

persbericht

5 November 2006

ILLEGAL WASTE SHIPMENTS IN EUROPE

The European regulations for exporting waste are frequently violated. This was revealed by a joint enforcement operation that was carried out in seventeen European seaports. During the inspections, 48% of the waste shipments were found to be illegal. Seaports in Germany, England, France, Ireland, Poland, Latvia, Slovenia, Sweden and the Netherlands were involved in the European enforcement week. The inspections were part of the international seaport project and were conducted in October in cooperation with the local authorities.

Violations

In the seventeen seaports, a total of 3,000 documents were checked while 258 cargo-holds were physically inspected, 140 of which were waste shipments. 68 of these turned out to be illegal. The illegal shipments included Swedish cable waste bound for China and discarded refrigerator compressors containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) bound for Pakistan. In Latvia, an illegal shipment of copper waste bound for Panama was discovered. In the United Kingdom, fourteen sea containers with domestic waste material on its way to India were detained. In the

ramach projektu powinny być przeprowadzone wspólne akcje.

9. **TFS – weryfikacja miejsca docelowego natyfikatorów odpadów.** W ramach tego projektu wybrały dostawy odpadów będą śledzone przez odpowiednie kompetentne władze od momentu wysłania do chwili dotarcia do miejsca przeznaczenia. W ten sposób istnieje możliwość zidentyfikowania nielegalnego transportu poza UE.

10. **Projekt m. powołanie egzekucji dotyczących odpadów.** Warunki określone w porównaniach dotyczących składowania i spalania, choć oparte na odpowiednich unijnych dyrektywach, różnią się w poszczególnych krajach członkowskich. Celem projektu jest zidentyfikowanie tych różnic oraz przebadanie możliwości recyklingu i ponownego wykorzystania odpadów w celu zredukowania ich ilości uciążliwych poprzez składowanie.

11. **Nauka wyciągnięta z wypadków.** Jest to kolejne seminarium dla inspektorów ochrony środowiska z krajów UE, którego celem jest wymiana informacji i doświadczeń, a także nauk wyciągniętych z awarii i poważnych przemysłowych wypadków.

12. **Warsztaty dot. wykorzystania lotnych związków organicznych VOC.** Celem projektu jest wymiana in-



Kontrola w Porcie Sopot

Fig. 29003

Doświadczenia z I edycji projektu kontroli transportu odpadów w portach morskich potwierdzają, że międzynarodowe prawa umiędzynarodowiały ich niedostępnym.

We wish you a fantastic 2006!

With much attention for the IMPEL-TFS Seaport Project II!

Kontrola transporowanego pasażerów odpadów w sześciu portach polskich

Pracownicy służby celniczo-ekologicznej podjęli w grudniu 2005 roku kontrolę transportu odpadów w sześciu portach polskich. W ramach kontroli sprawdzano dokumentację towarową, a także przeprowadzono oględziny ładunków. W wyniku kontroli stwierdzono, że 48% z transportowanych odpadów było nielegalne. Wśród nielegalnych odpadów znalazły się m.in. odpady z chlorofluorowęglami (CFC) oraz odpady z metalami ciężkimi.



W ramach projektu IMPEL-TFS, który jest międzynarodowym projektem, prowadzonym przez Komisję Europejską, wzięło udział 17 państw europejskich. Celem projektu jest wymiana doświadczeń i informacji dotyczących transportu odpadów w portach morskich. W ramach projektu przeprowadzono kontrole w sześciu portach polskich: Gdyni, Szczecinie, Gdańsku, Wrocławiu, Poznań i Łodzi. W wyniku kontroli stwierdzono, że 48% z transportowanych odpadów było nielegalne. Wśród nielegalnych odpadów znalazły się m.in. odpady z chlorofluorowęglami (CFC) oraz odpady z metalami ciężkimi.

Międzynarodowy obrót odpadami reguluje prawo Unii Europejskiej.

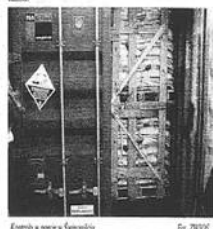
PROJEKT IMPEL-TFS W PORTACH POLSKICH

IMPEL jest nieformalną siecią organizacji odpowiedzialnych za wdrażanie i egzekucję prawa ochrony środowiska. Sieć jest narzędziem służącym wymianie doświadczeń i informacji dotyczących metod wdrażania i stosowania prawa ochrony środowiska w różnych państwach Europy. Sieć IMPEL rozpoczęła swą działalność w 1992 r.

Wraz z przygotowaniem nowych krajów do członkostwa w UE, Komisja Europejska zaproponowała tym krajom utworzenie struktury równoległej. Tak powstała sieć krajów stowarzyszonych AC-IMPEL (Accession Countries IMPEL network). Głównym celem AC-IMPEL było wspieranie krajów kandydatów we wprowadzeniu odpowiednich metod kontroli zgodności, które zagwarantują praktyczne wdrożenie unijnego prawa ochrony środowiska. Komisja Europejska zaproponowała także pomoc finansową w działalności sieci.

Fundusze te były wykorzystywane na pokrycie kosztów dopłaty budżetowej państwa w procesie dostosowywania poszczególnych krajów i kosztów uczestnictwa reprezentantów krajów kandydatów w spotkaniach, na których te ekspertyzy były analizowane i dyskutowane.

Korzysta z działalności AC-IMPEL miały nie tylko kraje akcesyjne, ale także Komisja Europejska, która



Kontrola w porcie w Szczecinie

Fig. 29005

To start 2006 with enthusiasm, we would like to point out some press releases on the IMPEL-TFS Seaport Project II...

European Union's IMPEL – A positive example of diligent enforcement of the Basel Convention and Ban Amendment

Source: Harmonizing Hong Kong's Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) and China's Basel Convention Obligation

Commissioned by Greenpeace and written by Basel Action Network

www.legco.gov

Date: 16-12-2005

The European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), has generated in the past two years needed momentum to highlight the need for enforcing environmental laws, such as the European Waste Shipment Regulation which implements the Basel Convention and prohibits the export of hazardous wastes to developing countries from the 25 member states of the European Union (EU).

IMPEL's first Seaport Project started in March 2003 and lasted until June of 2004. During this period IMPEL conducted enforcement projects in 6 large European seaports, focusing their inspections on EU waste shipments with non-OECD countries, mainly to Africa and Asia, paying special attention to non-declared wastes or wastes claimed as green-listed wastes. 47 Inspections were conducted during the project which resulted in 1,230 shipments being checked. IMPEL's investigation revealed that 20% of the shipments were illegal, and part of the uncovered illegal shipments were of electronic wastes, i.e. Belgian e-waste going to West Africa, and a shipment of computers and monitors from the UK to Pakistan.

Buoyed by the success of the first Seaport Project, IMPEL launched a second Seaport Project in September 2004. In April 2005, IMPEL released an interim report, revealing that of the 393 shipments inspected, 113 were illegal shipments some of which involved e-waste, i.e. Dutch e-waste destined for China via Antwerp, and German e-waste bound for Africa.

Just recently in October 2005, IMPEL carried out inspections, covering 258 ship cargo holds in 17 ports in nine EU countries. 140 waste shipments were identified during the inspection, 48% breached EU rules. Some of the illegal waste shipments included Swedish cable waste bound for China and discarded refrigerator compressors containing chlorofluorocarbons bound for Pakistan.

The high rate of infractions has led IMPEL to conclude and recommend to the participating EU nations that better enforcement of the Basel Convention and the EU Waste Shipment regulation are absolutely needed. These laws, according to IMPEL, could simply become a paper tiger without adequate enforcement, and that "international cooperation between enforcement authorities is a basic principle for such 'transfrontier enforcement'".

Indeed the revised waste shipment regulation now nearing completion has incorporated mandatory spot-checking procedures as have been practiced by the IMPEL program.

These conclusions, and the report which contained them, have raised awareness of the existing inadequacies in the export controls of various industrialized European nations. More importantly, the IMPEL investigations have helped generate pressure among the participating governments to improve the implementation of their export control regulations. It is vital that Hong Kong as a major port not only implement the Basel Convention in the laws of the HKSAR in accordance with China's obligations but also cooperate globally and locally in diligent enforcement making use of the invaluable experience of the IMPEL program.

Real Story traces 'recyclables' to Indonesia

Source: www.letsrecycle.com, UK

Date: 06-12-05

Householders were urged to carry on recycling by BBC news presenter Fiona Bruce last night (December 5) in the wake of a BBC Real Story programme which raised questions over recycling.

The programme suggested that recyclable materials from the UK could be ending up in landfills in either China or Indonesia. There was also a suggestion that recovered paper, such as envelopes and print outs of emails with people's details on them, were included in the loads.

“ I hope they are destined for some shiny modern factory, just around the corner. ”
- Michelle Thomas, Islington resident

The edition of Real Story looked to be based partly on reports in the Guardian newspaper published earlier this year which focused on a number of containers of recyclables which appeared largely to have not been greatly sorted into different materials.

Real Story started with an aerial shot of landfill in the UK and the oft-quoted analogy of the UK producing enough waste to fill the Albert Hall every hour.

A London resident, Michelle Thomas, was asked where she thought her recyclables would go. She replied: "I hope they are destined for some shiny modern factory, just around the corner."

The programme then switched to Holland where Jenny van Houten of the Dutch Environment Department described how it had found containers of mixed recyclables that also included contaminants such as batteries.

Senior Environment Agency official Roy Watkinson appeared a number of times during the programme and was one of three people from the UK involved in a part of the recycling chain to appear. The other two were Andy Bond of ECT Recycling and Cllr Bridget Fox of Islington.

Mr Watkinson recalled how 75% of containers inspected in a recent check were not satisfactory. The BBC noted that some in the recycling sector consider the Agency to be too strict.

Indonesia

The programme then focused on containers of UK waste overseas and showed some in Indonesia which clearly contained different types of materials as well as plastic bags. It was unclear what the final destination of the material was although Real Story reporter Morland Saunders pressed the Indonesian environment minister Rachmat Witoelan on the matter. Mr Witoelan said he believed the material was getting dumped and the country only had one factory to use the material.

The programme did not show any of the paper mills, steel mills or plastics plants or have anyone speaking to confirm that these plants do use material from the UK.

Kent-based Grosvenor Waste Management was named twice in the programme. In one mention, the BBC produced paperwork which they said showed the Indonesian material had been supplied by Grosvenor Waste Management. It also reported that Grosvenor said the material was produced by a German company. No Grosvenor spokesman was interviewed although film of the plant in Erith, shot from outside it, was broadcast.

Landfill

Film of the terrible conditions in the landfill in Djakarta, Indonesia was shown, with children perilously close to moving machinery. The BBC interviewed scavengers on the site who said they did

not want any overseas waste, they had enough already. The programme also noted: "We found no evidence to show that waste from the UK was ending up at this dump."

Islington

Islington councillor Bridget Fox was asked what would she say to residents who learnt their recyclables were overseas. She responded: "We will be taking steps to ensure that it is recycled. We hope this is a one off thing and it is of concern."

Positive

The approach taken to recycling by ECT Recycling of Ealing, London was shown as a positive way to deal with recyclables. Film of tidy and neat storage bays were shown alongside an interview with ECT director Any Bond. Mr Bond was asked what he thought about the sort of recycling that involves not sorting waste, and said: "If I was doing it I would expect to be prosecuted."

The programme concluded with Fiona Bruce's call to continue recycling after Mr Watkinson had been asked about why there had been so few prosecutions with regard to the export of the material. He replied: "Watch this space."

Related links:



➤ [BBC Real Story: How green is your wheelie?](#)

Roche Praises Dublin Port Waste Inspection Improvements

Source: The Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local government, Ireland

Date: 10-11-2005

The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr. Dick Roche, T.D., today (10 November, 2005) praised the ongoing enforcement efforts of Dublin City Council, which showed remarkable results during a recent European wide seaport inspections project.

The Minister said: "The results showed that all of the waste shipments checked at Dublin port were legal in the week in question compared with a figure of 48% of illegal shipments detected in ports in the 8 other participating European countries. This is a truly remarkable situation and a complete reversal from the situation found in 2004 when almost all shipments inspected at Dublin port were found to be defective or indeed illegal."

The Minister noted that Ireland is now benefiting from a very hands on approach to waste enforcement and a better understanding of the international waste shipments rules. "We have come full circle on this and from a position where there was limited resources and little enforcement we are benefiting from:

- Increased staffing financed from Government supported Enforcement grants - over 110 staff nationwide and the Waste Enforcement Unit for Dublin City Council was set up in this way
- Better training of staff and dedicated enforcement projects
- A better response from the waste industry and shippers and brokers" added the Minister.

The Dublin Port results stand out when compared with the port inspections carried out elsewhere in this joint enforcement operation (which was carried out in seventeen European seaports and which showed 48% of the waste shipments to be illegal).

Seaports in Germany, England, France, Ireland, Poland, Latvia, Slovenia, Sweden and the Netherlands were involved in the European enforcement week. The inspections were part of the international seaport project and were conducted in October in cooperation with the local authorities.

In the seventeen seaports, a total of 3,000 documents were checked while 258 cargo-holds were 'physically' inspected, 140 of which were waste shipments. 68 of these turned out to be illegal. The illegal shipments included Swedish cable waste bound for China and discarded refrigerator compressors containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) bound for Pakistan. The violations were detected primarily in France, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In accordance with international agreements, the illegal waste shipments will be sent back to the country of origin.

"We too often get bad press for failures in the system and particularly in cases where waste is intercepted and sent back to Ireland for infractions of the international waste laws but on this occasion I am extending my congratulations to the Dublin City Council waste enforcement unit for their continuing vigilance in this matter", added the Minister.

Information for editors

Appendix 1 - Background on the Dublin City port inspections results and

Appendix 2 - IMPEL TFS Press release - IMPEL is the European Union's Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law -detailing the IMPEL TFS Seaport project results for the 17 ports which participated.

Appendix 1

Dublin City Council's waste enforcement in Dublin Port

- Dublin City Council's (DCC) waste enforcement unit took part in the IMPEL Seaport project, conducting waste inspections in Dublin Port. Waste for export comes from all over Ireland to be shipped from Dublin Port.
- During Seaport II Inspection week 10th to 15th October 2005, DCC inspected a number of loads in Dublin Port.
- Among the loads were pharmaceutical waste and solvents moving under Transfrontier Shipment documentation (TFS) to Germany, waste from non-ferrous casting moving under TFS to Germany and cardboard for recovery moving to the UK as green list waste.
- When DCC started this project in October 2004, nearly all of the loads inspected were detained as illegal shipments. Compared to DCC's initial inspections in 2004, where nearly all shipments were stopped for lack of , or incorrect, paperwork and some illegal shipments, no infractions were detected during the recent Port and verification inspections.
- **In October 2005, during Seaport week, all shipments of waste inspected were legal and allowed for export.**
- Last year Ireland was classed as one of the worst offenders in Europe for the shipment of illegal waste. The situation in Ireland is very different now due to the continuing waste inspections in Dublin Port. This is supported by the latest IMPEL press release - which is set out beneath.
- In one year, the level of infractions and illegal exports detected in Dublin Port has fallen dramatically from nearly 100% to almost 0%. The level of inspections has been maintained throughout.
- This dramatic decrease in such a short time is due to a combination of education, the ongoing inspections throughout the year and the continuous presence of the waste enforcement unit in Dublin Port. **The waste enforcement unit was created with the assistance of State funding from the Environment Fund - into which the proceeds of both the Landfill Levy and plastic bags Levy go.**
- The unit reported a continuous decrease in detection of illegal activity throughout the year.
- While it would be foolhardy to say that DCC has stopped all illegal exports this decrease in illegal exports along with the corresponding increase in enforcement represents a great success for one year's work.
- The increased communication with Ireland's EU counterparts means that it is easier to detect the illegal operators and move swiftly to intercept them.
- The verification of the inspected loads and those selected during verification week - a separate IMPEL exercise - proved that the export from Ireland of various waste streams is now much more regulated than in previous years.
- Port inspections and the verification of waste exports from Dublin Port will continue in the future, to crack down on illegal exports and create a level playing field for the legitimate operators in Ireland.

Appendix 2 - IMPEL TFS Press release - IMPEL is the European Union's Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law detailing the IMPEL TFS Seaport project results

8 November 2005

ILLEGAL WASTE SHIPMENTS IN EUROPE

The European regulations for exporting waste are frequently violated. This was revealed by a joint enforcement operation that was carried out in seventeen European seaports. During the inspections, 48% of the waste shipments were found to be illegal. Seaports in Germany, England, France, Ireland, Poland, Latvia, Slovenia, Sweden and the Netherlands were involved in the European enforcement week. The inspections were part of the international seaport project and were conducted in October in cooperation with the local authorities.

Violations

In the seventeen seaports, a total of 3,000 documents were checked while 258 cargo-holds were 'physically' inspected, 140 of which were waste shipments. 68 of these turned out to be illegal. The illegal shipments included Swedish cable waste bound for China and discarded refrigerator compressors containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) bound for Pakistan. In Latvia, an illegal shipment of copper waste bound for Panama was discovered. In the United Kingdom, fourteen sea containers with domestic waste material on its way to India were detained. In the Netherlands, containers filled with electronic scrap metal, old batteries, heavily-polluted copper waste and CFC-containing refrigerators were intercepted. In France, a total of 30 waste shipments were blocked. The containers were found to be loaded with waste material such as cable waste containing PCB and bitumen, polluted engine blocks, rags, automobile tyres, electronic scrap metal and telephone cables with lead casing. The shipments were destined for countries in Asia and Africa. The violations were detected primarily in France, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In accordance with international agreements, the illegal waste shipments will be sent back to the country of origin.

International Seaport Project

The aim of the international seaport project is to improve and harmonize the level of enforcement of EU regulations concerning the export of (hazardous) waste in member states. During the seaport project, vehicles, ships and containers carrying (waste) materials and storage locations in port areas are inspected. Special attention is paid to the export of waste materials from the European Union to countries not belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), such as a number of Asian and African countries. The export of waste materials to such countries is often prohibited, or is allowed only with the permission of the relevant authorities. The inspections are carried out by the local authorities in cooperation with a large number of enforcement agencies such as customs, the police and the seaport authorities. An important goal of the project is for the environmental inspectors of the countries involved to exchange information and experiences, which has led a number of countries to improve their enforcement methods.

The first seaport project was conducted in 2003 and involved six countries. A portion of the inspected waste shipments turned out to be illegal, leading to the decision to conduct a subsequent project. In joint enforcement operations in 2004 and March of this year, a great number of shipments also proved to be illegal. At the moment, thirteen countries participate in the seaport project: Belgium, Germany, France, England, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. The final report will appear in June of 2006.

European enforcement strategy

Based on the number of intercepted illegal shipments and the observed inadequacies, it appears that joint enforcement of the European regulations governing waste shipments is essential, as the European regulations for trans-frontier waste shipments applies to all member states. The regulations therefore do not differ between countries, but each country is nevertheless responsible for its own enforcement. At present, there are still large disparities in this regard. Through the European Union's network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), European countries are cooperating to establish a more uniform method of enforcement. The seaport project is an example of this cooperation. In addition, a European enforcement strategy is being developed.

For questions on the IMPEL project call Martijn van Baarsen, Press Information for the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), (070) 339 2616.

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turn back the toxic tide

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- EMBARGOED until 12:01 Monday October 24, 2005 -

High-Tech Toxic Trash Exported to Africa

USA and Europe Creating a “Digital Dump” from “Re-Use and Repair” Trade

Seattle, WA; Lagos, Nigeria. October 24, 2005. A new investigation by the toxic trade watchdog organization, Basel Action Network (BAN), has revealed that large quantities of obsolete computers, televisions, mobile phones, and other used electronic equipment exported from USA and Europe to Lagos, Nigeria for “re-use and repair” are ending up gathering dust in warehouses or being dumped and burned near residences in empty lots, roadsides and in swamps creating serious health and environmental contamination from the toxic leachate and smoke.

The photo-documentary report entitled *“The Digital Dump: Exporting High-Tech Re-use and Abuse to Africa,”* exposes the ugly underbelly of what is thought to be an escalating global trade in toxic, obsolete, discarded computers and other e-scrap collected in North America and Europe and sent to developing countries by waste brokers and so-called recyclers. In Lagos, while there is a legitimate robust market and ability to repair and refurbish old electronic equipment including computers, monitors, TVs and cell phones, the local experts complain that of the estimated 500 40-foot containers shipped to Lagos each month, as much as 75% of the imports are “junk” and are not economically repairable or marketable. Consequently, this e-waste, which is legally a hazardous waste is being discarded and routinely burned in what the environmentalists call yet “another cyber-age nightmare now landing on the shores of developing countries.”

“Re-use is a good thing, bridging the digital divide is a good thing, but exporting loads of technotrash in the name of these lofty ideals and seriously damaging the environment and health of poor communities in developing countries is criminal,” said Jim Puckett, coordinator of BAN who led the field investigation.

The report includes evidence of numerous computer identification tags from schools and government agencies as well as forensic examinations of hard-drives picked up by BAN in Lagos, revealing very personal information about their previous owners.. According to BAN, much of this trade is illegal under international rules governing trade in toxic waste such as the Basel Convention, but governments, particularly the United States refuses to ratify, implement or properly enforce these rules for toxic electronic waste. Proper enforcement of these rules would require all such escrap exports, whole or in parts to be properly tested for functionality and certified to be going to re2 use destinations rather than for disposal or recycling.

“Things are completely out of control,” said Puckett. *“Manufacturers have got to get toxic chemicals out of electronic goods, governments have got to start enforcing international law, and we consumers have got to be a lot more careful about what our local “recycler” is really doing. It’s time we all get serious about what is now a tsunami of toxic techno-trash making its way from rich to poorer countries, and start taking some responsibility.”*

Following the publication of a report on their previous investigation in China, entitled *Exporting Harm: The High-Tech Trashing of Asia*, BAN, together with the Computer TakeBack Campaign has initiated the E-Stewards Program in North America with now over 30 member recycling companies that have pledged to uphold the world's most rigorous standards for social and environmental responsibility in e-waste management. To locate a responsible recycler that won't dump e-waste on developing countries visit: www.ban.org/pledge1.html or http://www.computertakeback.com/the_solutions/recyclers_map.cfm.

END

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Photos and Report available at: www.e-takeback.org/Press/pressinfo.htm

B-Roll Video material available: Contact Richard Gutierrez at rgutierrez@ban.org.

For more general information visit:

www.ban.org

www.computertakeback.org

Fresh Agency inspections find more "illegal" waste shipments (18.10.05)

Three quarters of the waste shipment containers inspected at an undisclosed UK port last week broke the law, the Environment Agency has revealed.

The inspections came as part of a Europe-wide crackdown on companies breaking EU transfrontier shipment rules, which require the registering of mixed wastes destined for recovery abroad.

They came six months after a similar inspection week found that 47% of containers checked contained contamination levels deemed unacceptable by the Agency.

Commenting on the latest round of inspections, the whereabouts of which it refused to reveal on legal grounds, the Agency said companies "appear to be abusing the rules and exporting waste illegally without the relevant permissions".

Municipal

The Agency's inspections were targeted specifically at municipal waste exports, electrical and electronic waste and scrap metals. It said contents of containers were "not always as described to customs".



Suspect containers described as having paper for recycling were found to contain mixed rubbish, Agency inspectors said

John Burns, the Agency's environmental manager, said: "When inspected, the suspect containers which were described as having paper for recycling were found to contain mixed rubbish including plastics, textiles and rotting food infested with maggots.

"We have detained these containers and where we have sufficient evidence of illegal activities we will take enforcement action," Mr Burns added.

Rules

Transfrontier shipment rules are being reviewed at EU level ([see letsrecycle.com story](http://letsrecycle.com/story)), but under current rules all exports of wastes from the UK for the purposes of disposal are prohibited.

As far as exports of material destined for recovery in OECD countries are concerned, wastes are classified into "Green list", "Amber list" or "Red list" depending on how hazardous they are deemed to be. Controls may differ for non-OECD countries, which decide individually what they will accept.

Green list wastes have little in the way of controls for exporting to OECD countries for recovery. These include materials that have been "properly sorted" for recovery.

Amber list materials – which include unsorted municipal waste – may be exported for recovery after authorities have been notified and unless recipient countries have objected within a certain period.

Red list materials cannot be exported unless the written consent of all competent authorities has been given prior to shipment.

Related links:

✚ Environment Agency

About 70,000 tonnes of waste exports from England and Wales are notified to the Environment Agency each year.

Crackdown leads to trail of illegal waste exports

Author: Head Office Press Office
Date published: 17-Oct-2005
Keywords: waste exports, ports, inspections

Crackdown leads to trail of illegal waste exports

The Environment Agency today revealed 75 per cent of containers inspected at a UK port by its dedicated illegal waste enforcement team were found to break the rules.

"When inspected, the suspect containers which were described as having paper for recycling were found to contain mixed rubbish including plastics, textiles and rotting food infested with maggots. We have detained these containers and where we have sufficient evidence of illegal activities we will take enforcement action", said John Burns, Environmental Manager at the Environment Agency.

This inspection was part of a week of Europe-wide inspections, which will improve intelligence on the growing problem of illegal exports of waste going between, and in and out of, European countries. The Environment Agency's intelligence-led inspections specifically targeted municipal waste, electrical and electronic equipment and scrap metals - where the contents of containers are not always as described to customs.

Illegally exported waste is untracked and unrecorded and as a result can end up simply being dumped in developing countries with serious implications for human health and the environment.

"There is a legitimate overseas market, in Europe and beyond, for used equipment and for recycling of paper and plastics. For example, there is very large demand for waste paper in China," Mr Burns said. "However, some companies appear to be abusing the rules and exporting waste illegally and without the relevant permissions. The transfrontier nature of waste shipments means it is crucial to work together with customs and our European partners to tackle this problem."

The week of inspections was coordinated by IMPEL, the European network of environmental regulators. Under current rules, no waste can be sent abroad for disposal. Certain wastes such as paper and packaging may be sent abroad for recycling or reuse but only with the recipient country's approval and in many cases must be notified to the relevant environment authorities.

Notes to editors:

IMPEL inspection week ran from Monday 10 October to Sunday 16 October 2005.
Photographs of the inspection are available from the press office.

This first European Inspection Week took place in March 2005 where 47% of the inspected waste shipments turned out to be illegal.

About 70,000 tonnes of waste exports from England and Wales are notified to the Environment Agency each year.

Estimates of business waste trade to and from UK is 4 million tonnes per annum. Lots of this will be legal but the work we've been doing with other authorities, such as customs, suggests not all of the un-notified trade is legal greenlist waste.

For further information about WEEE and TFS visit the Environment Agency website.

The Environment Agency is cracking down on illegal waste exports by:

A dedicated special enforcement team that will step up the number of random inspections carried out at ports across England and Wales and prosecute offenders.

Playing a lead role in major European projects, including 'Seaports2', involving clampdowns at 25 ports across 12 European countries.

Working closely with both HM Customs and Excise in the UK and through the European network of regulators - IMPEL - to share information and intelligence on illegal trade in waste across the whole of Europe.

DETAILS OF ENVIRONMENT AGENCY ENFORCEMENT PROJECTS

Pan European Action - 'IMPEL-TFS Seaport project 2'

'Seaport project 2' was initiated during Autumn 2004 and is a follow-up of an enforcement project that was carried out by six European countries (including the UK) between spring 2003 and summer 2004. In this first project about 20% of the inspected waste shipments were illegal. Main recommendations from this first seaport project were to enlarge the established cooperation to more European countries and seaports, and to expand the cooperation to other enforcement networks, such as customs and police. With this second seaport project, these recommendations are put into force. It involves twelve European Member States who will increase their enforcement on waste shipments in their main seaports. During a recent conference, representatives of these countries reached agreement for joint and co-ordinated inspections with respect to regulations on transfrontier shipments (TFS) of waste. Previous enforcement actions revealed that still many international waste shipments are illegal.

Representatives of enforcement authorities from Belgium, Spain, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, agreed to execute inspections, intensify the information exchange on certain waste streams and cooperation. Over 25 large seaports of these countries will be involved. Inspection activities will focus on inspection of storage facilities, traffic inspections and inspection of container vessels. Special attention will be paid to wastes destined for non-OECD countries and import of wastes into new EU Countries. Within the participating countries cooperation will be established or will be expanded to other authorities, like custom services, police and port authorities.

Results gained during enforcement activities will be gathered, analysed and reported during spring 2006. This report will be submitted to the national responsible authorities and the European Commission highlighting enforcement actions taken, and will pay attention to problems encountered with enforcement of waste shipments regulations at large seaports, thus improving enforcement in the future.

More information about IMPEL - TFS and waste shipment regulations in general can be found at the IMPEL website.

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Project IMPEL-TFS (summary)

“Eko i My”, no. 6 (118), June 2005

Currently 30 countries are participating in the IMPEL network, i.e. all UE countries, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Croatia and Norway. The main role of IMPEL is to help countries share knowledge and experience. IMPEL-TFS Seaport Project is focused on transfrontier waste shipment and performed by 6 countries from April 2003 to June 2004. It turned out to be a good solution, because cooperation between countries was established and many illegal waste shipments were detected.

In the summer 2004 the Project II started including Poland as one of the participants. The main goals of the project are improvement of law enforcement, creating a network of inspectors responsible for supervision on transfrontier waste shipment, consolidation of cooperation and sharing the information and experience.

Simultaneous inspections in participating seaports were planned to be carried out during one week. The Voivodeship Inspectorate for Environmental Protection in cooperation with Customs Service performed the inspections in Poland. Customs documents, containers and storages were checked. The illegal import of copper scrap wastes to Poland without obligatory permit was detected. A steelwork located in the south Poland was the target destination of the scrap. The problems seem to vary widely from country to country – Poland focuses on preventing the import of wastes, although inspections in large seaports like Hamburg or Amsterdam are aimed to detect export of wastes to Asia or Africa.

IMPEL-TFS Project in Polish seaports (summary)

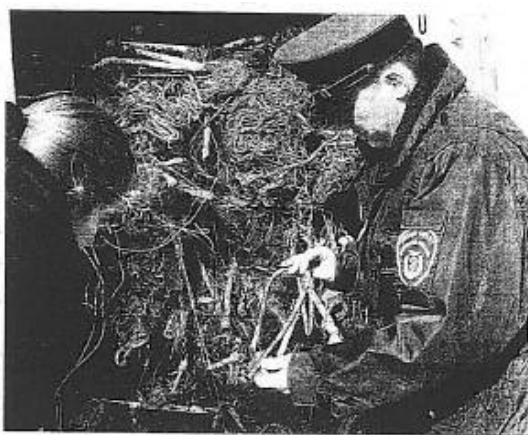
“Regiony”, no. 4 (14), April 2005

The IMPEL network, which was formed in 1992, gathers organisations responsible for enforcement of environmental protection regulations. It helps to share knowledge and experience in the field of environmental protection law enforcement in EU countries. Among many various tasks, the network performs IMPEL-TFS Seaport Project. The target is to improve observing the international regulations in range of transfrontier waste shipment. Unification of inspection methods, sharing knowledge and experience, and creating a network of countries seriously involved in observing the regulations, is necessary.

Experience of the Project I proves that an illegal transfrontier waste shipment is possible while not respecting the environmental rules. One of the European Commission key issues in 2005 is the illegal transport of wastes (including hazardous wastes) to non-OECD countries. IMPEL-TFS Seaport Project sets the main target of improving the enforcement of the Council regulation 259/93 in participating seaports by unification of inspection methods.

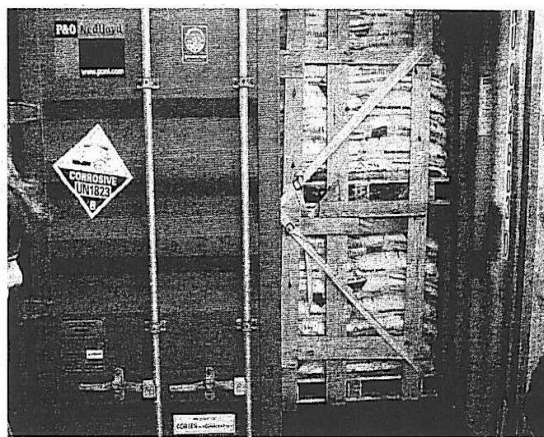
Simultaneous inspections were carried out in the period from 7 to 13 March 2005. Ports in Gdynia, Szczecin and Swinoujscie were chosen for inspections. Some infractions were detected like a transport of wastes without an obligatory permit.

Environmental protection inspectors claimed that it is necessary to share knowledge and experience regarding enforcement of Council regulation 259/93. It will enable to create a network of inspectors responsible for supervision and control of the transfrontier waste shipment and it will reinforce cooperation between the international and national authorities.



Kontrola w Porcie Szczecin.

Fot. ZWIOS



Kontrola w porcie w Świnoujściu

Fot. ZWIOS

The last section includes some links
to articles that are not available in English.

France

http://www.environnement-online.com/info_env/une.asp?p=infoenv&sp=une&uid=&id=180

Latvia

http://www.jvp.gov.lv/Jaunumi/IMPEL_seminars.htm

Portugal

http://www.ig-amb.pt/documentos/RelacoesInternacionais/RI-TFS_SEAPORTPROJECTII.pdf