

# Cork Environmental Forum

## Position Paper 6 – Priorities for Waste Management in Cork

Waste Management Policy must be based on sustainable development principles. Its priorities should be the reduction of consumption in general and of primary materials in particular. Waste must be viewed and treated as a valuable resource with a continuous lifecycle within the system. The Polluter pays principle and the precautionary principle should be fully implemented in all decisions relating to waste/ resource management



The **hierarchy of priorities** for sustainable development under **Local Agenda / Action 21** is:

1. To reduce overall consumption patterns and waste production.
2. To encourage selective consumption promoting maximum possible use of secondary materials, durability, reparability, and recyclability, buying second-hand, hiring or sharing.
3. To minimise waste generation.
4. To reuse products and materials.
5. To recycle products and materials including composting.
6. To recover energy from waste materials.
7. To dispose safely of waste materials.

**A comprehensive cradle to grave approach should be applied to Resource management whereby:**

- 🌱 Material which cannot be reused should not be produced in Ireland or imported into Ireland
- 🌱 Levies should be imposed on all materials and products at the manufacturing stage to cover the full cost of their disposal
- 🌱 Financial incentives to promote reusable products and discourage non-reusable products should be applied through VAT and similar product taxes.

**National, Regional and Local Development Plans and Development Control should be based upon a coherent national policy and incorporate Resource Management Strategies with specific policies and actions for:**

- 🌱 Adoption of a Zero Waste policy to define a strategy for overall waste reduction
- 🌱 The education of all sectors of the community in eco-friendly lifestyle and practices (1,2,3,4,5,7)
- 🌱 The reduction of all wastes from all sectors to agreed national and international targets (3).
- 🌱 The elimination of litter from the County and coastal waters (3).
- 🌱 The reuse of materials within all sectors (4).
- 🌱 The recycling of materials from all sectors including domestic, commercial, hazardous, light industrial, constructional, agricultural to BATNEC principals (5).

**Sustainable Resource Management in the City, County and Coastal waters requires:**

- 🌱 The provision of a widespread network of waste handling facilities identified in City / County Development Plan and Local Area Plans (5,6,7).
- 🌱 Adequate provision of litter wardens and enforcement of litter laws, e.g. on the spot fines

- 🌱 Proactive and available information and demonstrations about waste facilities for all sectors, such as guidelines for planning developments and local information.
- 🌱 Promotion and encouragement through incentives and support of local Resource Management enterprises and schemes, e.g. domestic and community composting (4,5,6), domestic and commercial design R&D for waste separation facilities
- 🌱 The provision of liquid waste treatment facilities in all Cork towns and villages to ensure and restore water quality to rivers and sea (5,6,7).
- 🌱 The monitoring and upgrading of private septic tank systems and slurry handling facilities to ensure and restore water quality to rivers and sea (5,6,7).
- 🌱 The preparation of Farm Waste / Resource Management Plans to include all agricultural wastes (5,6,7).
- 🌱 All new domestic and commercial development to prepare a Waste / Resource Management Plan as part of any Planning Application (3,4,5,6,7).
- 🌱 An agreed strategy between Cork Corporation, Cork County Council, Dept of the Environment, Heritage & LG., Department of the Marine & NR. and the Harbour Authorities to control coastal and marine litter, debris and pollution to Blue Flag standards for the entire coastline in their jurisdiction.
- 🌱 Full consultation with the community at all stages of the development of waste / Resource Management Plans through proactive discussion as conducted with the local area development plan process

### Targets:

- 🌱 The **elimination of single-use plastic bags from Cork by 1st January 2005**. Replacement of such bags still in current usage to be replaced by recycled paper bags, greaseproof paper and similar environmentally friendly food wrappings.
- 🌱 Comprehensive, convenient, well managed, incentive based Waste Recycling and Disposal facilities and services for each village, town and city / urban areas with a minimal **phased provision by 2007** of:
- 🌱 **Information Boards** with full (updateable) information about all local waste facilities, collection services, nearest civic amenity site, litter fines, contact numbers and space for local notices for items required for reuse e.g. jam jars, cereal boxes for clubs & schools etc. **Comprehensive coverage of Cork City & County by 2006**, outside Community Halls, Libraries, LA. offices etc
- 🌱 **Bring sites per 1,500** population to cater for full recycling of separated domestic waste including: glass, plastics (segregated), batteries, cardboard & paper, cans (beverage & food),
- 🌱 **Civic Amenity Sites within 20 miles radius of all parts of the City and County**, to take of all separated domestic waste as listed under (ii) and in addition waste oil & car batteries and other domestic hazardous waste, used domestic appliances (including items under the WEEE Directive such as computers), cars and similar large items for recycling.
- 🌱 **Additional facilities** for waste oil and car batteries to be established in Local Authority yards & commercial garages (latter through planning process in new applications)
- 🌱 **Flexible, Incentive based** unsorted waste collection and disposal facilities to reflect high costs of non-recycled waste disposal. Inverse weighting system (to increase relative costs) for producers of high volumes of waste. **Tag- Bag scheme to be available by 2006** for all premises with no waste collection service.
- 🌱 **Kerb-side collection of segregated waste in urban areas**
- 🌱 **Comprehensive coverage of litter wardens by 2007** and enforcement of litter laws to include all shopping, recreation and public amenity areas including beaches and roadside dumping.

**Local Area Plans & By-laws** to reduce domestic waste by **60%** and improve ground water quality through housing planning applications and conditions. LA. To require full **waste/Resource management plan for liquid and solid waste products by 2007**:

- 🌱 Local Authorities to adopt a **Zero Waste Policy by 2007** whereby 60% of all municipal waste will be diverted from unsegregated disposal.
- 🌱 By 2007 all Planning applicants to be supplied with an **information leaflet** for guidance about domestic waste and sewage waste systems which promote waste as a resource.
- 🌱 Planning Application to require clear provision for in house **waste segregation and disposal proposals** with plans linked to local facilities.
- 🌱 By 2008 all Sewage waste systems to require the installation of a watertight sealed construction for primary and secondary sewage digestion only (all other domestic 'grey' waste waters to be segregated and collected for garden use where possible). All waste waters to be passed through tertiary treatment e.g. reed bed or similar system to remove toxins including nitrates and monitored on an annual basis.
- 🌱 Comprehensive plan for agricultural wastes and effluents which **monitors discharges to groundwater by 2007** and prevents water pollution through excessive nitrates and harmful microbes

**Local Area Plans & By-Laws** to reduce commercial waste by **60%** LA. to **require all new planning applications for Commercial and Industrial premises by 2007** to include a **comprehensive waste/resource management plan**:

- 🌱 **By 2007 all** planning applicants to be supplied with an **information leaflet** for guidance about Commercial and industrial waste management and effluent and emission waste systems which promote waste as a resource.
- 🌱 **Information and education** of staff about waste minimisation and recycling.
- 🌱 **Minimisation** of waste
- 🌱 Provision for **maximum waste reuse and recycling** in all aspects of the production system, offices and on-site facilities
- 🌱 Facilities for the **return and reuse of packaging** supplied with goods produced or supplied
- 🌱 Use of **environmentally friendly materials** for packaging
- 🌱 Full **effluent and emission management** and monitoring system which implements current BATNEC standards and gives full recognition to **polluter pays principle and precautionary principle**.

**All new and Licensing reviews for landfill waste disposal sites and municipal sewage schemes by 2006** to require comprehensive on site effluent purification systems including tertiary treatment such as reed bed to ensure removal of all bacteriological and chemical toxins from leachate prior to discharge into surface waters and other waterways

**20% reduction of pollution incidents and 20% improvement in water quality** in monitored waterways through comprehensive Enforcement of Water Quality legislation to ensure Water Quality to highest possible EU. Standards as specified for groundwater, drinking water and bathing water.

**Collaborative development through** the enterprise agencies and other business support groups such as **REPAK** together with **Long term Financial Incentives** and support to be made available **immediately** to all enterprises new and established which develop new products and services which promote and waste minimisation, reuse and recycling. Such as

- 🌱 Community composting schemes and services, products in returnable containers (eg.glass milk bottles), products made from waste materials (e.g. Recycled paper products). Flexible financial Incentives to reflect the value to the environment and community of the product or service. For example:

- 🌱 Cork based **glass container commercial producer** which takes in glass from bring sites and produces a range of standard food containers such as milk bottles, condiment jars etc
- 🌱 Cork based **Recycled paper company** to use paper collected from recycling to produce paper products used in high volume such as newsprint, toilet tissue, paper bags, office paper etc.

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*To foster, promote & implement sustainable development within the Cork region*