EU Waste Legislation: A wasted opportunity?

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Price index
(real year 2000 US$)
2000=100

- Food
- Raw materials
- Energy
- Metals and minerals (including iron ore)

Rare earth metal shortage a 'ticking time-bomb'

A "ticking time-bomb" looms over several core manufacturing industries, experts have warned, due to a growing shortage of "rare earth" metals.

Malcolm Preston, PwC's global sustainability leader, said: "Put simply, many businesses now recognise that we are living beyond the planet's means. New business models will be fundamental to the ability to respond appropriately to the risks and opportunities posed by the scarcity of minerals and metals."

The corporate scramble for Africa

If it continues to be business as usual in Africa, it could set the stage for Resource Conflict 2.0.

Bill Clinton: cutting use of natural resources would help US economy

Former president says US would recover faster from financial crises if more effort was made to use resources sustainably.

Africa's mineral wealth hardly denting poverty levels, says World Bank

Report finds discovery of oil and mineral resources doing little to improve prospects for poor people, whose lot may even worsen.
Exploiting the urban gold mine – a comparison

Primary production
\[ \approx 5 \text{ g/t Au in ore} \]

Secondary production
\[ \approx 250 \text{ g/t Au in computer circuit boards} \]

Source: Umicore
Average end-of-life functional recycling

Source: UNEP, 2011
Municipal waste treatment EU27, 2011

Prevention
Re-use
Recycling
Recovery
Disposal

Recycling 25%
Composting 15%
23%
37%

Source: Eurostat, 2013
What are the OPPORTUNITIES at the EU level?

- **Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe**
  - Ongoing debate – final policy recommendations before summer
  - European Resource Efficiency Platform

- **7th Environmental Action Plan (7EAP)**
  - Currently in Parliament
  - Plenary vote in June


- **Revision of Packaging Directive in 2014**

- **Programming of EU Funds, 2014-2020**
We need to move up the waste hierarchy

- Prevention and preparation for reuse targets
  - Flanders 150kg per person target

- Recycling targets
  - Time for an increase!
  - Include biowaste
  - Quality of recycling

- Waste prevention plans
  - Not only municipal waste
  - Top down meet bottom up
Stop landfill and incineration by 2020

- Introduce a landfill and incineration ban for non-recyclable materials by 2020
Stop funding incinerators with EU money
Priorities for European legislation

- Move to a Resource-Efficient Europe - operate at the top of the waste hierarchy
- We have a current legislative framework that is not allowing us to do that – see latest Eurostat figures
- BUT we have some opportunities ahead

What are we waiting for?
Thank you

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