EU Regulation of Wastes

Inception Workshop

Mercury Storage and Disposal Project in the Caribbean

Port of Spain

12-13 August 2015

General EU Rules for Waste Storage (1)

Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill*) of waste

- Key piece of EU legislation in the field of waste disposal
- Stringent operational and technical requirements to prevent possible negative effects on the environment
- Not to be operated without appropriate permit by competent authority

*) notion "landfill" = very broad, covers sites for waste disposal onto or into land



General EU Rules for Waste Storage (2)

Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste (cont.)

- Application for permit must contain all relevant information
 - type and quantity of waste
 - capacity of the site
 - geological and hydrogeological characteristics
 - proposed measures for pollution control
 - monitoring and control plan
 - plan for closure and after-care of the site
 - financial security provided by applicant
 - environmental impact assessment (acc. to local conditions)
- Permit only to be granted if authority is satisfied with all elements
- Liquid waste not to be accepted in a landfill, but now derogation for metallic mercury



General EU Rules for Waste Storage (3)

2003/33/EC: Council Decision of 19 December 2002 establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

- Complement and particularizing of the landfill directive by detailed technical requirements
- Criteria for waste acceptable at landfills dedicated to hazardous waste*)
- Criteria for underground storage, including specific considerations for salt mines
- Long-term safety assessment required for underground storage
- All provisions of landfill directive as well as of criteria and procedures apply to a storage facility of metallic mercury

Metallic mercury as well as waste containing mercury is classified as hazardous waste under EU legislation



EU Criteria for Underground Disposal (1)

Council Decision 2003/33/EC establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

- Criteria for underground storage
- A site-specific safety assessment as defined in Annex A
- Importance of geological barrier
- Ultimate objective of underground storage = Isolation of wastes
 from the biosphere
- Wastes + geological barrier + cavities + engineered structures
 - + technical aspects must fulfill the corresponding requirements



EU Criteria for Underground Disposal (2)

Council Decision 2003/33/EC establishing criteria and procedures for the acceptance of waste at landfills

- The site-specific assessment of risk requires the identification of:
- The hazard (deposited wastes)
- The receptors (biosphere and possibly groundwater)
- The pathways by which substances from the wastes may reach the biosphere

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