



The End of Waste criteria

The situation

When is waste no longer waste? When it becomes a product or secondary raw material. That's the principle behind the End of Waste criteria developed under the revised Waste Framework Directive. Article 6 states that: "certain specified waste shall cease to be waste when it has undergone a recovery operation and complies with specific criteria to be developed in line with certain legal conditions, in particular that there is an existing market or demand for the material, the use is lawful, and the use will not lead to environmental or human health being negatively impacted."

When the Directive was produced, it was thought that aggregates, paper, glass, metals, tyres, commercial/industrial wastes, some ashes and slags, scrap metal, compost and textiles could all become non-wastes, if properly treated. It also allowed EU member states to set their own criteria for defining when a material has reached an End of Waste condition.

As far as the UK is concerned, waste can only become non-waste if it meets a Quality Protocol for the specific waste in question that has been approved by the Environment Agency. Whilst there are currently only a limited number of these Protocols, more are expected to be introduced. Materials and substances that are deemed to be no longer waste must still comply with the REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation & Restriction of Chemicals) regulations to ensure the maximum protection of the environment*.

* This doesn't apply to compost which is exempt from REACH since it is considered a 'natural' material. Despite this, a clear and robust Quality Protocol and PAS has been deployed for this material to ensure the environment is protected.

The seven key issues

1. Food waste collection and processing
2. Mixed material (co-mingled) collections
3. Mixed plastics collections
4. Management of hazardous waste
5. Energy efficiency and incineration
6. Renewable energy and district heating

7. The End of Waste criteria

The end of waste can be the beginning of life for a valuable raw material.

But not at any cost.

Where we Stand.



In principle we are **fully behind the End of Waste** movement, with the caveat that it mustn't be used as a deregulatory tool.

The intention of End of Waste was to remove the burden of legislation for safe, high-quality waste materials. We firmly believe that legislation is the friend of the waste industry; a means to guarantee the environmental integrity of all the waste that we recycle and the people who treat and handle it.

We accept that Quality Protocols should be developed for streams of waste that are clearly non-hazardous and are safe to use without the controls set out in waste regulations. We would also insist that, despite processing, it's imperative that hazardous waste and any solid fuels that are recovered remain as waste. That's because there will always be uncertainty about what they contain. If allowed to pass through the system as end of waste, it could lead to uncontrolled pollution of the environment.

If a material is considered for End of Waste status, our view is that the criteria set within the Quality Protocol must be absolutely clear and rigorously applied. We believe that a Quality Protocol should control the materials used, set constraints on how it is processed, control the final quality of materials produced and its end destination. A good example is PAS100 for compost, which realises all these objectives and has now established compost from biowaste as a high quality product.

End of Waste must never be a means of obtaining a cheap source of high quality raw material at an unacceptable cost to the planet. That's simply not the way to develop a green economy in the sustainable cities of the future.



Where do you stand?

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