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SOSTENIBLE
DE LOS RECURSOS

Brussels, 8 July 2011

ACR+ International Seminar on the Interpretation of Life Cycle Thinking in the Waste Management Hierarchy

On 5 – 6 July, ACR+ organised a very interesting workshop with the participation of around 65 experts.

The workshop (sponsored by Holcim Group) focused on the new European waste policy and the implementation of the waste hierarchy in relationship to the concept of 'LIFE CYCLE THINKING.'

At this stage, public authorities and private enterprises make strategic choices for waste treatment on the basis of legal prescriptions which are open to many different (and sometimes inconsistent) interpretations.

In particular, the implementation of "LIFE CYCLE THINKING FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS" should be explicitly set out and defined for the ranking of certain recycling alternatives vis-à-vis other waste treatment processes which combine material and energy recovery options. These would include, for example, co-processing or anaerobic digestion, followed by composting.

The meeting concluded that various non binding tools exist for LCT/LCA applied to waste management options, including Life Cycle Analysis, CO2 balance, Energy Balance, Ecological Footprint, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Social Cost Analysis, etc., that need more harmonization and standardization. Various LCA tools are alike whereby the same parameters and inputs are used but... with different outputs.

It was agreed that proper and accurate data collection and characterization are key for the subsequent steps in the LCT/LCA, that the studied parameters should be brought back to a limited number of key parameters through a sensitivity analysis and translated into easy interpretable data, in order to support decision-making by public authorities.

The LCT/LCA process should also be transparent and involve major stakeholders at key steps in the process. The final analysis should be peer reviewed, against international recognized quality systems (ISO, EMAS), by independent specialists.

To conclude: promoting LCT in the WFD without providing clear guidance and methodologies leaves the door open to misinterpretations and therefore poor or inadequate waste management options.

For **more information** do not hesitate to contact **Mr. Jean-Jacques Dohogne**, at **jjd@acrplus.org** or 0032 2 234 65 09. **Details on this event (including the presentations)** are available on: http://www.acrplus.org/seminar_life_cycle_thinking.