



Case Study



Denmark without waste

Focusing on Resources in Danish Waste Management

Problem to resolve:

As an industrialized country Denmark has been wasting a lot of materials and energy in unsustainable dimensions.

Response:

Integrated campaign towards recycling 'waste'.



Background:

The municipalities in Denmark have every 4 years since 1986 been preparing Municipal Solid Waste Management Plans as a part of the national waste management strategy. In 2013 the Danish Government introduced a new Strategy: "Denmark without waste" and is now implemented in Resource Plan for Waste Management.¹ "Denmark without waste" aims to give impetus to a movement from "consumption and combustion" towards a society in which the materials are used again and again. It is about seeing our waste resources and make sure that valuable materials are not lost.

"Denmark without waste" sets ambitious targets for recycling. Among other things, we want to recycle 50% of waste from households in 2022. This is more than twice as much as in 2011. Municipalities must contribute to achieve the goal, but it is up to each municipality to find the best solution

to their local conditions. As part of the resource strategy, the government will take the initiative to come up with examples of simple and workable solutions that municipalities may be inspired by.



In "Denmark without waste" are the municipalities a crucial partner in the realization of the Government's waste policy. There is an agreement between the municipalities and the Ministry of the Environment on a number of initiatives for the realization of "Denmark without waste".

At the same time there is a need for modernization of the waste-to-energy sector. As stated in the agreement on local finances for 2015 the government and the municipalities agreed on the objective of improving the efficiency of waste incineration with 200 million kr. (=27 Million Euro) until 2020 to the benefit of businesses and consumers.

New opportunities for businesses

The Danish companies may be affected very differently by "Denmark without waste". In some sectors - like building and construction – the Resource Strategy initiatives will mean more new jobs. In agriculture, it means better opportunities for biogasification of manure, which will reduce the impact from Methane and CO₂. For the many companies working with technology and recycling strategy will mean new business opportunities.

Overall, the strategy will entail:

- Increased recycling of materials from households and service sectors;
- Increased recycling of materials from WEEE;
- Increased quality in the recycling of construction and demolition waste; and
- Better utilization of nutrients in organic waste.

Denmark does not operate with waste strategies and waste management plans in traditional way anymore. The idea behind this change is that implementation of various treatment facilities are done, maintenance of the investments is on the track, and the Danish municipalities know what to do with the waste. Instead the new strategy forces everyone to (re-) think in resources and recycling. The resource strategy is now implemented into Resource Management Plans period working until 2018, giving the municipalities 2 planning periods to implement and correct plans to reach the ambition of 2022.

The expected effects of the Resources Strategy ²						
SOURCE	EXPECTED EFFECTS	THE CURRENT SITUATION (2011 FIGURES)				
		2018	2022 GOAL	Recycled	Incinerated	Land-filled
		Min %	Min %	%	%	%
Households*	Recycling of organic waste, paper, cardboard, glass, wood, plastic and metal waste*		50	22	75	0
	Collection of waste electronic equipment	75		68**		
The service sector	Recycling of paper, cardboard, glass, metal and plastic packaging	70		53	47	0
	Recycling of organic waste	60		17	83	
All	Energy recovery from garden waste*	25		87	4	4
	Collection of waste electronic equipment	65				
	Collection of batteries	55		47		
	Recovery of shredder waste	70		0		
	Recycling of phosphorus in sewage sludge	80		–		

* A smaller volume for temporary storage and special treatment is not shown in this table. Therefore the sum of the three treatment options shown is not 100%.

** Average of amount placed on the market in the past 3 years.

Credentials

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References

¹ The Resources Strategy “Denmark without waste” from 2013, together with the municipal resource plan for 2013-2018 is the management framework for waste management in Denmark.

² Source: The Danish Environmental Protection Agency: “Denmark without waste” Resources Strategy for waste management http://eng.mst.dk/media/mst/Attachments/Ressourcestrategi_UK_web.pdf (Retrieved 1. July 2015)