

Separate Collection and Waste Treatment – An EU Project Application in Accordance with the ECOS-Overture Program 1998 – 2001 and the EU Enlargement Beyond 1999 in the Field of Environment

Dipl.-Ing. Peter Gössele (MA), ARGUS, Study Group for Environmental Statistics at the Technical University of Berlin, Germany

Abstract:

The programme ECOS-OVERTURE of the European Union must be seen as a bond between the 15 EU member states of present and in particular with the Central and Eastern European Countries in the region. The programme is set to ease the approximation of the applicant countries to accomplish the structural levels as is prevalent in the EU.

The demonstrated project application proceeding in the field of landfill management depicts the desirable co-operation within different developed regions in Europe within or outside the borders of the Union. The particular example hereunder indicates the importance of an EU-Enlargement towards the east according to the Copenhagen Membership Criteria.

The Idea of the ECOS-OVERTURE Program of the EU

All European countries are having to cope to varying degrees with ever more rapid and mutually reinforcing trends such as the globalisation of the economy, the transition towards an economy based on services and other intangibles, the speed with which the information society is developing, the pressures on the environment, security of supply, high levels of unemployment and increasing attention to equal opportunities.

People involved in local development are trying to respond to all these challenges. The range of know-how available which, because of the diversity of the situations on the ground, has to operate against backgrounds which are themselves culturally and institutionally diverse, has given rise to widely differing working methods and experiences throughout Europe.

Inter-regional co-operation offers a forum for working together where ideas, methods and practices can be compared. All the various parties involved can subject their working methods to review and learn lessons from

partners in other regions which will enrich their own ways of working. In addition, exchanges and co-operation will help to solve problems better and more swiftly. Pilot projects can help to foster the emergence of methods of regional economic development, enabling actors at local level to assume their full responsibilities within a broad partnership.

Such experience makes a useful contribution to economic and democratic transition, particularly in partner countries of Central Europe (CCE). Experience of this kind can also provide a framework which helps towns and regions in the applicant countries to integrate successfully when the European Union comes to be enlarged. Working together is thus both a motor for European integration and a factor in reducing tensions.

The project of Separate Collection and Waste Treatment intends to serve the

- Development of a regional waste management concept by the involved regional authorities in compliance with European as well as national targets for depositing wastes, especially by developing and realising measures to reduce

biodegradable waste (incl. paper) as well as separate collection and recovery of glass, plastics and metals.

- Development of transferable concepts to reduce biodegradable waste and for separate collection of wastes to similar regions based on implemented waste management measures as developed by involved regional authorities.
- Establishing a network between regional authorities serving the illustration and discussion of regional project measures, the mutual information on waste management concepts among the project partners as well as the exchange of experiences and Know-how.

ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN:

Interregional

- Transfer of Know-how and exchange by means of joint seminars
- Execution of specialised training sessions for principal partner Sofia
- scientific supervision for regional measures by principal partner Berlin
- development of transferable concepts from the findings of regional waste management activities
- dissemination of findings

Regional

Niederlausitz (Germany)

- technical-scientific supervision of the mechanical-biological operation in the residual waste treatment plant

Porto (Portugal)

- Performing a domestic waste analysis to acquire planning data
- Performing a pilot scale trial for separate collection of biodegradable and yard waste
- Compilation of a study for separate collection and composting of biodegradable- and yard waste

Community of SOFIA (Bulgaria)

- Compilation of a waste management concept

- Introduction of separate waste collection

EXPECTED RESULTS

Interregional

- Concept for the reduction of biodegradable wastes (incl. paper), plastics, glass and metals, which may be adopted by similar regions
- New discoveries and experiences to supplement the commissions directive on landfills in the context to reduce biodegradable waste in the view of sparsely populated or economically less developed regions
- an enduring network between participating partners for the transfer of know-how

Regional

Niederlausitz (Germany)

- Improving the operation of a mechanical-biological treatment plant for municipal waste
- Availability of a cost-effective method for the disposal of municipal waste
- Basis for assessment of mechanical-biological treatment with regard to the commissions directive on landfills

Porto (Portugal)

- Data on waste management planning according to given objectives
- Concept for a system of separate collection for biodegradable- and yard waste
- Optimising composting methods for the region by comparing alternatives
- Concept for extending the separate collection system for paper, glass, plastics and metals
- Basis for assessment of separate collected biodegradable waste with regard to the commissions directive on landfills

Community Sofia (Bulgaria)

- Data on waste management planning according to given objectives
- Waste management concept as basis for definite waste management measures
- Pilot scale system for separate collection detailing viability for the region

The EU-Enlargement Beyond 1999

The creation of ECOS-OVERTURE for the co-operation within the "New Europe" entails an artificial and constructed component for "development aid" directed at the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEEC's). However, this composition will have to make way for a genuine economic co-operation with the CEEC's in order to enable the applicant countries to restructure and to prepare for full membership (Twinning Program).

According to the Copenhagen membership criteria

- the applicant country must have achieved stability of its institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for the protection of minorities
- it must have a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU
- it must have the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

In addition the Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries

The Opinions

- an assessment against the Copenhagen criteria: a detailed description and analysis of the political and economic situation in each applicant country
- an evaluation of its capacity to adopt and implement the aquis (that is, the rights and obligations deriving from EU treaties and laws) in all areas of the Unions activity
- an indication of possible problems in taking on the aquis
- and a recommendation concerning the opening of negotiations

Conclusion and Recommendation of the Commission

Based on the following conclusions

- none of the candidates fully satisfy all the criteria at the present time
- nine countries satisfy the political conditions
- certain countries have made sufficient progress toward satisfying the economic conditions
- the Commission considers Hungary, Poland, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Cyprus could be in a position to satisfy all the conditions of membership in the medium term

The Commission recommends, the Council to open negotiations with these countries.

But also for the remaining Central and Eastern Europe Countries the structures should as soon as possible be brought to a level with the EU, assisted by the Twinning Programme in order to commence negotiations for full membership to the benefit of all peoples in Europe.

Project-Organisation

Co-ordination and scientific supervision:
Berlin (TU-Berlin/Argus)

Steering committee:
1/2 yearly meetings

Brandenburg

Porto

Sofia

local group:
Authority/Consultant

local group:
Authority/Consultant

local group:
Authority/Consultant

1. Seminar: a) outline of project, b) subject:
Data compilation, planning, waste management plan

1. Phase:
Analysis to optimize
treatment plant

1. Phase:
separate collection
of bio-waste

1. Phase:
planning, waste
management plan

2. Seminar: a) Evaluation of interim results, b) separate
collection schemes, reduction of biodegradable waste

2. Projektphase:
Analysis to optimize
treatment plant

2. Projektphase:
treatment of bio-waste,
cost-benefits analysis

2. Projektphase:
separate waste collection,
cost-benefits analysis

3. Seminar: a) Evaluation of interim results,
b) biological-mechanical treatment
assessment of costs

Evaluation,
final report,
dissemination of results