



Energy from Waste UK

Joint Statement on Energy from Waste

Introduction

Energy from waste provides us with an opportunity for a waste solution and a local source of energy rolled into one.

While we welcome the coalition government's focus on expanding anaerobic digestion, it can only address a portion of the waste stream and is not sufficient on its own.

Energy obtained from the combustion of residual waste (Energy from Waste or EfW) provides us with an opportunity to deal with the waste we do not recycle and is a modern and environmentally sound solution. By clearly signalling its support for energy from waste, the Government would be delivering key objectives from its October 2010 National Infrastructure Plan. We believe that energy from waste can help the UK to achieve an infrastructure that is:

- Integrated, reliable, secure and resilient
- Supportive of the delivery of reduced green house gas emissions

Following a decade of delayed projects and a lack of clear policy, the coalition government has an opportunity to show clear leadership in declaring its support for the full potential of energy from waste.

The partners

The British Plastics Federation



Imperial College London



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We make the following five key points to explain why energy from waste has great potential for the UK over the next decade:

1. Energy from Waste can help prevent a UK energy deficit.

Our energy infrastructure is ageing, and its urgent renewal is now a real priority. The recession temporarily relieved pressure on energy prices, but as the economy grows demand will return, and must be met with supply from a full range of sources.

Energy from waste is well positioned to plug this deficit in many ways:

- **Scale** - EfW could provide for over 10% of future electricity generating capacity as well as large quantities of heat energy
- **Reliability** - it is a 24/7 all year round source of "base load" generation (unlike many other renewables)
- **Security** - it is not dependent on imports from other countries, that may be controlled by varied and changeable political regimes
- **Sustainable** - increasing energy from waste will contribute to reaching the UK's renewable and CO₂ reduction targets
- **Flexibility** - it can provide for cooling as well as heat and power, with the demand for cooling likely to increase in the UK.

2. Energy from Waste is a cost effective solution in challenging economic times

Growing our energy from waste capacity will help keep energy price rises down.

It will also help councils and businesses avoid paying the rising rates of landfill tax, which otherwise would be passed onto taxpayers and consumers. Energy from waste can provide low cost access to heat and power for homes and result in significant savings for both commercial and public sector bodies.

3. Energy from Waste can contribute to the Coalition Government's 'localism' agenda

Energy from waste provides a local waste and local energy solution for local communities.

Modern facilities often incorporate education facilities that encourage community responsibility and local "ownership". Experience from beyond Britain is that when waste must be dealt with locally, supplying local energy from waste can be seen to benefit the local host communities.

4. Energy from Waste is compatible with effective recycling

It is well proven that energy from waste can complement very high rates of recycling. It is energy from waste which is most widely used in the leading 'green' economies of Europe to help divert waste from landfill. Energy from waste works with modern recycling and waste collection systems to provide an integrated materials and energy recovery solution. It provides an effective means to recover significant additional value from what remains after cost effective and environmentally friendly recycling.

5. Energy from Waste is not harmful to the environment or public health

Today's modern energy from waste treatment plants must not be confused with the old incineration facilities of the 1970s which would not meet today's stringent regulatory standards prescribed by European legislation and monitored by the Environment Agency. After a detailed review of all the evidence, the Health Protection Agency stated that "modern, well-managed energy from waste plant will only make a very small contribution to background levels of air pollution" - a conclusion supported by similar bodies across Europe and beyond. Any public concern about pollutant levels in the everyday environment

should focus on the major causes of pollution and paths of exposure, such as road transport and indoor air pollution. Energy from waste reduces greenhouse gas emissions by diverting waste from harmful landfill, and by displacing CO₂ emitted from our fossil-fuelled energy infrastructure.

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