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Waste and climate change

Municipal waste management to be improved to reduce GHG emissions

The EEA briefing **projects a significant decrease by 2020 in net greenhouse gas emissions from municipal waste, with a reduction of more than 80 % (down to 10 million tones) compared to the late 1980s**.

Municipal waste, however, is set to grow by 25 % from 2005 to 2020. The EEA therefore warns that increasing waste amounts could lead to saturation and increase GHG emissions due to inefficient management.As such, keeping municipal waste to the minimum remains the preferred action for reinforcing past and future improvements in waste treatment. **Restricting waste volumes delivers both immediate and long-term benefits to citizens, including reduced air pollution (with particles and nitrogen oxides) and less noise from collection and transport.**

In 2005 emissions from waste management represented 2 % of EU's total GHG output. Methane, one of the six greenhouse gases controlled by the Kyoto protocol, is mostly generated by landfill operations in the waste sector.

European Environment Agency

Recommended

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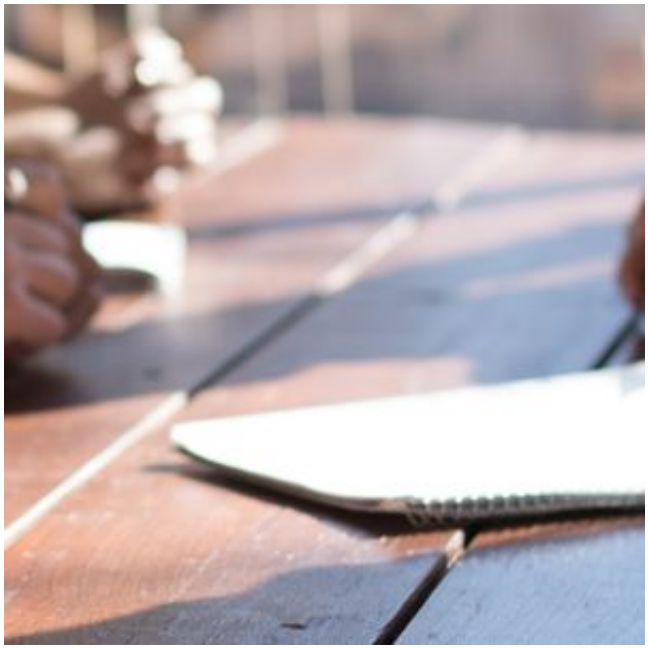
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Heads of national delegations in the GREENS/EFA Group

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