

7th Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region - Vision 2030

Seminar Report

Title of Seminar: Closed loops: Innovative solutions in sludge management for a toxin free environment.

Name of Seminar Organiser: PAC Hazards, PAC Bioeconomy, PAC Nutri, HELCOM.

Name of Seminar Rapporteur: Jody Raditya Hanindyawan Handoko

Date: 9 November 2016

Time: 15.00 – 15.50

Venue: Lindgren

SUMMARY:

The seminar was started with series of presentation from several countries in the Baltic Sea region to describe the sludge management on each respective countries. Those countries are Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, German and Ragn-Sells; the Waste recycle company that operate in the Baltic region, mostly in Sweden. Most of the sludge used as fertilizer for agriculture, Landscaping and end up in the incineration process. Yet, the utilization of sludge overshadowed by the dangerous contents such as heavy metals, antibiotics, organochlorides, micro plastics, etc. Therefor, to make an innovative solution in sludge management, there are ecological objectives on hazardous substances, which are,

1. Concentration of hazardous substances close to natural levels,
2. All fish supposed to be safe to eat
3. A Healthy wildlife

HELCOM (Baltic Environment Protection Commission) has a main goal to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution, and to restore and protect its ecological balance. On the 3 October 2013 in Copenhagen, Denmark, HELCOM made a Copenhagen Ministerial Declaration and agree to enhance recycling of phosphorus (especially in agriculture and waste water treatment) and to promote development of appropriate methodology. HELCOM also propose a recommendation on sewage sludge handling. The recommendation identifies general principles for sustainable handling of sewage sludge and upstream measures to improve the quality of the sludge and paves the way for a regional dialog to elaborate regionally agreed parameters assuring maximum utilization of the valuable components of the sludge and minimize potential negative effects (Presure 5-2016, October 2016).

In general the presentation inform that all of the Baltic countries has to obey the EU directive 86/278/EEC in sludge usage; special to German that recycle under their own Fertilizer Product Act which is stricter than the EU Directive. So far, German has the best sludge management compare to other countries. In addition, RAGN-Sells proposed an innovative phosphorus waste management from the city's perspective. As argued by the German's representative, Phosphorus that being recycled from the sludge, could replace and decrease an extraction from nature; RAGN-Sells inform that "one ton recycled phosphorus replace fifty ton extracted virgin resources".

The seminar was ended with a discussion between speakers and the audience. The most intriguing debate was the fact that there is no ideal legislation to actualize a non-toxic waste management. The world is always changing, one of the speaker said that "what we fear is changing all the time, that is why we think about the present, and then we change it over the time". The best what we can do is by minimize the problem by implementing the precautionary principle and make a thorough risk assessment.