

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Information on the alignment of municipal waste landfills in Poland with the requirements of the Council Directive on the landfill of waste

In accordance with the negotiation commitments relating to Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste, Poland was obliged to submit to the European Commission information on the adoption of programmes for the closure and modernisation of existing municipal waste landfills and the localisation of the new sites of municipal waste landfills.

Moreover, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Accession, laid down in Annex XII, Chapter 13 "Environment", letter B "Waste management", point 3, in respect of existing municipal waste landfills, intermediate targets were set out for each year until 31 December 2011. The first intermediate target set out provides that not more than 85% of the total weight of the waste deposited at municipal waste landfills may be deposited at landfills which fail to meet the requirements, i.e. out of the estimated 13,200,000 Mg of all the waste deposited at municipal waste landfills, 11,200,000 Mg of waste may be deposited at such landfills.

The transposition of the provisions of the Directive on the landfill of waste into Polish legislation started a new stage with the aim of aligning waste landfills with the requirements set out in the legislation concerning waste management.

Each landfill operator was obliged to submit the environmental audit for a given waste landfill to the competent authority: Voivode or Starost. On the basis of the results of the environmental audits, the competent authority was obliged to issue by 31 December 2003 a relevant decision concerning the further operation of the waste landfill, pursuant to the provisions of national legislation, particularly Article 33 of the Act on the Introduction of the Environmental Protection Act and the Waste Act and on Amendments to Certain Acts (Official Journal No. 100, Item 1085, as amended).

Where an existing waste landfill failed to meet the technical and organisational requirements the competent authority could take the following decisions:

1. a decision on adjustment, providing for so-called “little adjustment”, issued where it was necessary at a given landfill to carry out works to build or equip the landfill with the following facilities: water-level gauges, datum points, fencing, a wastewater pre-treatment plant, a shallow-water chassis-washing facility, scales, a gas capture facility, a belt of greenery, a wire fence preventing the spreading of waste by the wind, machinery (compactor, tamping roller, tracked bulldozer), along with the designation of sampling points and other organisational measures at the landfill, pursuant to the regulations on waste landfills;
2. a decision on adjustment, providing for so-called “large adjustment”, where the competent authority deems that a thorough reconstruction of the waste landfill is indispensable, including e.g. the installation of a drainage system, banks and lining;
3. a decision ordering the closure of the waste landfill, where in respect of an existing waste landfill there is no possibility whatsoever for aligning its operation with the requirements provided for in the regulations on environmental protection.

At the same time, it should be explained that for individual waste landfills the competent authority could issue a decision providing for both “little adjustment” and “large adjustment”. Moreover, where, to ensure after-closure monitoring of the waste landfill, it was necessary e.g. to install water-level gauges, the competent authority could issue a decision on the closure and on “little adjustment”.

In contrast, where an existing waste landfill met the technical and organisational requirements provided for by the provisions of legislation, such decisions were not issued.

Given the still continued process of the preparation and adoption of Powiat waste management plans, in preparing this information use was made of the data provided by the plans which had already been adopted or the data to draw up the assumptions of draft plans which had been verified by Voivodes or Voivodship Marshals.

The qualification should be made that the lists and numbers given in this information may be revised when all the Powiat waste management plans have been adopted.

In accordance with the data received, on the basis of information approved by the Voivodship Marshals who are the authorities to which the landfill operators send information on the quantities and types of waste deposited at individual waste landfills, in 2003 municipal waste landfills held approximately 10,753,000 Mg of waste, including:

- approximately 3,414,000 Mg at landfills meeting the requirements,
- approximately 7,339,000 Mg at landfills failing to meet the requirements (representing 68% of all the waste deposited at municipal waste landfills).

Information is given below on the number of municipal waste landfills which, given their failure to meet the requirements, have been classified for modernisation in the form of moderate or substantial adjustment, depending on the type of measures which need to be taken at a landfill and the adjustment to meet the required technical conditions (Table 1), and those planned to be closed (Table 2). The data in the Tables originate from the decisions issued, as of 31 December 2003.

Table 1

Waste landfills to be modernised		
End date of modernisation	Number of landfills (little adjustment)	Number of landfills (large adjustment)
2004	39	27
2005	470	23
2006	9	4
2007	1	2
2009	11	56
2010	*	*
2011	*	*
2012	1	*
Total	545	118

* - Not envisaged at present

Table 2

Waste landfills to be closed	
Closure date	Number of landfills
2004	73
2005	157
2006	23
2007	16
2008	10
2009	63
2010	5
2011	1
2012	3
Total	361

It should be stressed that the situation of each municipal waste landfill is considered individually by the competent authority. In consequence, in respect of the remaining 130 municipal waste landfills, at present the process of taking decisions whether to modernise or close them is still under way.

In analysing the state of landfills in Poland, it is envisaged that 16 new sites will be established and 36 ones will be expanded (by adding new chambers at existing sites). In this scope, the following timetable is envisaged for setting them in operation:

- in 2004 – 21 landfills,
- in 2005 – 11 landfills,
- in 2006 – 6 landfills,
- in 2008 – 3 landfills.

Given the early stage of the procedure for the localisation of the remaining 11 waste landfills identified, at this time it is difficult to give the date when they are expected to be set in operation.

Table 3 shows the plans of individual Voivodships for the construction of new waste landfills and the expansion of existing waste landfills.

Table 3

Voivodship	Construction of new landfills	Expansion of existing landfills	Total
Dolnośląskie	3	2	5
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	1	4	5
Lubelskie	*	1	1
Lubuskie	*	*	0
Łódzkie	2	2	4
Małopolskie	*	1	1
Mazowieckie	*	2	2
Opolskie	*	3	3
Podlaskie	*	7	7
Podkarpackie	3	2	5
Pomorskie	1	*	1
Śląskie	*	11	11
Świętokrzyskie	2	*	2
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	2	1	3
Wielkopolskie	1	*	1
Zachodniopomorskie	1	*	1
Grand total	16	36	52

* - Not envisaged at present

In the light of the information given above on the quantities of waste deposited at municipal waste landfills failing to meet the requirements, it should be said that the first quantitative intermediate target laid down in the Treaty of Accession has been achieved.

In respect, however, of the gradual implementation of technical and organisational requirements for individual existing waste landfills which fail to meet the requirements set by legislation, the competent authorities have taken relevant decisions on their further operation providing for their adjustment to the requirements or setting the date for their closure.