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HOTSPOT

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Plastic waste in the context of the European Circular Economy Policy

“By 2050, without significant action, our oceans will contain more plastic than fish”, warns a report published by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

Without bringing water into the controversy surrounding the exactitude of this claim, one thing is for sure: more and more plastics end up in the sea. Marine littering is emerging as a global challenge requiring a global response, yet the pollution of world oceans is not the only challenge. Most of the plastic waste in the EU is still landfilled, creating a loss of energy and processed raw material. From the beginning of the 20th century, plastic has become the most common material and as such it is now increasingly clear that a new focused and strategic approach is needed, in particular regarding plastic waste.

This is why, in Europe, many eyes are on the European Commission after it announced, in the new circular economy package, the preparation of a specific strategy concerning plastic waste by 2017. If some hints have already been given within the circular economy package, the bets regarding the content of this strategy are still open. A short overview of the work of the European Institutions and opinions from interested parts could be a showcase for what to include in this strategy.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE:

"Unwrapping the package: towards a circular economy in Europe" conference

MEPs welcome new circular economy proposals but regret weaker waste targets

Publication of a report assessing the separate collection schemes in the 28 capitals of the EU

Adoption of the 2014-2020 cross-border cooperation "Mediterranean Sea Basin" programme

Food waste discussed at the Committee of the Regions

New EEA report shows that circular economy has considerable benefits but challenges remain

