green Public Procurement and the implementation of the Waste Framework Directive.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/resource-efficient-europe/#>