



How waste management companies adapt their business models to environmental challenges

SEA met Yves Decelle, Project Manager at Suez, and Dieter Grimmelprez, COO at Vanheede, to understand how waste management companies can make their business models evolve, taking environmental challenges into account.

Waste management companies have a key role to play in better managing our resources

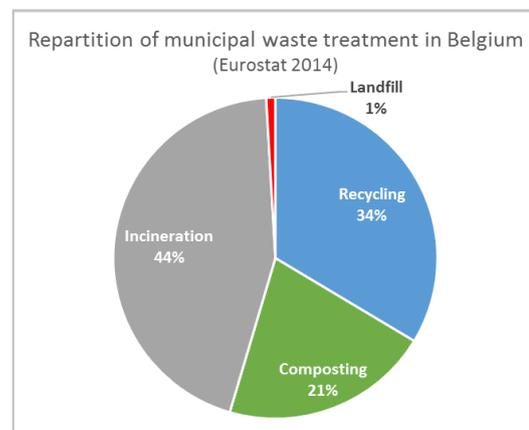
Recycling waste into raw materials (full circle) and into materials for energy production (short circle) are the most common frameworks to limit landfill storage and waste incineration.

In Belgium, 55% of municipal waste is either recycled or composted.

In terms of processes and technologies to valorise the highest possible percentage of collected waste, Vanheede and Suez are rather advanced companies.

In 2015, Vanheede recycled close to 70% of the waste treated and turned it into raw materials, such as:

- Composting organic waste to be used as fertiliser or transformed into biogas, a renewable energy source.
- Transforming plastic waste is transformed into shreds of plastic ready to be re-used for production.
- Recycling over 50% of collected textile floor coating for the production of new coating, while transforming the rest into alternative fuel pellets for the cement industry.



A logical consequence of the vision upheld by Dieter Grimmelprez, Vanheede's COO: "If you cannot close the full circle by recycling into raw materials, you should at least close the closest circle by using it for energy production."

Waste management companies are a source of great advice on material and product design

Vanheede and Suez are also more and more active very early on in the value chain, providing advice to production companies on which materials to use in order to facilitate recycling at the end of their products' life cycle.

Their broad experience with all kinds of raw and processed materials is of great value to manufacturing companies, helping them to conceive products that are easy to recycle.

Think of the example of a floor coating, which can be composed of many different raw materials that can be more or less easy to decompose for recycling.

To make the right material choices, companies need to measure and compare CO2 emissions, resource needs and the impacts of negative externalities, all throughout the product life cycle.

Measures to incentivize companies reducing their waste footprint remain necessary

Regulatory requirements are key in incentivizing companies to establish contracts with sustainable waste management companies.

Dieter and Yves believe that bad practices and negative externalities still need to be controlled and subject to penalties, in order to motivate companies to opt for a more sustainable treatment of their waste.

More and more companies start asking questions about what happens to their sorted waste and what positive impact their efforts have on the environment, in terms of reducing CO2 emission.

To encourage good behaviour, it is important that waste management companies deliver consistent monitoring and verified certificates of the waste treated and valorised. This enables the client companies to communicate their waste management efforts to their stakeholders.

Collaboration is crucial to build a sustainable future together

Within the waste management industry, private and public waste collectors and recyclers collaborate to avoid de-multiplying waste treatment factories per type of waste and per player. There are numerous Private-Public Partnerships with Municipalities around organic waste management, recycling and incineration.

Beyond the sector boundaries, collaboration between waste management and production companies enables building long term solutions to use our limited resources in an optimal and responsible way.

What will be the future of waste?

100% recycling, 100% bio degradable, drastic reduction of waste by using unpackaged products? What will be the future of waste?

How will our future generations people and companies change their behaviour?

What new more optimal solutions will be invented?

Our future still needs to be designed and built together.



Vanheede Environment Group is an integrated environmental company specializing in waste management and innovative environmental technologies. Besides a waste logistics organized internationally, Vanheede has its own processing sites, where it treats more than 1.850 different types of waste and transforms them into new raw materials or energy.

In recent years, they have accumulated a lot of knowledge around:

- Product design by thinking in terms of circle or chain
- Reverse logistics
- CO2 balance

Their motto: "Closing the closest loop".



Dieter Grimmelprez currently is **COO at Vanheede** and has been with the company for 22 years. He is still passionate about the challenges and innovations happening in the industry.



Specializing in the protection, optimization and production of essential resources **SUEZ** provides industrial services for public and private sectors. Worldwide, SUEZ provides its customers (authorities, industry, consumers) concrete solutions to face the new challenges of resource management:

- intelligent services to optimize water management and develop alternative water resources through recycling of wastewater or desalination
- collection and disposal of waste and encouraging the use of waste to produce secondary raw materials and renewable energy
- innovative consulting solutions for sustainable development of cities and territories.



Yves Decelle is **Project Manager at SUEZ Belgium** and has been with the company for 12 years. Before joining SUEZ Belgium, he worked as an Advisor at the Ministry of Environment in Brussels, a Project Engineer at WATCO and an Assistant to the Director of the Ministry of Environment and Energy in the Seychelles.