



**Statement by Mr. Jaanus TAMKIVI,  
the Estonian Minister of the Environment,  
at the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the  
Commission on Sustainable Development  
Ministerial Round Table  
“Strategies for Sustainable Chemicals and Waste Management”**

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Dear colleagues,

Estonia lined up with the general position brought up by the EU during the session. As already referred by the EU, the EU waste management policy is based on the official 5-level waste hierarchy. Estonia has during the last decade focused principally on implementation of the waste management hierarchy. As in many countries, the solution with the waste has been in previous years landfilling. To achieve higher levels of the hierarchy the last one, the disposal, including landfilling, should be well controlled, otherwise cheap and uncontrolled landfilling will counteract with the other preferred aims.

Estonia has in this process very positive experience to address environmental pressures with environmental taxes on resource use and waste disposal, as it is with the economic measures.

Estonia has imposed both natural resource taxes to motivate sustainable use of all natural resources, but increasingly also environmental taxes on landfilling of waste, including all industrial waste. This is to motivate the implementation of waste hierarchy principle and to decrease waste amounts and hazardousness as well as to promote the recovery of waste in different forms.

Of course, the implementation of such environmental taxation increases production costs. During the last few years all economic operators have shown constant interest to act more sustainably on the resource use, which has clearly helped to trigger major private sector investments to the waste management sector. Before that, the waste management sector and project developers relied in major part on state support. So in Estonia economic measures have supported both waste hierarchy as well as the polluter pays principle.

This has enabled the government to redirect collected funds from environmental taxes back to the different environmental projects, including the direct investment support for the waste management projects and predominantly to also support the waste hierarchy application. Beside direct investments, projects on environmental awareness and education are supported, which are equally important for the future developments.

Thank you!