

Plastics Recycling in the North-South Context

Plastics - Initial Situation

The worldwide market of plastics is very fast growing (packaging, construction, medicine, electronics, agriculture etc.). One of the best examples is widely used PET (Polyethylen-terephthalat). Core markets for PET are beverage bottles (water, soft drinks and juices) where the plastic bottles replace more and more glass bottles. PET is very suitable for mechanical recycling. Secondary markets are mainly fibre, foils and - more and more - new beverage bottles (closed loop or bottle-to-bottle recycling). Due to the increasing demand for post consumer bottles (i.e. from Asia), PET has become a valuable material (depending mainly on sorting and compacting levels). Having a look at a possible value chain of post consumer bottles, we have to consider the processes which are necessary. Furthermore we should clarify to which point of the value chain processes should be managed by ourselves (question of in- / outsourcing).

Value chain Plastics - packaging

Surroundings : political, social, technical, legal...							
Business-Processes:	Packaging production	Consumption / Behaviour	Point of Return POR	Collection / Compacting	Sorting	Recycling	Sec.-products
Business-Processes:							
Step 1 "Export"	Packaging, flakes						
Step 2 "Pellets"	Pellets, flakes						
Step 3 "Inline"	Fiber, film, compound (i.e. glassfiber), secondary market-products						
Step 4 "closed loop"	Pellets, flakes						
Supporting-Processes:	Packaging-design, system-conformity, recyclability, guidelines, specifications...						
	Marketing, communication, incentives, stakeholders, education...						
	Finances, controlling, continuing improvement...						
Establishing value chain:	Project- and knowledge-management, steering, review / assessment...						

Most industrialised countries have the knowledge and the money to afford the appropriate equipment for logistics and recycling. But what can developing countries do? It is very important to develop and establish systems which are sustainable for all stakeholders.

Waste Collection "North-South"

Just a few cities in lower income countries collect and segregate all/most of the waste that is generated. Since poor areas tend to be ignored, there is a need for specific, targeted initiatives to ensure that waste collection services are extended to the poor. For example solid waste collection and drain cleaning are very labour-intensive. In most cases the work is done by the poor. Since manual work in solid waste management requires little

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Workshop R'07 Congress

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capital equipment and little training, solid waste collection provides important opportunities for providing much-needed employment for the poor.



Some of the questions addressed will be

- Can PET beverage bottles be an example for best practice?
- Is it possible to get an ideal constellation for a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) project?
- How many jobs are created by establishing a plastics recycling system (contribution to fight against poverty)?
- How could an adapted business-model look like?
- What are the milestones looking at the entire value chain?

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Additional information: Kick-Off meeting “Knowledge platform PET Recycling”

At our R'07 workshop we will present the brand new knowledge platform for PET recycling we established together with our partners. We are looking forward to discuss the results with you and to improve the platform with your inputs:

- Overview goals and history of the project
- Content and functionality of the platform
- Next steps and further extensions

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