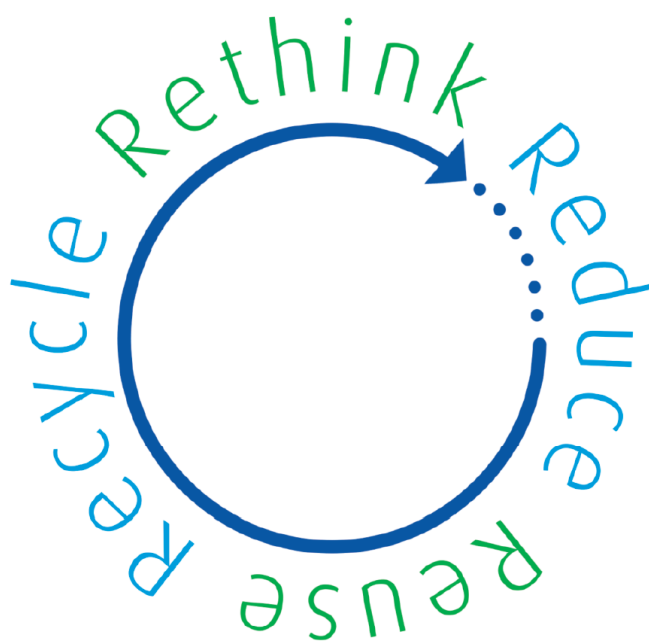




ACR+

ACTIVITY REPORT 2014



JANUARY - DECEMBER 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This report covers the period from January 2014 to December 2014. It intends to summarize the activities promoted by ACR+ during this year. There were organised around the following axis:



This year, ACR+ activities were based around 5 pillars:

1. Public Awareness and Communication Tools
2. Technical Tools (data collection)
3. Legal and Economic Instrument
4. North-South-South Cooperation
5. Permanent Services to our Members

At the end of 2014, another axis was added to our activities: **Strategy and planning**. It was embodied by the launch of the « Circular Europe Network », a multi-stakeholder working group aiming to help local and regional authorities to develop circular economy strategies within their territories.

1. AWARENESS & COMMUNICATION TOOLS

When it comes to sustainable resource/waste management, public awareness and communication are central instruments, especially in terms of prevention.

The first semester of 2014 marked the 20 years anniversary of ACR+ activities.

On the occasion, a two-day conference, entitled “Towards a circular economy” was organised in Rome. This event gathered nearly 200 people. The first day was centred around the European Week for Waste Reduction (awards ceremony and seminar on communication tools regarding sustainable resource management). The second day was devoted to a round-table which endorsed and deepened the zero waste and circular economy concepts. They were illustrated with concrete examples given by different stakeholders (local authorities, European Commission and private sectors representatives).

The conference was followed by ACR+ General Assembly, and for this occasion, the book “ACR+20 - 20 years of multi-R approach”, was presented. It recounts the history, the vision and the activities of the Association during the last 20 years. This vision includes the multi-R approach into the concept of circular economy. During this Assembly, it was also decided to create a working group aiming to help members in elaborating a circular economy strategy within their jurisdictions. The first meeting of this work group was held in Brussels, on 4th November 2014. All documents relatives to this event (new vision, work document and terms of references) are available on ACR+ website.

1.1 The European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR)



In July 2013, ACR+ received the mission, via a LIFE+ project, to develop the concept and coordinate the EWWR at a European level until 2016. This project, in cooperation with several members of ACR+, covers a great number of tasks notably the organisation, for the first edition in 2014, of a “European Clean-Up Day”. ACR+ assumes the role of technical Secretariat for the EWWR by providing support to the organisers, coordinating the communication, updating the website, as well as selecting actions in Europe and organising the EWWR Awards for the best actions.

ACR+ pursues its intensive promotion of the project in order to increase the participation of all the countries and regions of the European Union and to improve the visibility of the participants’ actions. ACR+’s main goal is to ensure the durability of the EWWR. It is therefore important to study the means to make this project durable (i.e. to ensure its renewal) as well as new financing opportunities.

This project is not only a way to attract the public and other participants’ attention on sustainable waste management during a week, but also to act as a lever for the emergence of a real community of actors in the field of sustainable resource management and the exchange of information through the dissemination of good practices, communication tools, data, etc.

The 2013 EWWR Awards ceremony was held in Rome on 22 May 2014, during which two Brussels-based actions were rewarded by an independent jury.



A few days before, on 10 May 2014, the “European Clean-Up Day” took place all across Europe, with the wide support of the European commissioner for the environment, Mr J. Potocnick.

A webinar dedicated to the “European Clean-Up Day” was organised by ACR+ on 1st April. Participants had the opportunity to discover in details the methodology and achievement of the Let’s Clean-Up Europe (LCUE) and the stakeholders involvement in the project.

ACR+ actively participated in the 2014 edition of the “Green Week”. The Association ran a stand, which was visited by the Commissioner, participated in two sessions as speaker and chaired the session on good practices following “Let’s Clean-Up Europe”.

It should also be noted that the project received the award for “Best of the Best” Life+ project 2013 at a ceremony held during the Green Week.

The 2014 edition of the EWWR took place from 22nd to 30th November 2014 and once again it achieved a great success with more than 12.000 actions indexed in 23 countries of the European Union.

During the year, a new website and communication tools were developed in collaboration with the other projects partners.

- For more information, you can consult the project website: www.ewwr.eu
- ACR+ contact: Lisa Labriga (ll@acrplus.org)

2. TECHNICAL TOOLS (DATA COLLECTION)

During this year, ACR+ has intensified its efforts to analyse, compare and promote the best practices relative to selective collection, alternative treatments techniques, financial schemes and how to optimize costs, as well as addressing questions concerning certain waste flows like WEEE, glass or bulky waste.

2.1 Online database of quantitative benchmarks for municipal waste prevention.

ACR+ online database for municipal waste prevention is intended for local and regional authorities who support the new Waste Framework Directive and was specifically developed for this purpose. This database is available exclusively to ACR+ members. It is updated and expanded regularly in order to incorporate more study cases (as of the start of 2014, 6 news cases were registered) and more quantitative data on targets and results indicators.

- To access this service, consult the webpage for [ACR+ database](#)
- ACR+ contact: Philippe Micheaux Naudet (pmn@acrplus.org)

2.2 European observatory on municipal waste recycling performances



The collection of quantitative data concerning waste management at local and regional levels in Europe, and specifically the causal links between performances and good practices and techniques regarding waste management, was always one of the foundations of ACR+ activities.

The subject is complex but a high interest has been shown for the identification of quantitative recycling targets and best practices, particularly since the setting of new municipal waste recycling targets (50% by 2020) with the new Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC.

ACR+ has, therefore, decided to launch a **European Observatory of municipal waste recycling performances**. The Observatory focuses firstly on the analysis of recycling performances across Europe and then, evolve under the control of ACR+ secretariat and with the partnership of waste management experts. The observatory also acts as a platform to share experiences and good practices among cities, in order to improve recycling rates, communication between citizens and reduce environmental impacts (including climate change) and financial impacts.

The 4th meeting of the Observatory working group was held on 2 December 2013 in Tallinn around the topic of household/assimilated waste, bulky waste and selective collection using the R4R project methodology. It was then followed by another meeting on 13 May in Graz, Austria.

Along this working group, an important research work was carried out during the first semester of 2014. It aimed to produce a benchmark of waste management performances in 28 European capitals. Ultimately, the data for only 18 capitals were approved and published in September ("EU Capital cities waste performances benchmark").

- For more information, you can consult the [European Observatory](#) page
- ACR+ contact: Philippe Micheaux Naudet (pmn@acrplus.org)

2.3 Regions for Recycling (R4R)



Launched in January 2012 as a complement to the work done by ACR+ Observatory of Municipal Waste Performances, Regions for Recycling (R4R) has reached, in 2014, its last year of implementation. This project aimed to enable its partners to improve their recycling performance through consistent comparisons and exchange of good practices. R4R was co-financed by the European Development Fund's (ERDF) INTERREG IVC programme.

As one of the lead partners, in charge of the communication and dissemination of the results, ACR+ has provided its expertise for the promotion, particularly with the Observatory, of the data collection methodology and comparison for this project.

In accordance with the necessity to use a common method for the data shared between partners, R4R has published in February 2014, the results of a first data comparison through analysis provided by the 4 groups of partners.

Besides those activities, a conference was held in Graz on 14 May 2014 where the first results and methodology were presented and discussed. For the purpose of promoting this methodology and ensuring a better practical application, a work meeting was organised the next day, also in Graz.

R4R also developed an online tool, the « R4R online tool », available since June 2014. This new tool aims to provide a joint platform to share and compare data on waste and performance in relation to local tools. The online tool also gives access to a database where good practices are gathered and can be shared as inspiring material.

On 23 October 2014, the final conference for this project was held in Sofia. This conference created the opportunity to present the results of this 3-year projects, in particular the good practices shared between partners, including ACR+ members. The DREC tool and methodology were also presented and widely disseminated within the ACR+ network, as its secretary aims to keep up the work around data comparison using this type of harmonised approach.

- For more information, you can consult the website: www.regions4recycling.eu
- ACR+ contact: Philippe Micheaux Naudet (pmn@acrplus.org)

2.4 NEWAPP Project



The NEWAPP project (New Technological Applications for wet biomass waste stream) started in November 2013 and will end in April 2016. Under the coordination of "The European Biomass Industry Association" (BE), 7 partners, including ACR+, work together: BVSE Federal Association on Secondary Raw Materials and Recycling (DE), INGELIA S.L (ES), Terra Preta GmbH (DE), Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Cientificas – Csic (ES), Technical University of Denmark (DK), Technology Transfer Centre Bremerhaven (TTZ) (DE).

The project aims to develop an alternative cost and resource-efficient and environmentally sound way of dealing with wet biomass waste through HTC (HydroThermal Carbonisation) technology. As a partner, ACR+ helps with the dissemination of results and finding concrete application possibilities with its members.

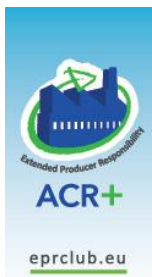
- For more information: <http://newapp-project.eu>
- ACR+ contact: Lisa Labriga (ll@acrplus.org)

3. LEGAL AND ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS

Legal and economic instruments are important tools to build policies aiming to promote sustainable and responsible behaviours to public and private sectors, along with citizens-consumers.

During the first semester of 2014, ACR+ has focused on highlighting the importance of economic instruments for the implementation of waste reduction policies. It has also analysed the situation in a European context regarding the use of economical tools such as taxes, extended producer responsibility (EPR) and Pay As You Throw (PAYT) through research work and participation in different working groups and conferences.

3.1 ACR+ European EPR Club



The concept of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is at the core of the European waste and resources policies, especially in the context of the circular economy. There are many initiatives in the different Member States concerning new waste flows (textiles, paper, furniture, oils, medicines, etc.). There are also significant variations and interesting debates concerning the existing schemes (packaging, WEEE, batteries, etc.).

In 2013, the European Commission has tried to understand the reasoning behind the different existing systems in Europe and has eventually proposed a modification of the directive 2008/98/CE in order to have minimum common legal requirements within the 28 (cf. proposal to amend the framework directive). ACR+, through the EPR Club*, has contributed to this effort by regularly organising exchanges of views between stakeholders of the value chain. ACR+ has also organised two lunch debates and provided the club website with background documents and different stakeholders' views.

*As a reminder, in June 2012, with the support of several of its member, ACR+ has launched the European EPR Club. It is a platform for exchange and debate on Extended Producer Responsibility.

Several lunch debates were organised in 2014:

- On 26 February, in collaboration with Municipal Waste Europe, on the role of communication in the context of EPR
- On 13 May, in the frame of the Green Week 2014, DSD and ACR+ organised a lunch debate on "Effective cooperation for a resource-efficient circular economy: Introduction of the recycling bin in Germany"
- On 25 September, in collaboration with Sita, on cost coverage by EPR schemes

Moreover, an international conference was held in Paris on 21 November 2014, in collaboration with Rudologia and the French Circular Economy Institute. It was entitled "Towards a circular economy: Should EPR re-invent itself?" and gathered around 200 participants.

Lastly, in February 2014, with the support of some of its Club members, ACR+ submitted an application to the European Commission to get the EPR Club recognize as "Raw Material Commitment" and received a positive decision at the end of March. This acknowledgement represents a form of labelling from the Commission which should enable the EPR Club to obtain European funds more easily in the future, within the frame of the Horizon 2020 research programme.

It should also be noted that in 2014, the EPR Club has gained new members, such as Ikea and recently EXPRA.

- More information on www.eprclub.eu
- ACR+ contact: Françoise Bonnet (fb@acrplus.org) and Lisa Labriga (ll@acrplus.org)

3.2 LIFE SMART WASTE project

June 2014 has seen the beginning of the LIFE SMART project. This 5-year project (ending in May 2019) is coordinated by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), in collaboration with Bruxelles Environnement and Natural Resources Wales (UK). The duration is five years and intends to tackle the issue of illegal waste activities, in an innovative way by:

- Developing innovative intelligence gathering and analytical approaches to identify and understand significant waste crimes issues (current and future), associated with challenging waste streams, problem waste operators and illegal waste activities.
- Targeting environmental, social and economic problems created by illegal waste activities
- Analysing and reporting on the difficulties that enforcement agencies face in identifying, understanding and tackling waste crimes.
- Developing new ways of working to ultimately reduce the impacts of waste crimes among Members States.

ACR+ is in charge of the global dissemination of this project and its results.

- For more information: www.TBC.sepa.org.uk
- ACR+ contact: Philippe Micheaux Naudet (pmn@acrplus.org)

4. NORTH-SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

In 2014, ACR+ continued its efforts towards the development of the network with cities and regions from the South and East of the Mediterranean area, with the following objectives:

- Reinforcing capacity building of public authorities regarding waste management and sustainable lifestyles
- Exchanging information and expertise to come up with solutions adapted to technical, legal and financial local contexts
- Building dynamic North-South and South-South partnerships amongst Mediterranean ACR+ Members

ACR+ also continued to develop thematic working groups on the integration of the informal sector in cooperation with local authorities and NGOs, such as the one organised in Rabat (Morocco), on 16 and 17 January 2014.

The main actions undertaken in this field are included in the frame of the European project Horizon 2020, in which ACR+ is a partner.

4.1 Horizon 2020 Capacity building programme and trainings

Horizon2020

The « Horizon 2020 Capacity building programme » was a project funded by European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI). Within this project, ACR+ was the key thematic expert for waste management. It ended in October 2014.

The following trainings were provided in 2014:

- Technical training on legal and institutional aspects, technology, financing, cost recovery systems, maintenance and monitoring (4-5 March 2014 in Beirut, Lebanon)
 - Waste-to-energy and strategic approaches on solid waste management options in Egypt as a follow up of the study visit in Belgium and the Netherlands (28-29 April 2014 in, Cairo, Egypt)
 - “Supporting the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on marine litter management in the Mediterranean sea (13-15 May in Athens, Greece)
 - ‘Waste-to-Energy’ consultation with all key stakeholders including local communities, NGOs and the media to raise awareness (27-28 May in Beirut, Lebanon)
 - Landfilling, composting and recycling for coastal local authorities and other actors (8- 12 June 2014, in Algiers, Algeria)
 - Cost & cost recovery of municipal waste management (14-16 October, Athens ; Greece)
- For more information, please consult the website www.h2020.net or www.acrplus.org
 - ACR+ contact: Jean-Jacques Dohogne (jjd@acrplus.org)

4.2 Project of creating a resource/waste management education centre and an eco-centre for the informal sector (cooperative annajah) in Rabat

This project, funded by Brussels region, within the frame of its bilateral cooperation with Rabat region, aims to set up a resource/waste management educational centre for all audiences. It also aims to set up an eco-centre for the informal sector in the region in order to fully integrate them as stakeholders in the resource/waste management value chain.

In 2014, with ACR+ help, a business plan was developed for the eco-centre.

The education centre, which will include a didactic experience with exhibit display and video room, will be inaugurated on 12 June 2015.

- For more information, please consult the website www.h2020.net or www.acrplus.org
- ACR+ contact: Jean-Jacques Dohogne (jjd@acrplus.org)

5. PERMANENT SERVICES TO OUR MEMBERS

5.1 Communication and networking

ACR+ continued to monitor closely the evolutions in European resource and waste management policies in order to analyse the impacts on local and regional authorities and inform its members of the changes to come. ACR+ also follows its members' activities and participate in several international conferences as a partner or Associate Partner – as for the “1st Capitalisation Event” of the SCOW Project on 12 June 2014 in Israel – to provide its members with the most comprehensive and updated service. Besides, the association is a key actor to defend the specificities of local and regional authorities to the European institutions.

ACR+ tried to reinforce the dissemination of technical information to its members via:

- **Events and working groups** on specific topics
- **Technical reports** in which ACR+ members are partners: January 2014 report “Management options for 6 composting strategies” and September 2014 report “The EU capital cities waste management benchmark”, available for free for ACR+ members and on demand for non-members
- An enriched “**ACR+ weekly Newslines**”
- **ACR+ website**, and especially the members' space
- Three-monthly information letter “**ACR+ Update**”
- **ACR+ webinars**: a simple and efficient mean to create a virtual meeting space to provide trainings and circulate information on ACR+ projects
- **ACR+ Virtual Library**, available to all members and in the case of some publications to the general public



- ACR + contact: Françoise Bonnet (fb@acrplus.org)



6. STRATEGY & PLANNING: THE CIRCULAR EUROPE NETWORK

During its 2014 General Assembly, a new vision for ACR+ was adopted. It was also decided to set up a working group aiming to help local and regional authorities to develop circular economy strategy on their jurisdiction, by promoting a multi-actors approach.

The first meeting of this working group was held in Brussels on 4 November 2014 and gathered more than 60 participants. It enabled the participants to lay the foundations for this working group and decide its “modus operandi” as well as its work programme for 2015.

All documents regarding the Circular Europe Network (new vision, work document, terms of references and report of the first meeting) are available on ACR+ website.

- ACR + contact: Françoise Bonnet (fb@acrplus.org) and Philippe Micheaux-Naudet (pmn@acrplus.org)
- More information : www.circular-europe-network.org