

## **Press statement on the proposed Netherlands waste import tax**

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 –**

NAWDO supports the reduction of greenhouse emissions, circular economy and moving towards a more resource efficient society. We are concerned to learn of tax proposals by the Dutch government and to implement a new tax at very short notice on UK imported waste sent for energy recovery in The Netherlands. It is unclear how much CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are hoping to be saved by this tax proposal. The proposal will directly lead to higher waste costs for local authorities at a time when austerity and funding for local authorities remains a key issue.

- **Assumptions on greenhouse gas emission savings**

There remains an under capacity to treat residual waste in the UK. The short to medium term option would be to landfill residual waste at greater environmental cost. Landfilling this waste will generate greenhouse gas emissions 25 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>, endangering climate change commitments and targets, which are the exact concerns the Dutch Urgenda court case, the motivator for this tax proposal, is looking to address.

- **Assumptions on increased waste recycling**

The Dutch tax proposal is merely on energy recovery plant input which does nothing at all to address the origin and cause of waste; product manufacturers and consumption behaviour. We note that NL's current EFW tax approach already is not very effective in moving waste towards recycling.

- **NAWDO's concern on increased costs**

Several of our members have made long term investment in waste export infrastructure which is now threatened to become obsolete or unaffordable after 1st January 2020 which could also see an end to the employment derived from operating this infrastructure. The proposal will directly lead to higher waste costs for local authorities at a time when austerity remains a key issue for local authorities.

- **NAWDO's concern around the proposal endangering public hygiene**

The proposal is for this tax to be implemented within just 6 months from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 which leaves virtually no environmentally sustainable alternatives. Due to waste export to NL becoming financially unattractive, it is more than likely there could be delays to waste handling and transportation causing back-ups in the collection system through to disposal routes.

NAWDO remain committed to working with all our stakeholders around fundamentally important issues such as resources and waste management. We look forward to our concerns being considered at the Dutch House of Representatives meeting on Wednesday 3rd July 2019.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WASTE DISPOSAL OFFICERS

Notes to editor

**About us:**

**NAWDO**, the National Association of Waste Disposal Officers, is the primary network and voice for local authorities with statutory responsibility for waste treatment and disposal. NAWDO was formed in 1992 and its members include London Boroughs, Metropolitan, Unitary, Joint Waste Disposal Authorities, Waste Partnerships and County Councils from all UK regions (except Scotland) to keep up to date with the fast changing waste and resources industry. Through NAWDO local authorities are provided with presentation on regional, national, international and strategic forums and groups to inform, influence and collaborate with key stakeholders and policy makers. NAWDO is entirely run by volunteers and through its Policy and Advisory (P&A) Committee it sets the direction of the organisation with member engagement. With over 80 members NAWDO represents around 80% of all local authorities with waste disposal duties in the UK. NAWDO holds quarterly meetings where its members, central government, regulators, waste industry and other affiliated groups discuss and debate challenges and current developments in the waste and resources industry, helping shape and influence (future) decisions and policy. It also provides an online forum where members can openly discuss and debate current and relevant issues facing senior officers with waste treatment and disposal portfolios.

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