**Enhanced Landfill Mining Symposium**  
EEC/WTERT Participation at ELFM Conference  
Houthalen-Helchteren, Belgium  
October 14-16

On October 14-16, Charles Mussche, EEC Research Associate, gave a presentation on "State of Municipal Solid Waste in the United States, China and Japan" at the 2nd International Academic Symposium of Enhanced Landfill Mining. Held at the Greenville (Center of Cleantech in Houthalen-Helchteren, Belgium), academic institutions from 10 EU member countries attended the Symposium, many from Northern Europe where the level of sustainable waste management is exceptionally high. Europe has an enormous amount of old landfills, each containing valuable resources that are untapped and could potentially create more regional independence on raw materials.

As a result, a pioneering project called ‘Closing the Circle’ was initiated in Limburg, Belgium. Numerous research institutions are part of the Steering Committee (VITO, KUL, UHasselt, HUBrussel), as well as non-profit organizations (Cleantechpunt, LRM, BBL) and a private company (Group Machiels). The old landfill has been in operation since the mid ’70. The landfill itself covers an area of 130 hectares and is situated in the vicinity of 3 municipalities. The CtC site is surrounded by an old coalmine, a military training camp and one of the most important natural reserves in Flanders, Belgium. This latter explains the strong interest to restore the entire area as sustainable nature. The amount, type and location of the landfilled waste streams, at the Remo landfill, are well documented. More than 16 million ton of municipal and industrial waste, such as steel slags, car shredder residues, C&D waste and sludge has been landfilled over the years.

As became clear during the closing debate on the 16th of October that the ELFM has a bright future in the EU and aims to facilitate the transition to a low-carbon, circular economy. In this respect an EU-wide Enhanced Landfill Mining Consortium has been erected, which will:

1. Map ELFM projects in the EU
2. Benchmark ELFM technologies
3. Propose legal and economic guidelines for ELFM in EU
4. Set up joint research and demonstration projects
5. Disseminate ELFM to a diversity of audiences
The formal decision to go ahead with this initiative was reached during a pre-kick-off meeting on the 14th of October, which was attended by 35 ELFM Actors from more than 10 EU Member States and WTERT-US. A temporary Steering Committee was set up that will prepare the launching of this new Consortium.

To learn more about the Closing the Circle project and the Enhanced Landfill Mining consortium, visit the following link: http://www.elfm.eu/en/Default.aspx