



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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14192/08 (Presse 289)

A new framework for waste management in the EU

The Council adopted today¹ a directive setting a revised framework for waste management in the EU, aimed at encouraging re-use and recycling of waste as well as at simplifying current legislation (*doc.* [3646/08](#)). By promoting the use of waste as a secondary resource, the new directive is intended to reduce the landfill of waste as well as potent greenhouse gases arising from such landfill sites.

The directive introduces a new approach to waste management that encourages the prevention of waste. While Member States must design and implement waste prevention programmes, the Commission is set to report periodically on progress concerning waste prevention.

In addition, the directive lays down a five-step hierarchy of waste management options which must be applied by Member States when developing their national waste policies:

- waste prevention (preferred option);
- re-use;

¹ The decision was taken without discussion at the Environment Council.

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- recycling;
- recovery (including energy recovery); and
- safe disposal, as a last resort.

In this respect, the new legislation considers energy-efficient waste incineration a recovery operation - a provision that promotes resource efficiency, thus reducing the consumption of fossil fuels.

The directive also sets new recycling targets: By 2020, Member States must recycle 50% of their household and similar waste and 70% of their construction and demolition waste.

Moreover, the directive simplifies and modernises current EU waste legislation by:

- introducing an environmental objective,
- clarifying the notions of recovery, disposal, end of waste status and by-product,
- defining the conditions for mixing hazardous waste,
- specifying a procedure for the establishment of technical minimum standards for certain waste management operations.

The directive contributes to legal simplification by repealing the current waste framework directive (2006/12/EC), the directive on hazardous waste (91/689/EEC) and part of the directive on waste oils (75/439/EEC).

In adopting this directive, the Council accepted all amendments voted by the European Parliament in second reading in June 2008. Member States are required to transpose the directive into national law within two years.