

The EU should reaffirm the role of Waste-to-Energy in the circular economy

Brussels, 18 October 2022 - ESWET welcomes the European Commission's 2023 Work Programme and the renewal of the Green Deal's ambitions. The current energy crisis has brought to light the necessity and the urgency of accelerating the energy transition. This requires maximising the use of all clean sources of energy, including the affordable and efficient electricity and heat supplied by Waste-to-Energy.

Indeed, Waste-to-Energy provides reliable, local and partly renewable energy, while playing an important hygienic function by treating non-recyclable municipal waste. This process of using residual waste as a resource not only keeps citizens warm but is also a vital link in the circular economy. The Commission acknowledged this [role of Waste-to-Energy](#) in 2017 but must now reaffirm its commitment to Waste-to-Energy since residual waste generation is continuously increasing.

In light of the above, ESWET appreciates the ambitious initiatives proposed by the European Commission, however stresses the necessity to accelerate the revision of the Waste Framework Directive. Therefore, ESWET calls for:

- Preserving the existing waste hierarchy;
- Recognising the recovery of metals and minerals from bottom ash as recycling;
- Supporting Member States in achieving the landfill reduction target by 2035;
- Fully reinforcing the Polluter-pays principle.

ESWET also welcomes the Critical Raw Materials Act, and highlights that the recycling and recovery of key materials will be crucial to the green transition.

"The full contribution of the Waste-to-Energy sector to the circular economy should be endorsed, as a safe waste treatment solution for non-recyclable materials, a material recovery option, and a source of partly renewable and reliable energy for citizens and businesses." - Said Patrick Clerens, ESWET Secretary-General.

This was reflected in the recent Conference on the Future of Europe¹, which concluded that active support should be given to the expansion of technologies such as Waste-to-Energy.

It is now up to the EU decision makers to act on the citizens' concerns.

Media Contact

María Carbonell
ESWET Communications Officer
m.carbonell@eswet.eu
+32.2.743.29.96

¹ Conference on the Future of Europe, Report on the final outcome, May 2022, Page 172, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/conference-future-europe_en

