



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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<p style="text-align: center;">PLASTIC BAGS UNDER CONTROL? ACR+ publishes updated report on existing policies worldwide</p>
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[Brussels, 21 February 2008] ACR+, the Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and sustainable Resource management, has published the 2008 update of its report entitled "Plastic Bags - Policies and Practices to Reduce Consumption". The report, first issued in January 2006, looks at existing national initiatives around the world aimed at controlling the use of plastic bags.

Each year every person in a typical industrialised country consumes perhaps 300 plastic bags. If this statistic were applied across the European Union, then one might reasonably conclude that 150 billion bags are distributed each year. There are opposing views on the environmental effects of those bags. On the one hand is the view that bags are at worst a nuisance, while others maintain that they represent a serious environmental and amenity hazard. This results in a variety of policies being implemented around the world.

There has never been such interest by policy-makers in this topic, with many countries introducing charges, taxes and even bans. There have even been examples of people being imprisoned for selling plastic bags! In 2007, the Republic of Ireland increased the plastic bag tax by almost 50 per cent, as an added deterrent to their use. Across the world, local and regional authorities as well as state agencies have started to encourage a public debate on the future of this commodity.

The ACR+ "Plastic Bags - Policies and Practices to Reduce Consumption" report examines the national policy initiatives and tools used in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, the Americas and Australasia to control the use of plastic bags. As such, it has proven to be a useful source of information for policymakers as well as other actors interested in practical and legal aspects of waste management.

The report shows that existing tools focus on the provision of information, infrastructure, legal and economic instruments and that each has a particular application, depending on local circumstances and the level of administration at which the policy initiative takes place.

The 2008 update of the report is available free of charge to ACR+ members and can be purchased at "<http://www.acrplus.org/technical-reports>" (table of contents accessible to all).

*The **Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and sustainable Resource management** (ACR+) is an international network of members who share the common aim of promoting the sustainable consumption of resources and management of waste through prevention at source, reuse and recycling. ACR+ currently has about 90 members, mainly local*



and regional authorities as well as national networks of local authorities representing around 750 municipalities. ACR+ also welcomes other key players in the sustainable resource-product-waste management, such as NGOs, academic institutions or private organisations, as partner members.

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