



environmental
services
association

ESA PRESS COMMENT

ESA: too early to tell if Chinese ban will disrupt UK recycling markets

LONDON, 19 July 2017: The Environmental Services Association (ESA), the voice for the UK's resource and waste management industry, today commented on China's announcement that it will stop accepting shipments of certain waste paper and plastic.

Mr. Jakob Rindegren, Recycling Policy Advisor, said:

“ESA has been made aware that China has notified the WTO about a ban on various recyclates, including scrap plastics and unsorted paper, taking effect from 1 January 2018. We also understand submissions have been made to contest the ban. It is still unclear whether the ban would be unconditional or allow materials meeting stricter quality limits.

ESA is following these developments closely and our members are committed to limit any disruptions that could occur. However, it is too early to comment on the implications of a ban, if imposed, not least before all details are known. “

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The [Environmental Services Association](#) (ESA) is the trade association representing the UK's resource and waste management industry, which is leading the transformation of how the UK's waste is managed.

2. We work with all levels of government, regulators and the public to deliver a more sustainable waste and resource management solution for the UK. ESA's recent Circular Economy report '*Going for Growth – A practical route to a circular economy*', which outlines how a Circular rather than a linear economy can help manage resources sustainably, can be downloaded [here](#).
3. ESA's Members manage waste on behalf of the whole of society and we are recovering more than ever before. For example, the industry has helped quintuple the UK's household recycling rates over the last decade.
4. **The sector at a glance**
 - Total turnover: **£11 billion**
 - Direct Employment: **106,000 people** (*including waste collection, treatment and materials recovery*)
 - Municipal waste handled each year: **27 million tonnes**
 - Energy generated (across landfill gas, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste) each year: **approximately 11,867 GWh**, which is 3.5% of the UK's electricity
 - **9,083 GWh of that was renewable electricity** (taking out non-biodegradable portion of EfW) which is **11%** of UK's renewable electricity
 - Greenhouse **gas emissions down by 70% since 1990.**
 - The **top seven companies account for approximately 40% of turnover**. Many hundreds of SMEs provide either localised or more specialised services
 - Waste & recycling is the **most highly rated of all council services** by the public (2016 survey)

For further details please visit www.esauk.org

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