



The impact of the European Landfill Directive on waste management strategy and current legislation in Turkey's Specially Protected Areas

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Abstract

The European Landfill Directive (ELD) 99/31/EC has become the most influential piece of waste management legislation to have been produced for some time and calls for reduction of the amount of biodegradable municipal solid waste disposed of to landfill. Moreover, national solid waste strategies need to be changed to achieve increased waste recycling and recovery rates will have to be modified ultimately to meet the targets set in the ELD. This paper outlines the waste management strategy implemented in the Specially Protected Areas (SPAs) in Turkey and gives the key requirements of ELD. On the other hand, it also outlines the adaptation of the Turkish Solid Waste Legislation (TSWL) to ELD and gives comments on the improvement of the TSWL.

This study showed that although the TSWL shares the broad objectives of the ELD and includes corresponding requirements of landfill of waste, it is less detailed; there are fewer specific targets and many of the requirements of the ELD are missing in the TSWL. There is no specific target set for the reduction in biodegradable municipal waste going to landfills. On the other hand deposit schemes and recovery rates are being applied on packaging waste without including strategy with long term targets. TSWL states that 45% of the total amount (by weight) of packaging waste produced should be recovered in 1995. However, Control of Packaging and Packaging Waste Legislation specifies the recovery rates between 2005 and 2014 and prohibits the packaging waste made of paper and carton to be landfilled. The Authority for the Protection of Special Areas (APSA) is responsible for the implementation of solid waste management strategies produced by Ministry of Environment and Forest.

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Implementation of the landfill directive must remain a long-term goal, to be achieved through a succession of incremental steps, in line with economic and institutional development. The improvement in waste management standards can therefore only progress by small incremental steps made in pace with economic development. A quick step change towards the EU standards cannot be achieved. In the short term, the policy should allow to keep a small number of larger landfill sites in operation, and use the resources available to upgrade them with leachate management and other environmental protection systems. As per the realities of Turkey's economy, the construction of new landfill sites, composting or incineration plants should be planned in the long term.

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1. Introduction

Turkey has a unique geographic position at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. The country covers 779,452 km². Turkey's 8333 km coastline extends along the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmara, the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. According to the UN population growth projections, the population of Turkey is expected to reach 92 million in 2025.

Turkish Statistical Institute has been collecting data on waste by applying annual surveys to industrial establishments and municipalities. Municipal waste statistics survey is being conducted in all municipalities annually since 1994. Table 1 summarizes the waste situation in Turkey between 1994 and 2004 (TURKSTAT, 2005) and Table 2 gives the disposal methods for municipal solid waste in Turkey (TURKSTAT, 2004). As Table 1 shows, the amount of solid waste collected in 2004 was 25,014,000 tonnes/year whereas, the amount of solid waste disposed to sanitary landfill, composted and incinerated were 7,002,000, 351,000 and 8000 tonnes/year, respectively. These figures clearly show that 17,653,000 tonnes/year of waste was disposed without any control.

Turkey has gone through great evolution over the last 20 years in creating mechanisms to tackle its environmental problems. An Environmental Act was implemented in 1983 (Resmi Gazete, 1983), the Ministry of Environment was established in 1991 and public awareness and demand for a clean environment is now growing. The Environmental Act introduces the polluter pays principle, describes activities to avoid and solve environmental problems and identifies the zones to be declared as Specially Protected Areas (SPAs).

SPAs are areas that have an international ecological importance because of their historical, natural and cultural values. These areas have been declared pursuant to Article 9 of the Environmental Act and the addendum protocol to the Barcelona Convention (protocol concerning protected areas in the Mediterranean) to ensure sustainable conservation and use for future generations. Fourteen SPAs were declared by decree of the Turkish Cabinet of Ministers. SPAs are also protected by a large number of other existing nature conservation designations like the RAMSAR Convention, the Washington Convention CITES, the Bern Convention and the Barcelona Convention (MoEF, 1998).

The Authority for the Protection of Special Areas (APSA) is a part of the Ministry of Environment and Forest and is responsible for the management, planning and protection of

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