

Press Release No. 47/2011

Press Relation Officer: Martin Ittershagen

Deputy Press Relation Officer: Stephan Gabriel Haufe

PR-staff: Fotini Mavromati, Marc Rathmann, Martin Stallmann

Office: Doreen Redlich, Uwe Weber

Telephone: 0340/2103 -2122, -6625, -2318, -2250, -2507, -2669, -2637

Address: Federal Environment Agency, P.O. box 1406, 06813 Dessau-Roßlau

E-Mail: pressestelle@uba.de

Internet: www.umweltbundesamt.de

Facebook: www.facebook.com/umweltbundesamt.de



Waste knows no borders

Imports of waste requiring authorisation remain high

The volume of Germany's waste imports is much higher than its exports. According to current calculations for 2010, a total volume of 6.8 million tonnes of waste was imported to Germany. The majority is recycled and reused, for example as building material. Exports amounted to a mere 1.5 million tonnes, thus continuing the trend of previous years. On the other hand, there has been a sharp increase in transboundary transport of waste - a 31% rise over 2009. Illegal waste shipments are prosecuted by the authorities.

The import of waste requiring authorisation has dropped slightly as compared to the previous year, yet the 6.8 million-tonne volume that Germany imports continues to be excessive. The imported wastes mainly consist of treated wood, filter dusts and other residues from scrubber systems. Most of it is recycled or reused in some form and thus conserves natural resources. Nearly one tenth is stored in officially monitored landfills. The majority of imported volumes comes from the Netherlands (2.6 mn tonnes) and Italy (1.3 million tonnes). Exports of waste in 2010 rose again over 2009 levels- possibly as a result of economic recovery. Exports consisted mainly of waste sorting residues. Major customer countries are the Netherlands (.3 million tonnes) and Poland and Switzerland with .2 million tonnes each.

Germany's roads were used more heavily as a transit route for waste in 2010 than in 2009. A volume of .4 million tonnes of waste was moved throughout the country- an increase of 31%. The rise owes mainly to used wood shipments from western and southern European destined for Sweden.

Because proper waste disposal incurs costs, incidents of illegal shipments occur time and again. Crime statistics for 2009 registered 8 cases of fines of up to 180 day-fines for illegal waste shipments, although there was no record of any detentions. According to data from the Länder and the Federal Freight Traffic Agency (Bundesamt für Güterverkehr) for the same time period, 83 cases of repatriation of illegal shipments were ordered, and fines amounting to a total €13,000 were charged. The data for the previous years was similar.

Further information and links:

Figures on trade in waste not requiring authorisation are provided by the Federal Statistical Office, with a focus on scrap metal, glass and paper waste, which reveal imports of 19.3 million

tonnes and imports of 12.2 million tonnes in 2009. This is a decline of 8% in exports over 2008, and 18% in imports.

Detailed statistics and further information are available online at
<http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/abfallwirtschaft/abfallstatistik/basel.htm>.

Dessau-Roßlau, 10 October 2011