

Appeal from the health and healthcare sector against the reclassification of incineration in the WFD

11 June 2008

In view of the upcoming vote on the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) we, the undersigned physicians and Associations, would like to ask the plenary of the European Parliament to take into account health considerations when voting in the WFD and therefore **oppose the reclassification of “efficient incineration” as recovery.**

We are concerned the efficiency formula which reclassifies incineration only takes into account energy efficiency considerations and not health or environmental repercussions. The current proposal upgrades incineration, which we believe is the wrong signal to send to the European citizens.

More waste burnt means more man-made toxics in the ecosystems, more fine particles in the air and more bottom ash and fly ash in the ground. We regret that we are going to see the amount of waste being incinerated increasing in the next years which would put even more fellow Europeans under risk.

Moreover, we are sadly surprised that the rapporteur of the Waste Framework Directive, Ms Caroline Jackson, claims that the health effects from incinerators are negligible.(1) Several recent studies of wide samples of population continue to reveal the threat that incinerators pose to human health in Europe and around the world.(2) Ultrafine particles emissions are still not monitored anywhere in Europe, even though the danger these particles pose is well documented.(3)(4)

We are also concerned about the image that the EU is giving to the rest of the world by being a resource-burning economy. We believe the current Waste Framework Directive falls short in ensuring that the waste will be properly separated and making sure the best waste management option will be applied. Progressive recycling targets are needed to redirect waste away from incinerators into cleaner processes.

We therefore ask the European Parliament to reconsider its decision regarding the reclassification of incineration and **stick to its first reading position**, which we believe will do far more to preserve children’s health and the health of future European generations. **We, the undersigned organisations, represent over 33,000 doctors.**

Signed,

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Docteur Jean-Michel Calut

Association Santé Environnement Provence (ASEP), France – representing 400 doctors
Docteur Pierre Souvet

References

- (1) <http://tinyurl.com/657usk>
- (2) 2008 *Etude d'incidence des cancers à proximité des usines d'incinération d'ordures ménagères* [French epidemiological study, 2.5 million people] - Pascal Fabre, Côme Daniau, Sarah Gorla, Perrine de Crouy-Chanel, Pascal Empereur-Bissonnet
- (3) <http://tinyurl.com/5r92mj> (pdf)
- (4) <http://www.noharm.org/details.cfm?ID=1841&type=document>