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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPARISON OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: A CASE STUDY OF THE CITIES OF IAŞI, ROMÂNIA AND ENSCHEDE, NETHERLANDS

ΒY

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Abstract. Sustainable approach to solid waste management in any region can be achieved by integrated waste management systems. The waste management systems differ in developed and developing countries. The Netherlands has a unique waste management system, the Dutch approach to waste consist in "avoid waste as much as possible, recover the valuable raw materials from any waste that is created, try to generate energy by incinerating the residual waste, and only then dump what is left". Netherlands is today among the leading countries in terms of waste management and especially in recycling solid waste. Compared with the waste situation from Netherlands the waste management in România is far behind. Landfilling of municipal solid waste is still the most used method to disposal of waste in Romania. The solid waste management sector in România is expected to develop in the coming years. In this paper environmental impact evaluation of these two different systems was realized with GaBi4 software.

Key words: environmental impact, life cycle assessment, municipal solid waste.

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1. Introduction

Waste management represents an important issue for all countries. The manner in which the growing amount of solid waste is handled influences the human health and environment (Giusti, 2009; Ngoc & Schnitzer, 2009). The solid waste should be managed according to the hierarchy of waste (or Lansink's Ladder in The Netherlands) which comprises the most and less favourable options for waste management (Fig.1) (Ahluwalia & Nema, 2007; Banar et al., 2009; de Jong, 2011). There are big differences regarding waste collection and processing between the countries from European Union (EU). In 2006 the recycling rate was higher in West of Europe and lower in countries from East of Europe. The landfilling rate was lowest in countries such as Germany 1%, Netherlands 2%, Belgium and Denmark 6% and highest in East European countries: 85% in România, 80% in Hungary and Bulgaria (EVD, 2008; Eurostat, 2010). The Netherlands has a unique waste management system. Using policy to discourage landfilling and improve safety such as landfill decree (technical requirements and standards; financial covering of post-closure costs), landfill ban (no dumping for 32 types of wastes), landfill tax (extra tax for combustible waste) and reorganisation of the landfill sector and policy to encourage prevention, reuse and recycling and also by developing of a professional waste market Netherlands is today among the leading countries in terms of waste management and recycling of solid waste especially (SenterNovem, 2006; SenterNovem, 2009).

Compared with the waste situation from Netherlands the waste management in România is very far behind. In 2008 in Iași the municipal solid waste was only collected and transported to landfill. The waste management sector in România is expected to develop in the coming years because as part of European Union, România has to meet some targets related to waste management (Agentschap NL, 2011; ANPM, 2009).



Fig. 1 – Lansink's Ladder.

Environmental pressures from generation, collection and processing of waste including emissions to air, soil and water has different impacts on the human health and the environment. To evaluate the environmental issues connected with solid waste management systems can be used many models (Ghinea & Gavrilescu, 2010a; Ghinea & Gavrilescu, 2010b; Morrissey & Browne, 2004). One of the most useful methodologies for evaluation of solid waste management is life cycle assessment (LCA).

In this paper LCA was used to evaluate the existing solid waste management systems in 2008 in Iași, România and Enschede, Netherlands from environmental point of view.

2. Methodology

2.1. Life Cycle Assessment Methodology

Life cycle assessment comprises four major stages according to ISO standard (14040:2006): goal and scope definition, inventory analysis, impact assessment and interpretation. LCA can be used to evaluate the environmental impacts of different processes, systems. In recent years various models were developed based on LCA methodology and can be very useful in helping users to interpret the results of an LCA study (Ness et al., 2007; Winkler & Bilitewski, 2007). GaBi software is one of the models that support every stage of an LCA from data collection and organization to presentation of results (PE International, 2009). GaBi calculates the potential environmental impacts as well as other important quantities of a product system based on plans. The plan includes the system studied which is made up of processes and flows (PE International, 2009). In LCA terms, "a plan represents the system with its boundaries, processes represent the actual processes taking place, and flows represent all the inputs and outputs related to the system" (PE International, 2009). Gabi software includes LCA methodologies such as: CML 2001, CML 1996, Eco-Indicator 95, EDIP 1997, EDIP 2003 etc.

CML 2001 methodology was developed by Center of Environmental Science of Leiden University and succeeds the CML 1996 methodology. CML 2001 methodology includes a set of impact categories: obligatory impact categories, additional impact categories, other impact categories (Frischknecht *et al.*, 2007; Goedkoop *et al.*, 2008; JRC European Commission, 2010). For waste management systems the most important and relevant impact categories are abiotic depletion potential (ADP), acidification potential (AP), eutrophication potential (EP), global warming potential (GWP), human toxicity potential (HTP) and photochemical ozone creation potential (POCP) (Table 1).

Eco-Indicator 95 (EI 95) considers "the environmental effects (greenhouse effect, ozone layer depletion, acidification, eutrophication, smog and toxic substances) that damage ecosystems or human health on European scale"

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(Goedkoop *et al.*, 1996). Heavy metals, winter smog and carcinogenic substances are the specific impact categories for this methodology (Goedkoop, 1995).

Environmental Design of Industrial Products (EDIP 1997) is a Danish LCA methodology which covers the most of the emission-related impacts, resource use and working environment impacts (Wenzel *et al.*, 1997). Three different steps are included in this method: environmental impact potentials, normalization with a common reference, weighting of the normalized impact potentials (Frischknecht *et al.*, 2007).

(den boer et ut., 2005a, Ghinea & Gavineseu, 20100)				
Environmental indicators	Description of the impact category	Substances contributing to the impact category		
Global warming potential (GWP)	Represent the effect of increasing temperature in the lower atmosphere.	CO ₂ , CH ₄ , N ₂ O, CFCs, HCFCs, HFCs, Halons, CCl ₄ , CCl ₃ CH ₃ , CO		
Photochemical ozone formation (POCP)	Ozone is formed in the troposphere under the influence of sunlight when nitrogen oxides are present.	NOx, VOCs including CH ₄ , CO		
Acidification potential (AP)	A number of emissions are either acid or they are converted to acid by processes in the air.	SO ₂ , SO ₃ , NOx, HCl, HNO ₃ , H ₂ SO ₄ , HF, H ₂ S, NH ₃		
Eutrophication potential (EP)	Include all potential impacts of excessively high environmental levels of macronutrients.	NO ₂ , NH ₃ , PO ₄ ³ - P, N		
Human toxicity potential (HTP)	Negative effects on human health of toxic substances emitted to the environment.	VOC, particles, heavy metals, POPs, NO_x , SO_2 etc.		
Abiotic depletion potential (ADP)	Abiotic resources are natural resources such as iron ore, crude oil.			

 Table 1

 Description of the Most Relevant Impact Categories for Waste Management

 (den Boer et al. 2005a: Ghinea & Gavrilescu 2010b)

EDIP 2003 is an update of the EDIP 1997 methodology. Both methodologies show many similarities: accordance with the requirements of ISO 14042 and precede the same steps characterisation, normalisation and weighting (Hauschild & Potting, 2005). The main difference between EDIP 1997 and EDIP2003 lies in the choice of impact category (Hauschild & Potting, 2005).

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2.2. Scope, Functional Unit, System Boundaries, Scenarios

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the environmental impacts of two different municipal solid waste management systems (MSWMS) from two cities: Iaşi, România and Enschede, Netherlands and to highlight the difference between these systems. Two scenarios representing the MSWMS were developed based on the amounts of waste generated in 2008 in the cities of Iaşi and Enschede (Fig. 2) and analysed with GaBi software. The functional unit has been defined for: the first scenario (noted Sc Is) as the amount of solid waste generated in Iasi City and for the second scenario (noted Sc En) as the quantity of solid waste generated in Enschede City. The systems boundaries include: temporary storage of waste in containers, collection and transport and treatment, elimination processes of solid waste. Municipal solid waste management existent in Iasi, România in 2008 included only temporary storage of mixed waste (residual) from household in various containers, collection and transport of solid waste to a non-compliant landfill (Fig. 2 a). In 2008 the separate collection of waste by fraction was implemented only in some locations from the city just for collection of paper and PET waste (pilot projects).



Fig. 2 – Waste management systems in 2008, *a* – in Iaşi, România, *b* – Enschede, Netherlands.

Enschede has a well organized separate collection system for various waste fractions. The separation of household waste is realized at source and each fraction is temporarily stored in special containers. From these containers the solid waste are collected and transported by various private companies for processing/treatment. Municipal solid waste management system in Enschede included in 2008 the following methods for processing solid waste: recycling, sorting, composting and incineration (Fig. 2 b).

2.3. Inventory Analysis

All the inputs and outputs were established for the processes included in waste management systems evaluated. The amounts of waste generated in Iaşi in 2008 were taken from Iaşi County Council (2009). The number of containers, annual quantity of material required for containers fabrication were calculated according to den Boer *et al.*, (2005b) for the evaluation of temporary storage process.

Number of vehicle and loading capacity, transport distance, fuel consumption and emissions from fuel consumption are the main necessary data for the inventory of inputs and outputs of collection and transport processes. The municipality Iasi has 30 vehicles with total loading capacity of 1881 m³ (Doba *et al.*, 2008), the fuel consumption was estimated to 30 L/100 km (den Boer *et al.*, 2005b) and the density of diesel are 0.845 kg/L (Recycled Organics Unit, 2003). Fuel consumption emissions were calculated based on the quantity of emission (CO₂, CO, NO_x, N₂O, PM10, CH₄, SO₂ and hydrocarbons) resulted from burning of 1 kg of diesel (Recycled Organics Unit, 2003).

For landfilling process the inputs and outputs consist in amount of waste landfilled, fuel consumption, emissions from fuel consumption, landfill gas and leachate. The biogas potential was calculated, the content of pollutants in the gas flow was estimated according to den Boer *et al.* (2005b) and also the quantity of leachate was calculated based on area of landfill and annual average rainfall.

The amount of waste generated in 2008 in Enschede was taken from CBS (2011) statistics. Most of the necessary data for inventory analysis were collected from the Dutch Waste Management Association and Twence Company. Also most of the inputs and outputs for modeling of waste management system were calculated according with these data because the Twence Company is processing the waste collected not only from the Enschede but from the entire Twente Region. **Twence's** waste activities are: incineration, composting, separation, landfilling of solid waste (de Jong, 2011). The Twence Company produces besides energy compost and raw materials for reuse (metals, bottom ash).

3. Results

Both municipal solid waste management systems existent in 2008 in Iaşi, România and Enschede, Netherlands were analysed with GaBi software. Only the normalised values of the environmental impacts for different methodologies included in Gabi software are illustrated in Figs. 3,...,7.

For MSWMS from Iaşi (Sc_Is) the value of all impact categories from all methodologies analysed are positive this means a negative impacts on the environment. Global warming potential (GWP) for Sc_Is has high values because of the higher content of organic waste that was landfilled. The organic wastes are degraded through a series of consecutive reactions which are taking place in the body of landfill so that large molecules are broken down into simpler molecules, then these molecules are degraded in intermediate compounds such as fatty acids, ketones, aldehydes, alcohols and in third phase the intermediate compounds are degraded under anaerobic conditions first in acetates and hydrogen which will then form CH_4 and CO_2 (Sundqvist, 1999). CH_4 and CO_2 are the main constituents of the biogas and because the biogas is not collected the emissions will reach in atmosphere as contributors to global warming potential.

The eutrophication potential (EP) for MSWMS from Iaşi has high values because the leachate resulted after landfilling of waste is not collected and can easily reach in the soil and groundwater. The average values of N-NH₃ and PO₄³⁻ are 2358.82 mg/L respectively 7.13 mg/L (Schiopu *et al.*, 2009).



Fig. 3 – Environmental impacts of waste management systems in Iaşi (Is) and Enschede (En) – CML 2001 methodology.



Fig. 4 – Environmental impacts of waste management systems in Iaşi (Is) and Enschede (En) – CML 96 methodology.



Fig. 5 – Environmental impacts of waste management systems in Iaşi (Is) and Enschede (En) – EDIP 97 methodology.









For the existing system in Enschede (Sc_En) in 2008 are recorded environmental benefits, all impact categories had negative values (Figs. 3,...,7). It can be said that the existing system in Enschede in 2008 is more favorable in terms of environment than the system from Iaşi in the same year. The differences between the two systems are starting from temporary storage because in Enschede were containers for each type of waste but in Iaşi the separate collection was still in phases of pilot projects form and some containers were located in several places in Iaşi city in 2008. Also, in the same year, in Enschede landfilling of municipal waste was 0% but for Iaşi was the most used method for disposal of waste fractions.

4. Conclusions

In this study GaBi software was used to evaluate from environmental point of view two different municipal solid waste management systems from Iaşi, România and Enschede, Netherlands. Results showed that the waste management systems existent in Iaşi, România has to be improved.

Implementation of treatment/elimination methods such as: recycling of materials, composting of biowaste, incineration of residual waste can achieve environmental benefits. The model of waste management of leaders like Netherlands can be very helpful in choosing the way for a sustainable waste management.

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ANALIZĂ COMPARATIVĂ A SISTEMELOR DE MANAGEMENT AL DEȘEURILOR SOLIDE: STUDIU DE CAZ IAȘI, ROMÂNIA ȘI ENSCHEDE, OLANDA

(Rezumat)

Abordarea durabilă a managementului deșeurilor solide din orice regiune poate fi realizată prin sisteme integrate de management al deșeurilor. Sistemele de management al deșeurilor diferă atât în țările dezvoltate cât și în cele în curs de dezvoltare. Olanda are un sistem unic de management al deșeurilor, abordarea olandeză constă în "evitarea generării deșeurilor pe cât este posibil, recuperarea materialelor din orice tip de deșeu creat, generarea energiei prin incinerarea deșeurilor residuale și depozitarea deșeurilor rămase". Olanda este astăzi printre țările lider în ceea ce privește managementul deșeurilor și în special reciclarea deșeurilor solide. Comparativ cu situația din Olanda managementul deșeurilor din România este cu mult în urmă. Depozitarea deșeurilor solide municipale reprezintă cea mai utilizată metodă de eliminare a deșeurilor din România. O dezvoltare a sectorului de management al deșeurilor solide din România este preconizată pentru următorii ani. În această lucrare evaluarea impacturilor asupra mediului a celor două sisteme a fost realizată cu softul GaBi4.

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