



PRESS RELEASE:

ENVI to dangerously damage European recycling with report on Waste Shipment Regulation

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European recyclers warn of major incoherencies that remain after the ENVI report on the Waste Shipment Regulation was adopted on 1 December. While the report alleviates some of the administrative burdens that impede trade of recycled materials within the EU and sets mandatory recycled content targets for plastics, it completely turns a blind eye on plastic waste shipments within the Union and grounds of revocation for pre-consented facilities by local authorities.

Regarding exports, the restrictive approach announced by the Commission's proposal has been strengthened by the report. Waste export restrictions go as far as to include an explicit ban on all plastic waste exports to OECD and non-OECD countries. For other resource streams, in particular metals and recovered paper, the report **falls short in distinguishing them from problematic waste streams**. Yet, EuRIC welcomes the distinction made between OECD and non-OECD countries.

“By failing to distinguish between unprocessed waste and recycled materials in terms of exports, the EU fails to turn the waste shipment regulation into an instrument that boosts the transition towards a more circular economy and further unlevel the playing field with extracted raw materials that are not subject to similar restrictions”, said Emmanuel Katrakis, Secretary General of the European Recycling Industries' Confederation (EuRIC). *“If access to international markets for European recyclers is restricted, policymakers must **swiftly adopt mandatory recycled content targets** for all materials including metals, paper, textiles, tyres, not only plastics and fasten the adoption of EU-wide end-of-waste criteria for streams for which such criteria have still not been defined in EU law. Clearly defining when waste ceases to be waste is of paramount importance to reward quality of raw materials from recycling and bolster market access within the EU and beyond”,* he further stated.

“The high-quality recycled materials we produce have a positive market value, fully comply with established industry quality standards and are key for reducing CO₂ emissions, energy and water consumption”, stated Olivier Francois, President of EuRIC. *“The Paris Climate Agreement shows that environmental and climate protection is global. The same applies to the circular economy. For the substitution of extracted raw materials, trade with high-quality recycled materials must be global”,* he concluded.