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ASSOCIATION
OF CITIES
AND REGIONS
FOR RECYCLING
AND SUSTAINABLE
RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

ASSOCIATION
DES CITÉS
ET RÉGIONS POUR
LE RECYCLAGE
ET LA GESTION
DURABLE
DES RESSOURCES

ASOCIACIÓN
DE CIUDADES
Y REGIONES PARA
EL RECICLAJE
Y LA GESTIÓN
SOSTENIBLE
DE LOS RECURSOS

ACR+ WORK PROGRAMME 2010-2011

Introduction

The ACR+ work programme for the upcoming 2 years is in line with the founding philosophy of the association: to increase the expertise of local and regional authorities on the subject of waste management through the diverse exchange of information and experiences.

Besides, some follow-up actions aimed at protecting shared interests will also be pursued in the context of future developments at European level, in particular in the area of electrical and electric waste management as well as the area of organic waste management.

The proposed work programme corresponds to the ideal of a necessary multi disciplined approached to the topic of waste: the aim is for a balance between the legal, technical, economical and educational aspects.

In addition, ACR+ seeks to strengthen its positioning on “resource – product - waste” cycle by an even more systematic integration into its work of the connection between the preservation and scarcity of material and energy resources, sustainable production and consumption, climate change and waste prevention/management.

As well as the development and strengthening of our services to permanent members of the association (section 3), we can combine this work programme based on 2 large axes:

- the optimisation of waste reduction at source (section 1)
- the optimisation of waste collection and treatment processes (section 2).

15 years of the ACR+

2009 is the 15th anniversary of the Association. In order to mark this occasion the ACR+ image was modernised with a new visual identity and set of promotional tools. The ACR+ is also publishing an important reference work based on its 15 years of experience. Entitled “Municipal Waste in Europe – Towards a European Recycling Society”, the book, published by Victoires Editions, is available since the end of September in both English and French. Each member is entitled to a free copy.

Three prestigious events were organised to launch the book, in Brussels (15 September 2009), Paris (29 September 2009) and London (30 November 2009).



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SECTION 1: OPTIMISING WASTE REDUCTION AND PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

It has become a widely accepted truth that: the best waste is that not produced. The priority of waste prevention has been the heart of the ACR+ since its founding.

As a result, a large number of activities that promote the optimisation of waste reduction have been scheduled for 2009-2011. In fact, the problem is occurring increasingly upstream of the “resource – product – waste” cycle, leading to the opening of a new domain for the ACR+: consumption (and distribution) and behavioural changes.

1.1. European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR)

ACR+ has been charged, via a LIFE+ project, with developing the EWWR concept and organising 3 editions in 2009, 2010 and 2011. This activity covers a large number of tasks and is conducted in cooperation with ADEME (French Agency for the Environment) and certain other ACR+ members (in particular ARC, LIPOR, IBGE).

21 public bodies at both regional and national level have already signed up to organise a European Week for Waste Reduction in their area in 2009.

The ACR+ assumes the role of technical Secretariat for the EWWR, in particular providing support to the organisers, communication, web site management and the organisation of the competition for the European Waste Reduction awards.

Other project events include:

- 24 and 25 November 2009: international conference on waste reduction in Girona (Catalonia).
- 15 March 2010, (and continuing in 2011 and 2012): awards ceremony for the “European waste reduction awards” in Brussels.
- June 2010 (to be confirmed): European training on the theme of waste reduction in Porto.

Finally, during the project (in 2011), ACR+ will publish a guide on best practices on the subject of waste prevention awareness-raising.

1.2. Guide on quantitative benchmarks for waste prevention

A new ACR+ guide (largely based on the “prevention clusters” which took place between 2007 and 2009) was published in November 2009 on the question of quantitative references on the subject of waste reduction.



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1.3. Sustainable consumption

The problem of waste reduction logically leads to concerns over the product policy, their production, their distribution and their consumption. On this subject it has been suggested to develop the expertise of the ACR+ in the field of the promotion of eco-products and the manner of communicating with citizens in order to promote responsible consumption. This links in with the European strategy for sustainable consumption and production (SCP) launched in July 2008.

So with the financial intervention of the Walloon Region (Belgium), the ACR+ will analyse the awareness raising strategies on sustainable consumption in the area of distribution (supermarkets) in Europe and will contribute in organising a dialogue between public authorities and distribution actors and sustainable consumption.

In this context, a technical seminar will take place at the beginning of June 2010 in Namur.

In addition, it is proposed to schedule an international conference in 2010 or 2011 on the theme of classification of products in line with environmental problems (energy and climate) and with improvement of sorting performance.

Complementing this, the ACR+ is involved as a partner of the Life+ pilot project by the autonomous Valencia Community (Spain) on the subject of "Green Commerce". This project shall begin January 2010 and finish end September 2012. It aims to mobilise the commercial sector on environmental objectives by making a series of tools available. The ACR+ essentially occupies a role of summarizing and disseminating results.

Finally, it is envisaged that a report will be produced in 2011 by the Secretariat on the question of new life styles integrating the importance of waste reduction.

1.4. Indicators and methodology for monitoring prevention

The ACR+ must pursue its efforts in putting together the technical tools to help set prevention targets and their monitoring.

In the context of the "-kg" Campaign and with the intention of carrying out the monitoring, the ACR+ has become involved in many European projects that were introduced in 2008, with the goal of securing European financial cooperation. Most of these projects are piloted by ACR+ members. The Life+ project MINIWASTE (elaboration of a waste reduction management tool and demonstration actions for organic waste reduction) piloted by Rennes-Métropole (France) had thus been approved and will be launched in January 2010 (lasting 3 years). It aims to put together management tools and monitor waste prevention actions at local level. It will rely on demonstration projects of organic waste prevention.

An Interreg IVC (PREWASTE) project has also been introduced by the Marche Region (Italy) in direct connection with the work of the prevention clusters and centred on establishing indicators and tools for the monitoring of prevention plans. The project has been approved and is due to start in March 2010.



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1.5. Waste prevention and the fight against climate change

Waste reduction and the promotion of sustainable consumption is an important factor for policies concerning the reduction of greenhouse gases. In this regard, it has been proposed to collect information in order to more systematically incorporate this aspect into the work of the ACR+.

The ACR+ is also a partner in the European LG Action project (Local Governments Action for Climate Change <http://www.lg-action.eu/>, June 2009 to December 2011), which is financed by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness & Innovation (EACI); and that aims to involve governments in the fight against climate change and the pursuit of the Kyoto Protocol objectives. In this project the ACR+ will contribute by providing expertise on the specific topics of waste and sustainable consumption.

1.6. Other activities related to waste prevention

Following the “- kg” Campaign and the guide “Quantitative Benchmarks for Waste Prevention” (see supra), a special section will be created on the ACR+ website that will list the waste reduction actions being led by different European actors and the quantitative results obtained.

In addition, the ACR+ remains a partner in the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign, together with the main European towns and regions networks. In this regard, the ACR+ is involved in the preparation and organisation of a large conference, “Delivering sustainable cities – the local leadership challenge”, in Dunkirk from 18 till 21 May 2010. This includes a session on responsible consumption and waste reduction in urban zones.



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Section 2: OPTIMISING THE COLLECTION AND TREATMENT OF WASTE

The major challenge in terms of waste is the objective of a “European recycling society”. In this perspective and in particular in the context of the new framework directive and the economic crisis, it is important to lean towards the general questions (organisation and performance of waste treatment selective collection, putting in place European obligations, financial mechanisms) as well as questions concerning certain waste flows (WEEE, sludge, bulky waste, plastic wastes, medical waste).

2.1. Organisation of waste collection and recovery

The diverse forms of selective collection organisation coupled with the aspects of European recycling politics formed the topic of the international conference organised in Malta from 7 till 9 October 2009.

The debate on the material and energy recovery of waste has become a first priority again, notably in connection with the problem of CO₂ emissions and the need to opt for new energy sources.

In this context, it is interesting for ACR+ to look at the impact of different collection and treatment alternatives on greenhouse gas emissions, on energy consumption, and on primary material consumption:

- in the context of the partnership with Holcim, a seminar was organised on the optimal recovery of material and energy resources in December 2009 in Turin. A first report on the subject will be drawn up by the Secretariat and a second seminar will be organised in May 2010 (in Seville, tbc) focusing on residual waste fraction and sludge.
- the impact of these different waste management actions in terms of greenhouse gases emissions will be addressed, notably in connection with Lipor’s work on the subject (carbon analysis report on waste management activities and comparisons of collection and treatment alternatives). It is envisaged to publish a report.

Finally, under the Belgian Presidency of the EU, IBGE will organise, alongside the ACR+, a seminar on the promotion tools for recycling in connection with the objectives of the Directive. The seminar will primarily deal with the instruments of Producer Responsibility, the evolution of green dot and waste sorting instructions, as well as the possible use of the green certificates system in the domain of recycling.

2.2. European observatory on municipal waste management

The collection of quantitative data concerning waste management at local and regional level in Europe has always been considered a base principal of the ACR+. Different studies have already been carried out on this subject, most notably on performances and costs.

The subject is complex but the problem of quantitative recycling targets is going to generate a renewed interest, in particular due to the new waste framework directive.

As a result the ACR+ seeks to (re)develop a genuine international observatory on performance in terms of selective collection and recycling for the main municipal waste flows. A call will be issued to bring together cities and regions in order to work in this area on the occasion of the September 2010 conference organised by the ORDIF (see 2.3). A publication would be envisaged in 2011.



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2.3. International conference on recycling targets and performance

An international conference, co-organised with ORDIF, is planned for the 15 and 16 September 2010 in Paris on the quantitative targets and performances of recycling.

The conference will aim to:

- Improve available knowledge on current statistics relating to municipal waste.
- List the current methods of data collection by comparing the experience of international statistics organisations, professional federations, and municipal actors.
- Clarify the future European debate on recycling objectives and also guide the evaluation processes of the thematic strategy for recycling.
- Assess the possibility and identify the main ideas for the establishment of a European observatory project.

It is important to note that the 2010 General Assembly of the ACR+ will take place alongside this conference.

2.4. Training sessions on the new waste framework directive

ACR+ Secretariat has submitted a project proposal to the European Commission. It aims at organising training seminars (combined with study visits) in order to support the implementation of the new Waste Framework Directive.

Coupled with this, the ACR+ is regularly contacted to act as an expert for missions in support of the implementation of European regulation. Those requests are assessed on a case by case basis in function of the workload.

2.5. Financing mechanisms for waste management

The « Pay-as-you-throw » systems for covering the waste management costs have already been studied by ACR+ a few years ago. A new updated report by the Secretariat could be planned in 2010 or 2011.

In addition, ACR+ has begun research work on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes, namely on specific waste flows like paper, textile, oils, WEEE, etc. It is proposed to pursue this work and to make it available for the members in a synthetic form.



2.6 Management of specific waste flows

2.6.1. Waste from Electric and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

The WEEE-PIN working group (chaired by Interafval and Amorce) will continue to follow the European policy developments in that field. The work (meetings, position papers) of the WEEE-PIN will be organized around the following preoccupations:

- following the developments around the new Directive proposal
- promoting the social economy sector (in partnership with RREUSE)
- controlling EEE or WEEE exports

2.6.2. Bio-waste

ACR+ intends to closely follow the progress of the European policy with regard to bio-waste, especially the follow-up of the Green Paper published by the EC and the related impact assessment study.

ACR+ will continue to defend the principle of a specific directive and, more practically, will continue to collect information on all European questions related to the management of this specific flow.

2.6.3. Sewage sludges

It is proposed to open a new working theme about the complex management of sewage sludge. The revision of the applicable norms is about to emerge on the European agenda. In addition, this issue is closely linked to the question of bio-waste treatment. It is proposed to organize an international conference on sewage sludge management in Budapest during the 1st semester 2011 (under Hungarian Presidency of the EU).

2.6.4. Plastic waste

Plastic waste recycling remains a complex issue. ACR+ could suitably update (with the support of a sponsor) its guide on municipal plastic waste management.

2.6.5. Bulky waste

At the limit between reuse and recycling, the interest for the topic of bulky waste management is increasing for local and regional authorities. The collection modalities, the financing, the issue of downstream markets and processes, along with links with employment and social economic policies, plead for its inclusion in the work programme for the coming years. The main outputs would be some technical reports on the topic as well as the potential submission of an Interreg project proposal on reuse centers in collaboration with RREUSE network.

2.6.6. Construction and demolition waste

EPE (European Partners for the Environment), together with the VROM (Dutch Ministry of Environment), the Wuppertal Institute and a range of other European organisations, propose that we join their work on this flow as an example for elaborating a global reflection based on the material chain approach.



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SECTION 3: Permanent Services to ACR+ Members

3.1. Information services and networking

ACR+ strives to pursue and strengthen the constant dissemination of technical information to its members:

- via the e-newsletter ACR+ Newslite
- via the Warmer Bulletin magazine
- via the website and in particular the restricted “members area”. The website will be modernised in order to integrate the new visual identity and to make available new functions to the user.

The consideration of new means of meeting, more sustainable, will be sought.

The ACR+ will also pursue the preparation and search for finances for setting up educational programs and new European projects, in connection with its members.

Finally, the consolidating of existing members, increase of new members and the geographical expansion throughout the 27 country EU will remain a daily challenge for the team.

3.2. Specific support to southern cities and regions

ACR+ will continue its efforts of developing its activities in connection with towns and regions from the south and east of the Mediterranean area. The following aims are:

- strengthening of public authority capabilities with regard to waste management and sustainable life styles
- exchange of information and expertise concerning solutions adapted to local technical, legal and financial contexts.

The main planned activities in this area are:

- publication integrating the work of the ACR+ on waste management at Maghreb (principally based on the seminars organised in 2008-2009 in Rabat, Mahdia and Sousse in the SHAMS project framework).
- project GODEM (Optimised Waste Management in the Mediterranean) piloted by the Brussels-Capital Region and co-funded by the EC.
- ACR+ has also become a member of the multidisciplinary consortium chosen in the context of the Horizon 2020 programme, established by DG Aidco with the aim of strengthening capacities in Mediterranean countries.