

PRESS RELEASE

EURELCO wins Interreg Europe project COCOON on landfill management

Houthalen, 11 October 2016

EURELCO is delighted to announce that the Interreg Europe project COCOON on policy of Landfill Management (LfM) was officially approved on the 5th October 2016. This project is coordinated by i-Cleantech Flanders and unites 8 partners from 6 EU regions. With a budget of 1,4 million euro the COCOON partners will improve regional policy on LfM in 6 regions, starting from existing regional legislation, and learn from the best practices and lessons learned in the other regions. Working with a regional stakeholder group on the development of the policy will enhance the implementation of the policy. Following the granting of EU Horizon 2020 [NEW-MINE](#), this is the second flagship EURELCO project, corroborating the increasing attention for (enhanced) landfill management and mining.

A vision for managing Europe's landfills is urgently required according the European Commission

Since the 1950s Europe has been disposing vast levels of waste in landfills. Estimates have revealed that 90% of Europe's 500,000+ landfills are "non-sanitary" landfills, which predate the EU Landfill Directive and have limited environmental protection technologies. The EC has acknowledged that a vision for managing Europe's landfills is urgently required. Landfills are to be considered as dynamic stocks of resources (landfill gas, water, other) that can be integrated into the economy, while landfill management (LfM) supports reclaiming land and avoids astronomic remediation and aftercare costs. Although many EU regions are already implementing LfM, no targeted, specific European LfM legislation currently exists. Nor are existing Waste Management and Soil Protection policies integrated in an overarching circular economy framework.

Develop, integrate and improve six policy instruments

The objective of COCOON is to develop, integrate and improve relevant policy instruments, while increasing subsidies through operational programmes (OPs) for LfM projects. COCOON brings together distinct EU regions to share and capitalise on regional good practices. The six targeted policy instruments include (a) the Soil Remediation Decree in Flanders (BE), the Environmental Protection Act in the Netherlands and (b) funding of LfM projects through the OPs in Andalucia (ES), Brandenburg (DE), Cyprus and Malta.

Economic development opportunities

As a result of LfM projects, the recovery of resources (landfill gas and water first, other resources later), as well as land recovery is increased while future environmental hazards can be avoided. LfM projects generate economic development opportunities; create new (local) jobs, all within the context of an EU-wide transition to a resilient, low-carbon, circular economy. The governments of the partner regions directly benefit from the improved policy. As LfM contributes to a safe

environment and more resource efficiency, other public bodies also benefit from the project, as will companies, knowledge institutes and civilians.

Consortium of COCOON

i-Cleantech Vlaanderen (coordinator, BE); the Department of Environment of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural development and Environment (CY); the Environment and Resources Authority (MT); the Public Waste Agency of Flanders (BE); Rijkswaterstaat – Agency of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (NL); Sanitation Cordoba (ES); the State Office of Environment of the State of Brandenburg (DE); WasteServ Malta Ltd. (MT).

About EURELCO

EURELCO is an open network that supports the required innovation with respect to Enhanced Landfill Mining, thereby contributing to a circular, low-carbon economy. EURELCO has 58 contributing members from 13 EU Member States.

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