

# “EU Policy and the National Waste Management Plan in Greece”

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## ABSTRACT

Waste is a growing challenge for national and local governments to pave the way for a sustainable development and resource efficient economies. The European Union's approach to waste management is based on waste hierarchy and the long term aim of its waste policy is to reduce the amounts of waste generated, and where the generation of waste is unavoidable, to promote it as a resource and achieve higher levels of recycling and the safe disposal of waste.

In Greece, there is a considerable potential for improving waste management to make better use of resources, open up new markets, create new jobs, while helping to reach waste legislation targets, reduce the environmental and health impacts and avoid negative impacts at local level due to still high reliance on waste disposal options. Based on 2011 waste data, just in terms of municipal waste alone, 5.6 million tonnes of municipal waste are generated in Greece each year, of which 3.7 million tonnes is biodegradable waste. On average, only 18 % of it is recycled or recovered and the rest goes to landfills, revealing a lack of progress in establishing an adequate waste treatment infrastructure that would increase recycling and recovery rates and divert waste from landfill.

The presentation aims to disseminate to the scientific community, decision makers and stakeholders the revised national waste management plan (NWMP) that is under adoption in Greece, highlighting the key aspects of Greek's policy on municipal waste management till 2020. Taking into account existing knowledge and progress made in Greece, NWMP builds upon the resource efficiency flagship initiative in the Europe 2020 Strategy, the roadmap to a resource efficient Europe and the 7th Environment Action Programme to 2020.

Greek's strategy and planned actions for municipal waste focus, among others, on the establishment of an adequate separate collection network, the full utilisation of available recycling and recovery infrastructure and the creation of valuable synergies with the industry to increase recycling and recovery targets, the integration of extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes, the encouragement of the market for secondary products, including improvements on the data collection system and an in-depth study of economic instruments that would be best suited to move up the waste hierarchy.

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