



European Union Network for the
Implementation and Enforcement
of Environmental Law

Reinforcement programme on inspection skills for landfill sites and pre-treatment plants



According to the waste management hierarchy, landfilling is the least preferable option and should be limited to the necessary minimum. Where waste needs to be landfilled, it must be sent to landfills which comply with the requirements of Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste.

A standard procedure for the acceptance of waste in a landfill is laid down so as to avoid any risks, including that waste must be treated before being landfilled. Requirements to pre-treat waste before landfilling is sometimes disregarded; this IMPEL project facilitates the sharing of experience and knowledge in practical landfill joint inspections and has been positively greeted by Member States.

Background

The Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste set standards for the authorization, design, operation, closure and aftercare of landfills.

The acceptance criteria and the acceptance process are further specified in Council Decision 2003/33/EC. This includes a detailed description of waste characterisation procedures, limit values for waste composition and leaching behaviour as well as acceptance procedures to be executed at each landfill site.

Member States must ensure that existing landfill sites may not continue to operate unless they comply with the provisions of the Directive and Council Decision.

Within the last years, important efforts have been taken in order to meet the established legal requirements. However, infringement cases, complaints and petitions received by the European Commission show that there are deficits in implementation.

TARGET GROUP

- Inspection authorities
- Permitting authorities
- Operators
- Technical support organisations

EU LEGISLATION

- [Industrial Emissions Directive](#)
- [RMCEI](#)
- [Landfill Directive](#)
- [Waste Framework Directive](#)

PUBLICATION DATE

March 2017



European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law

According to Article 6 of the Council Directive 1999/31/EC, only waste that has been subject to treatment is landfilled. The Malagrotta judgement (European Court of Justice of 15 October 2014 in case C-323/13) confirmed the Landfill Directive's principle that all waste capable of undergoing pre-treatment must be pre-treated before being landfilled. In addition, it clarified that Member States are not free to apply any pre-treatment whatsoever, but instead they must search and implement the most appropriate pre-treatment option in order to reduce as far as possible negative impacts on the environment and human health.

18 Member States joined the IMPEL Landfill Project, with 35 experts involved working in environmental public administration at a different level. The different skills and experience promote the process of environmental compliance assurance in its three main components:

1. compliance promotion by public authorities,
2. compliance monitoring (i.e. inspections and other checks), and
3. enforcement.

Effective compliance assurance is a crucial aspect of effective implementation.

A Guidance book for Landfill inspections and a gap analysis of the implementation of the Landfill Directive in the Member States have been already issued as outcome of the 2016 project.

Desired outcome

The project is intended to increase inspection skills for landfill sites and pre-treatment plants in order to achieve better implementation of the Landfill Directive. Desired outcomes of the work are the following:

- Fostering cooperation and coordination between different inspection bodies, using the checklist and Guidance (produced in previous years) to drive joint inspection;
- Identification of good practices, criteria and technologies of pre-treatment of the waste before landfilling;
- Feedback to policy makers on the (effectiveness of) the various approaches and practices in the field of permitting and inspection of landfill sites in IMPEL member countries;
- Feedback on the implementation gaps of the pretreatment provision before landfilling;
- Cooperation (and helping each other) between IMPEL member countries to work towards a consistent regulatory and enforcement regime.

LINKS

- [IMPEL](#)
- [IMPEL Landfill project](#)
- [IMPEL Guidance book \(2016\)](#)
- [Environmental inspections](#)
- [EU Commission: Waste](#)

KEY WORDS

- Landfills
- Treatment of waste
- Inspections