

## **ECOCITY FORUM 2018: Circular Economy in Smart Cities**

### **HSWMA Workshop: Waste prevention and management as complementary pillars of Circular Economy in EU.**

#### **Key points - Conclusions**

The current situation of waste management in Greece can be summarized as follows:

- The National Solid Waste Management Plan and the National Prevention Plan as well as the revision of Regional Solid Waste Plans in line with the National one have been recently formulated.
- However, due to the new challenge of revising waste management in the framework of circular economy, adaptation of the above plans to the new requirements as included in the new waste directives of this year has to be examined.
- The majority of solid waste generated in Greece is landfilled. Some progress on waste treatment has been achieved; currently 7 waste treatment plants are in operation or under construction. In addition, 6 plants are in tendering procedure. At the same time good news is the efficiency in decreasing the use of plastic bags, following the implementation of a relevant fee.
- On the other hand there is no Green Points operating and separate collection of bio-waste faces barriers due to the lack of adequate treatment facility.
- Regardless progress mentioned above, dumping disposal continues in some areas.
- At the same time, due to significant delays on planning and implementing environmentally sound waste management, emergency alert is arising in specific areas (e.g. Attica Region and Corfu Island).

Starting from this point, Greek economy, as well as the waste management practices, has to change deeply to be adapted to circular economy concept.

It is important that circular economy criteria are set in the decision-making and design process and their products are used in the new economic model.

In this framework products' design and consumers' behavior are of fundamental importance for waste prevention, supporting, at the same time, efficiently new recycling and landfilling minimization targets set by EU legislation.

In addition, systematic and efficiently organized source separation and collection of waste streams can assure the quality of waste to be recovered, recycled and reused.

In the field of circular economy private investment, as well as research and innovation, has to be encouraged and supported through smart financial instruments. New jobs can be created.

Practices such as Green Public Procurement and implementation of end of waste criteria, combined with the use of instruments such as landfill tax and pay as you throw can boost significantly recycling and other recovery and reuse of waste.

In this framework, specific attention has to be paid to plastic waste in terms of both products' design, especially with respect to packaging, so as to ensure recyclability and separate collection for assuring the quality of the waste recovered in order to be easily valorized as secondary material.

Waste management hierarchy has to be followed when planning and implementing waste management practices and schemes. EC Communication 26.1.2017 COM (2017) 34 gives a clear recipe for countries, such as Greece, with high reliance on landfill.