

The waste transport system in the Lille metropolis
How an inland port can help to organize a sustainable transport system for waste

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In 1998 the Lille Metropolis (1,1 million inhabitants) has experienced a serious problem with the incinerators that burned its domestic wastes (+/- 1.300 Tons per day). Because of a high level of dioxin dumping, the 3 incinerators were stopped. Solutions have to be found before a new and more efficient incinerator was built and put into service.

The Ports of Lille proposed to the Urban Community to use the waterway transport for a part of the domestic waste that had to be sent to a landfill plant in the area. This system was put into service in June 1999. Waste were put into 20' open top containers, loaded into barges and transported by waterways to the landfill plant. Between June 1999 and December 2002, when the new incinerator was fully operational, more than 55.400 containers were transported by barge.

Even after, a part of the waste still kept on using this system (25.000 containers between 2003 and 2006).

The consequence of this experience is that it convinced the Urban Community to trust the waterways transportation for large volumes of waste. In the new organization, the valorisation plants have been settled along the canal, into ports areas, in order to be able to use environmentally friendly modes of transport. This year, in 2007, 2 plants will be put into service, using waterways transportation for more than 200.000 tons per year.

Ports of Lille has launched in 2003 a similar system for worn out glass, which is used to make new glass. Since July 2003, more than 13.000 containers of glass have been transported by barge.

These examples show that inland ports can be reliable and efficient partners in the urban policy, especially for waste transport which is a crucial question.