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,

ISDE International Society of Doctors for the Environment, representing 30,000 doctors worldwide
President Professor C. Vyvyan Howard. MB. ChB. PhD. FRCPath.
Bioimaging Research Group - Centre for Molecular Bioscience University of Ulster - Cromore Road - Coleraine BT52 1SA
Italian physicians and healthcare associations
Dr. J. Andreas von Lutterotti - Ordine dei Medici della Provincia di Bolzano, Italy
Dott. Giuseppe Miserotti - Presidente Ordine dei Medici Piacenza
Dott. Giovanni Ghirgha Pediatria - Portavoce per il Lazio del Coordinamento Nazionale dei Medici per l' Ambiente e la Salute
Dott. Patrizia Gentilini Oncologo Portavoce per l' Emilia Romagna del Coordinamento Nazionale dei Medici per l' Ambiente e la Salute
Dott.ssa Gabriella Filippazzo Igenista Direttivo Nazionale Arcidonna Italia
Dott.ssa Laura Ridolfi Oncologo Forlì
dott Valerio Gennaro Epidemiologo Genova
Dott. Giovanni Vantaggi GP Gubbio
Dott. Giuseppina Abbate Psichiatra Palermo
Dott. Celestino Panizza Medico del Lavoro Brescia
Dott. Michelangiolo Bolognini Igenista Pistoia
Dott Ruggero Ridolfi MD Oncologist, Endocrinologist - Medicina Democratica FB-Franco BORGHI Intn'l Trading & Consulting
Dott.ssa Francesca Cigala Psichiatra Ferrara Medicina Democratica o.n.l.u.s
Dott Michelangiolo Bolognini - Medico Igenista - Piattoia
Mr Jerzy Ziaja – Chairman National Recycling Business Council (OIGR)

ARTAC - Association for Research and Treatments Against Cancer, France
Professor D. Belpomme MD. Oncologist, PhD. Paris.

Collectif des médecins de Clermont Ferrand - Coordination Nationale Médicale Santé Environnement (CNMSE), France - representing 3,000 doctors
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 Goria, Perrine de Crouy-Chanel, Pascal Empereur-Bissonnet
(3) http://tinyurl.com/5r92mj (pdf)
(4) http://www.noharm.org/details.cfm?ID=1841&type=document