Plastic waste and resource efficiency – an emerging challenge

Plastic Recyclers Annual Meeting 2012

Soledad Blanco, Director

European Commission, DG Environment, Brussels, 22 November 2012

Thematic Strategy on Waste Prevention and Recycling

Framework

Waste Framework Directive
(Includes Municipal and Construction Demolition waste)

Waste Shipment Regulation

Treatment

Incineration Directive

Landfill Directive

Recycling Standards (future)

Streams

Packaging

Batteries

WEEE & Restriction of use

Vehicles
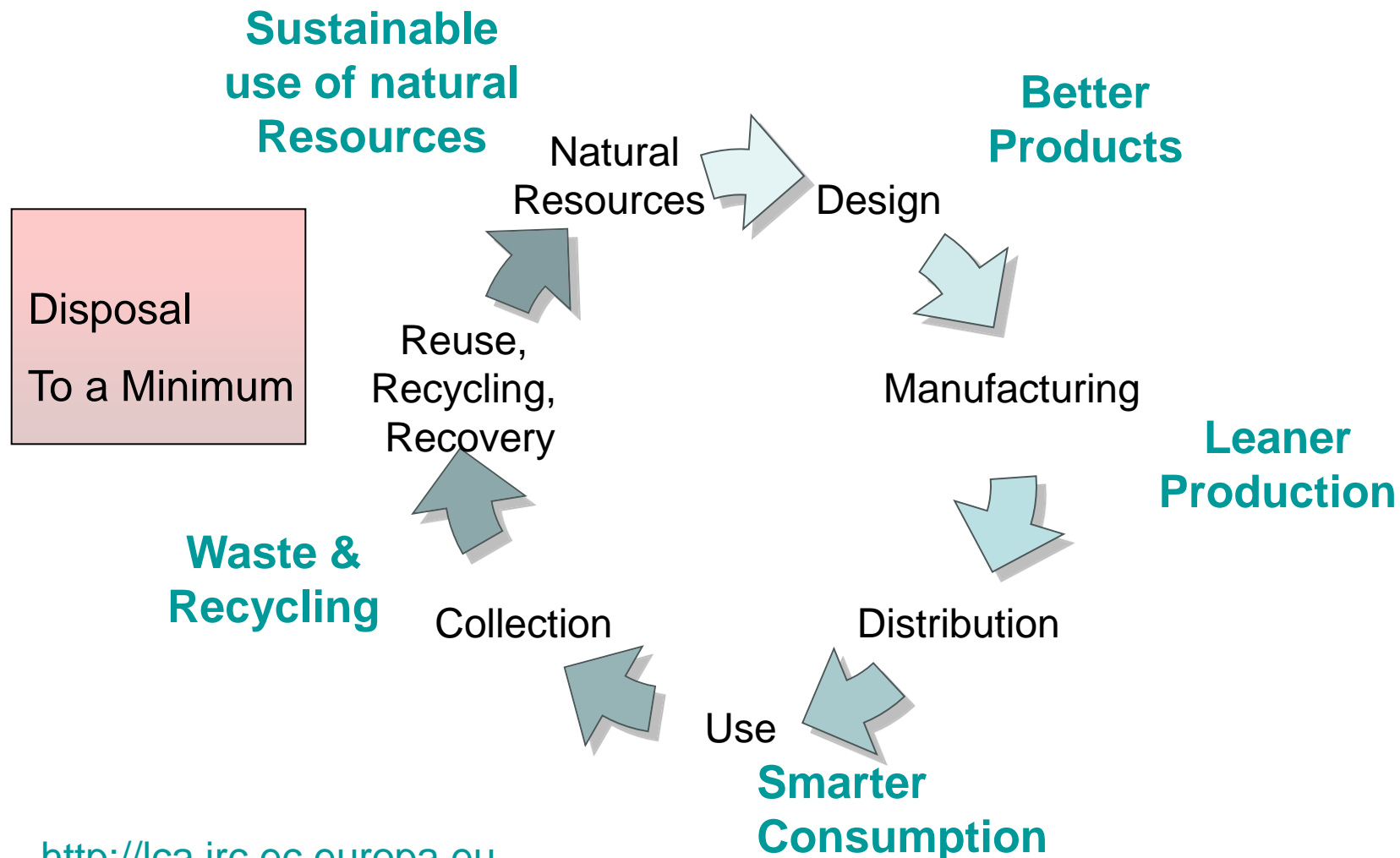
Mining waste

Sewage Sludge

PCB/PCT

In Brown : with targets

Environmental Objectives Art. 1 WFD The WFD as the "Constitution" of European waste law

- **Preventing and reducing the adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste**

- **Ressource conservation**

- **Ressource efficiency**

EU Approach – Life Cycle Thinking

Sustainable use of natural Resources

Better Products

Leaner Production

Smarter Consumption

Waste & Recycling

Natural Resources

Design

Manufacturing

Distribution

Use

Collection

Reuse, Recycling, Recovery

Disposal
To a Minimum

http://lca.jrc.ec.europa.eu
LCA-waste@jrc.it

Waste prevention – Key tool for preserving resources

2013:   waste prevention programmes

- **set objectives**
- **determine benchmarks or targets**
- **describe prevention measures**

Promotion of eco-design for products
Campaigns to change consumer behaviour
Supporting the reduction of industrial waste (EMAS, ISO 14001)
Green public procurement

2014: **Commission to propose** *waste prevention and decoupling objectives by 2020, if appropriate*

end-of-waste criteria

- ***End-of-waste criteria for plastic*** *should*

  - support recycling markets and
  - boost resource efficiency

- *JRC Report finalised and under analysis*

- *Criteria should be:*

  - **Simple**
  - **Practicable**
  - **Effective and efficient**

Recycling targets boost resource efficiency

By 2020 (Art. 11 WFD):

- **Achieve** preparation for re-use, recycling of household waste including plastic to *a minimum of overall"* 50% **by weight.**

- **Achieve** preparation for re-use, recycling and backfilling of 70% construction & demolition waste

- *Target review foreseen in 2014*

Other measures to improve resource efficiency

Separate collection (Art. 11 WFD)

- **At least of paper, metal, plastic, glass by 2015**
    - → **higher yield, better quality**
    - + **Specific provisions on Batteries, WEEE, Packaging and PCB/PCT**
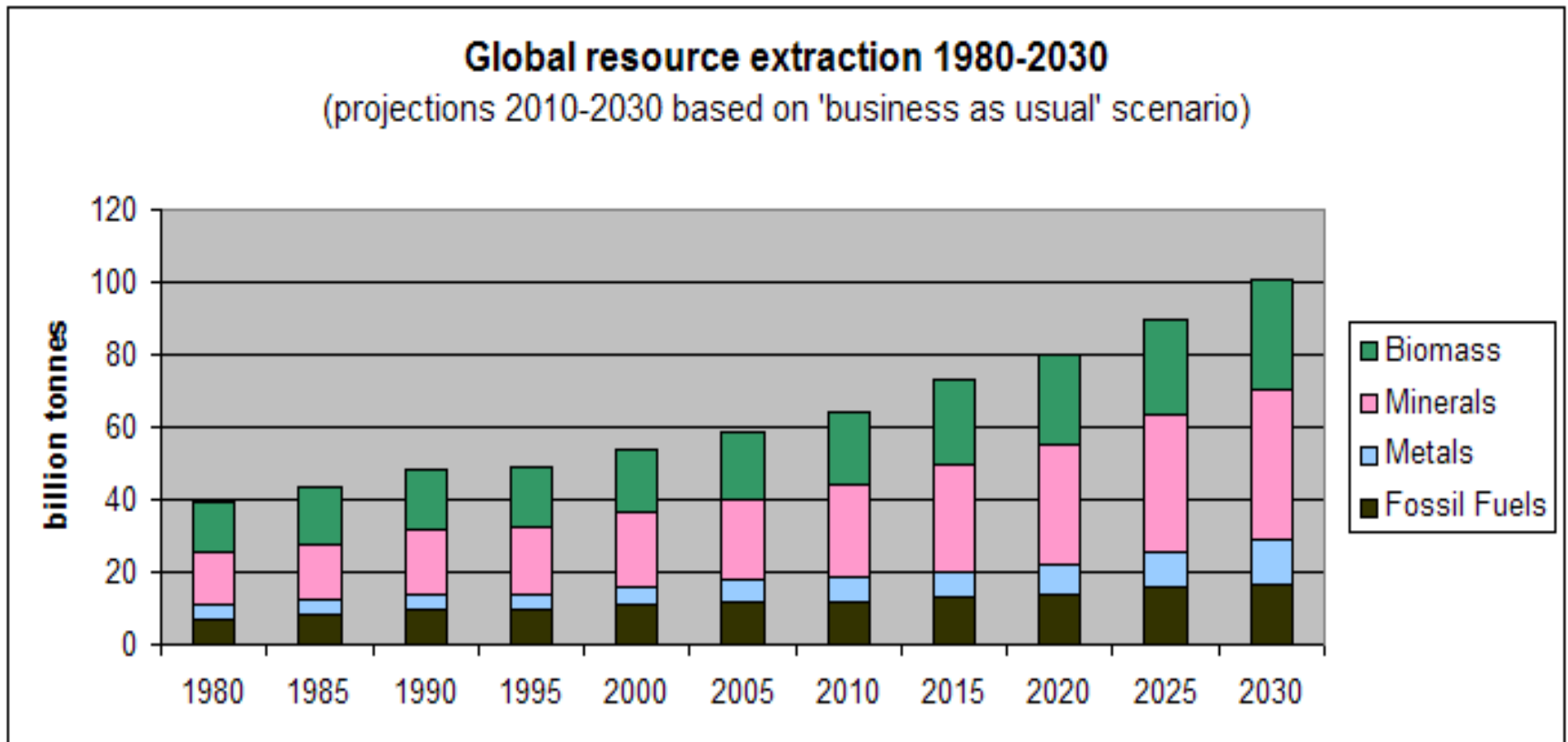
Extended producer responsibility

- **Soft law ("may") leaving it to Member States to set the rules**

- **Highest potential to achieve resource efficiency**
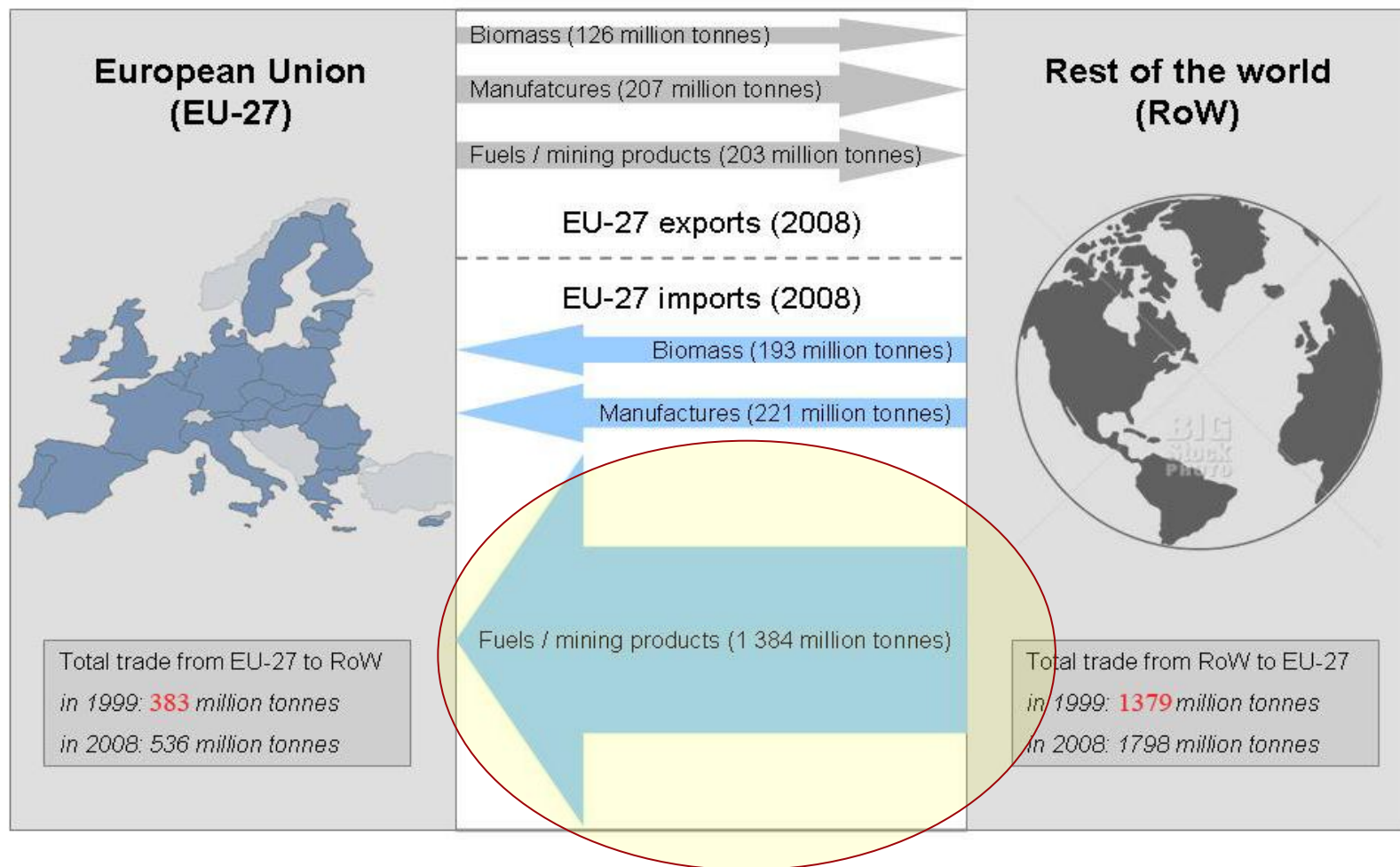
a sleeping beauty →→

Why all the fuss about resource efficiency ?

Only one single Planet Earth

Global resource extraction 1980-2030

(projections 2010-2030 based on 'business as usual' scenario)

Source: EEA 2010 derived from SERI GLOBAL 2000, Friends of the Earth Europe (2009)

European
Commission

European Union (EU-27)

Rest of the world (RoW)

Biomass (126 million tonnes)

Manufatcures (207 million tonnes)

Fuels / mining products (203 million tonnes)

EU-27 exports (2008)

EU-27 imports (2008)

Biomass (193 million tonnes)

Manufactures (221 million tonnes)

Fuels / mining products (1 384 million tonnes)

Total trade from EU-27 to RoW
in 1999: 383 million tonnes
in 2008: 536 million tonnes

Total trade from RoW to EU-27
in 1999: 1379 million tonnes
in 2008: 1798 million tonnes

Source: Eurostat Comext Statistics, EEA 2010, The European Environment, State and Outlook 2010 : Thematic Assessment – Material Resources and Waste
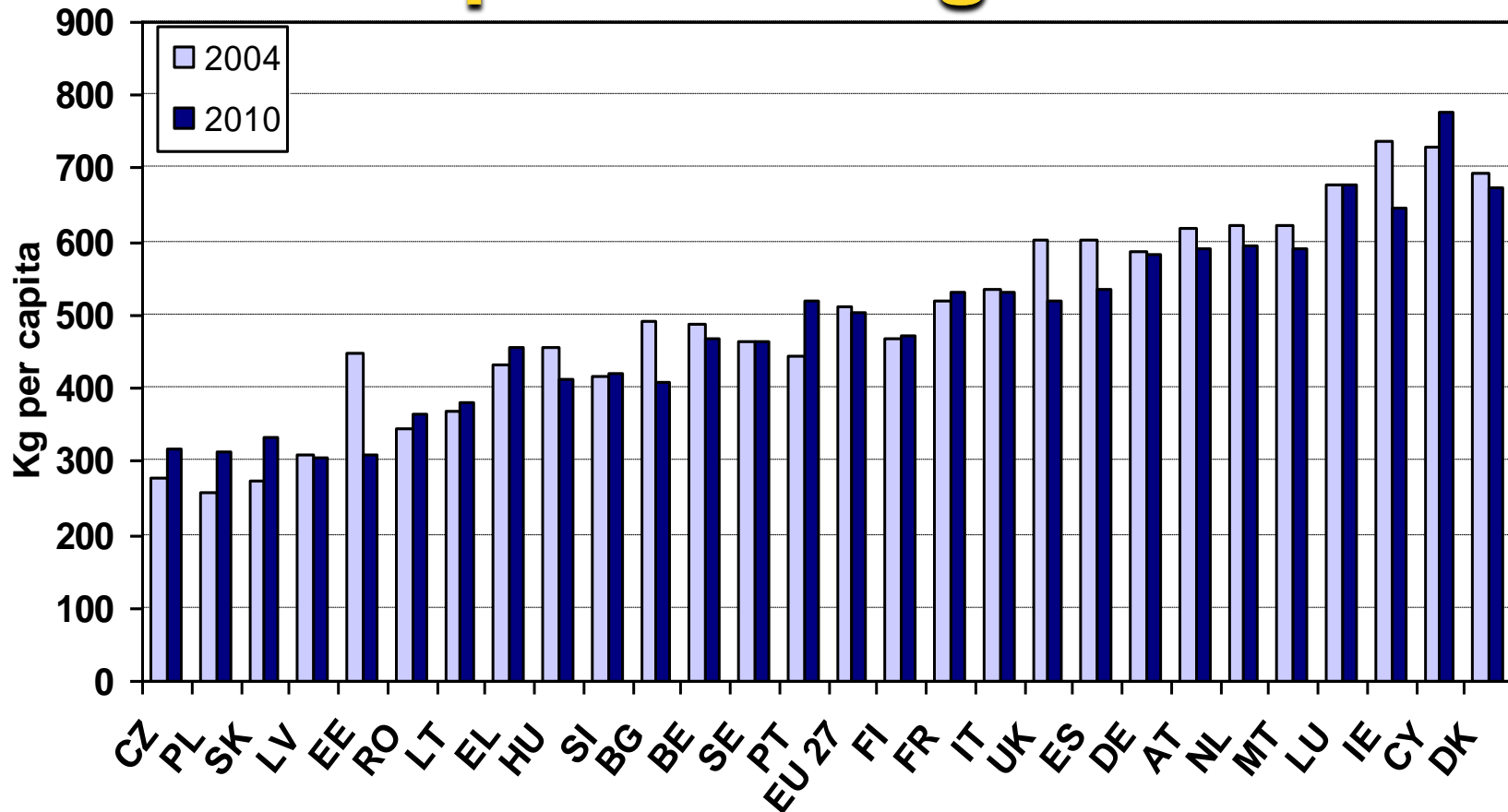
Roadmap to Resource Efficiency
Waste as a Resource
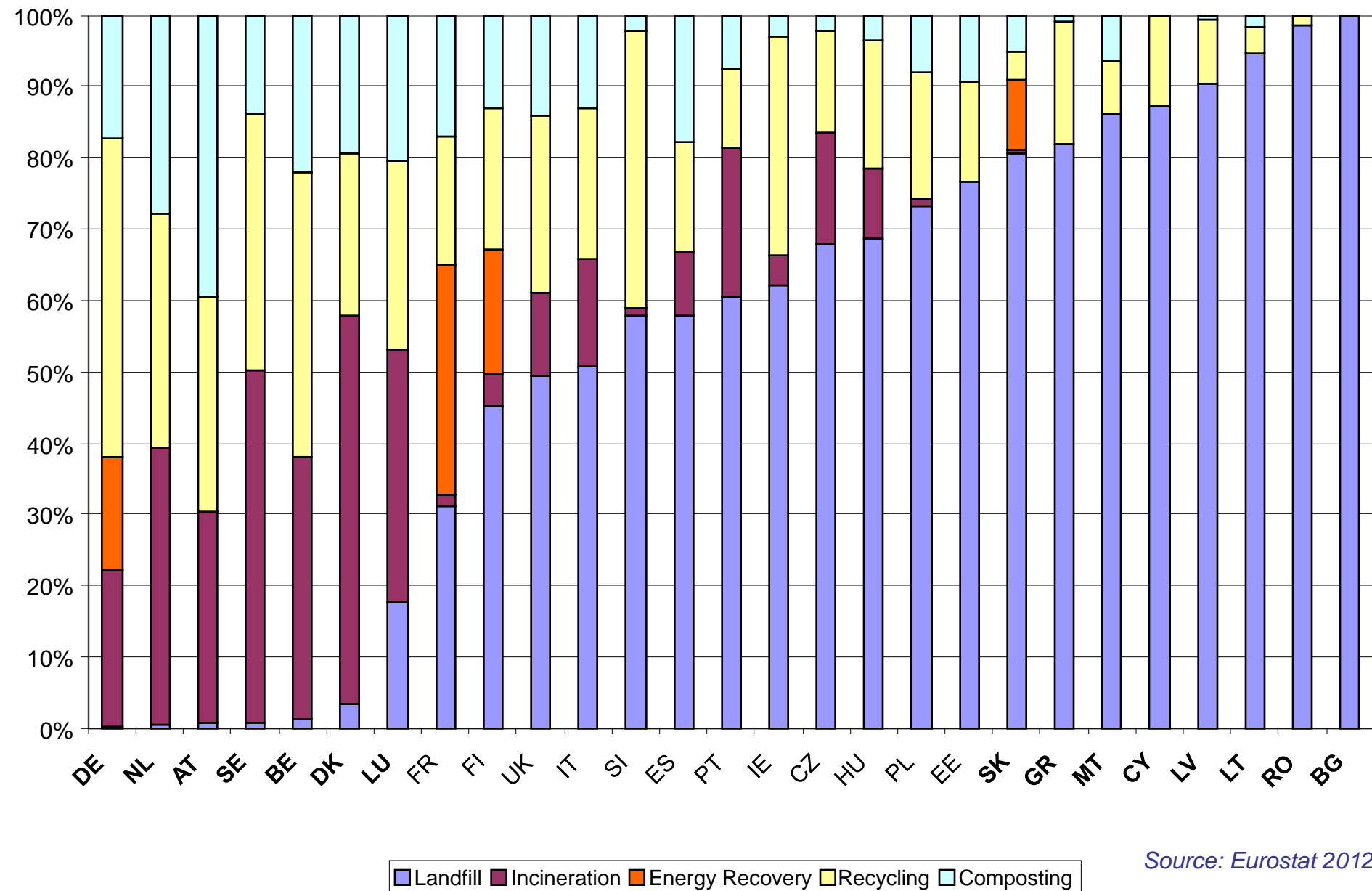
2020 aspirational objectives

- Full implementation of the EU waste acquis

- **Waste prevention/Recycling**

- Landfilling virtually eliminated

The Status Quo

Municipal waste generation

Source: Eurostat 2012

Municipal waste Treatment (2010)

Legend: Landfill | Incineration | Energy Recovery | Recycling | Composting

Countries (x-axis): DE, NL, AT, SE, BE, DK, LU, FR, FI, UK, IT, SI, ES, PT, IE, CZ, HU, PL, EE, SK, GR, MT, CY, LV, LT, RO, BG

Source: Eurostat 2012

Continuous challenge of Implementation

in the EU still around 50% of plastic waste is wasted in landfills → Lost opportunities for green growth

Illegal and substandard dumping is practise in many Member States → hazards for human health and environment

The 7th EAP sets implementation high on the agenda.

> *The EU is lacking an independent auditing capacity*

Full implementation

=

new opportunities

General waste legislation

- €72 Billion p.a. savings

- €42 Billion increase of p.a. turnover in waste management and recycling

- 400.000 new jobs by 2020 in the EU

Only plastic recycling

- 70% recycling rate = 162.018 new jobs by 2020

Green Paper on Plastic Waste

→ Do more with less

→ Reuse

→ Recycle/Producer responsibility

→ Durability

→ Chemical design

→ Close the Loop from pruduction to disposal

Thank you for your attention !

Additional sources of information:

DG ENV "waste" website: http://ec.europa.eu/environment//waste/index.htm

    Resource Efficiency: http://ec.europa.eu/resource-efficient-europe/index_en.htm

    Study on Economic Instruments: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/use.htm

Eurostat Databases: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/waste/introduction

EEA: http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/waste