Press Release - Madrid, 11 June 2013

Spanish Municipalities pledge support for recycling ‘made in Europe’

The declared commitment of Fuenlabrada town council and of the Association of Municipalities of the Costa del Sol are two good examples to demonstrate that the recent amendment to the Spanish Waste Act, which promotes recycling ‘made in Europe’, is beginning to bear fruit.

Fuenlabrada town council has recently unanimously approved a proposal in which it commits to recycling ‘made in Europe’ and pledges that all the paper and board collected in the town will be recycled in Spanish or European paper mills. Fuenlabrada, with a population of over 200,000, is one of the largest towns in the Greater Madrid area and also has one of the youngest populations of all Spanish cities.

On a similar note, the Association of Municipalities of the Western Costa del Sol has included a pioneer requirement in its new contract for paper and board collection services that the concessionaire delivers all waste paper and board it collects to a paper mill within the European Union and also submits supporting documents to guarantee traceability of that waste. The Association provides services such as separate paper and board collection to almost 460,000 inhabitants in the province of Malaga. It groups eleven town councils from the Costa del Sol, including resorts such as Marbella, Torremolinos, Fuengirola, Benalmadena, Mijas, Estepona...

The possibility of prioritising recycling within the European Union was set down for the first time in Spanish legislation for town councils through the 2011 Waste Act, and in November 2012, an amendment was included in the Law that extends the possibility of championing recycling ‘made in Europe’ to all producers or initial holders of recyclable waste.

Currently in Spain, any large retailer, bank, hotel chain, service company, municipal council... can legally require that the final recycling of its waste materials be carried out in European paper mills. This new legislation shields ‘made in Europe’ recycling and affords Spanish generators the ability to decide on the final destination of their waste.

By developing a European recycling society through such initiatives, the EU Commission estimates that over 400,000 jobs would be created in Europe by 2020.
Six good reasons for prioritising end recycling of waste within the European Union:
1. **Enhancement** of the European recycling industry.
2. Creation of **green employment** in Europe.
3. **Reduction of emissions** associated with transporting waste.
4. Guarantee that recycling meets **European environmental requirements**.
5. Creation of wealth in the same place as the **effort and investment** to recover waste have been made.
6. **Improved transparency and control** in the recycling process, which will lead to greater consumer confidence.

What the Waste Act says:
**Article 16.3:** "With respect to waste that is eligible for recycling, public administrations may articulate mechanisms on a temporary basis to give priority to recycling within the European Union, when justified for environmental reasons."

**New additional provision nº 16:** "Producers or other initial holders of recyclable waste materials may give priority to it being treated completely within the European Union in order to avoid the environmental impact of its transport out of the Union, in accordance with the applicable regulations."

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