

Learning From European Step Changes In Waste Management – Understanding The Risks

by

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The Tenth Malaysia Plan calls for sound resource management and preservation of resources in Malaysia. This requires a step change in waste management in order to treat more waste as a resource rather than a liability. The recent enforcement of the Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Act (2007), and the signing of the associated Concession Agreements in September 2011 provide the framework to deliver modern, efficient and flexible waste management services. The next stage is Delivery.

In 1991, with their revised version of the Waste framework Directive, the EU continued a process of waste management regulatory reform and waste management service privatisation to deliver step changes in waste management and drive waste up the hierarchy from disposal through to recovery, recycling, reuse and, finally, prevention. This is the position Malaysia finds itself in right now and this paper outlines the experiences and lessons learned in the delivery of these improvements to waste services and associated infrastructure over the past two decades. It deals with the six key risk areas to be considered and managed in the successful delivery of any waste management project.

1. Public engagement and behavioural change
2. Suitability of collection systems
3. Infrastructure risks (suitability of technologies, feedstock, outputs, markets, sites)
4. Funding
5. Procurement and contract structures
6. Service management and monitoring

This paper addresses each of these key risk areas and presents the lessons learned and recommendations for managing these risks based on the Author's experience of recent and ongoing UK based contracts. It uses the successes (and mistakes) made in the EU context to provide key pointers towards the successful delivery of efficient, adaptable, flexible and value for money solutions for waste management services in Malaysia.