



European Union Network for the Implementation
and Enforcement of Environmental Law

IMPEL

Impact of China's Green Fence Policy

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Some figures



- China is a big importer of plastic, paper and metal waste from across Europe
- The Bureau of International Recycling China estimates that China last year imported 7.3 million tonnes of plastic scrap from Europe, Japan and USA, and 27 million tonnes of waste paper.
- UK exports ~180,000 tonnes post consumer recovered plastic packaging (~25% of UK plastic packaging exports) and over 1 million tonnes of recovered mixed paper (~70% of UK mixed paper exports) and to China
- Export of waste from NL to China in 2016: 106,069 tonnes of plastic; 1,835,781 tonnes of paper and 283,215 tonnes of metal

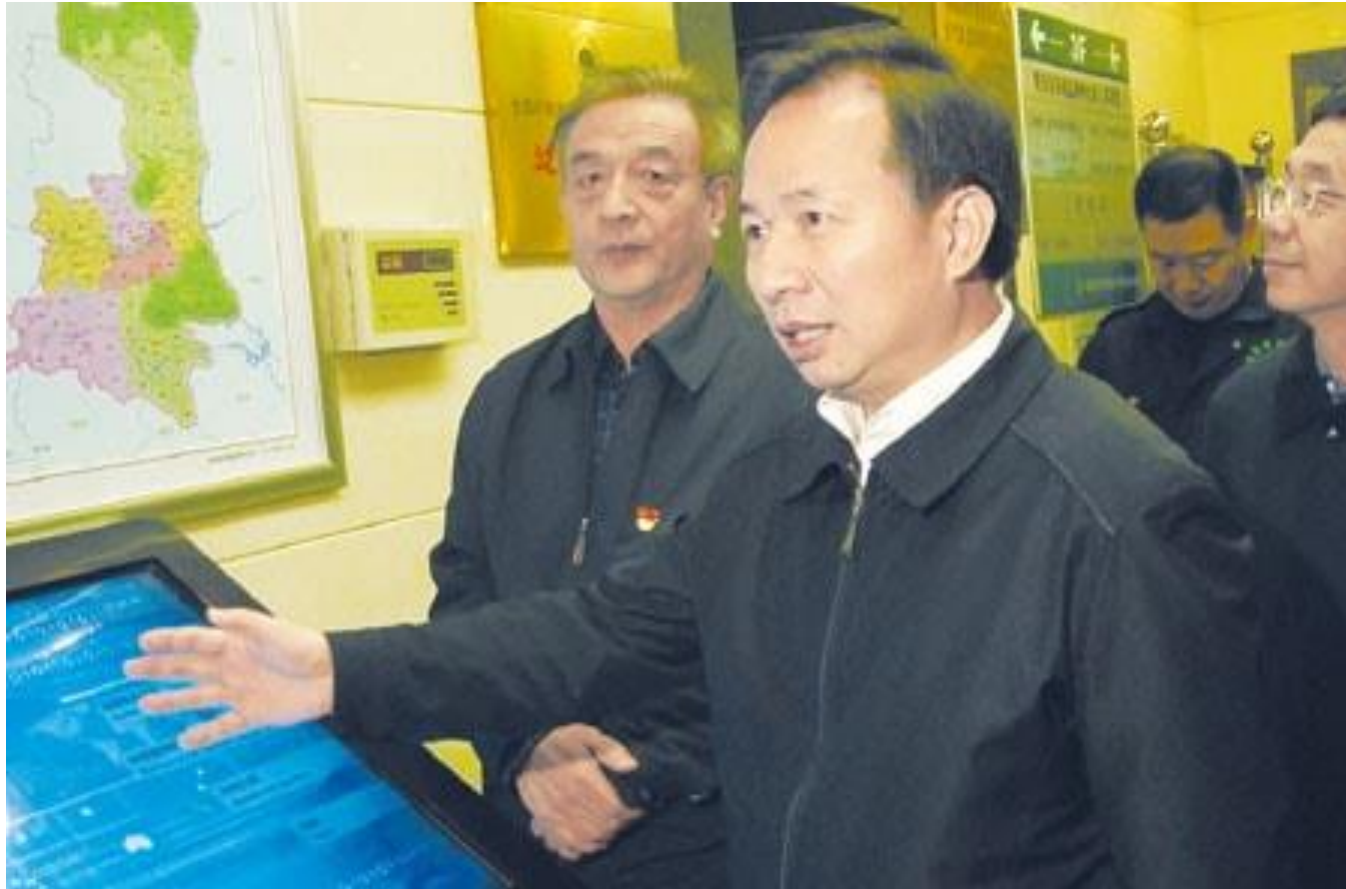


Developments in China

- Since around 2005 more focus on quality of the waste
- 2012 Green Fence
- Beginning of 2017 National Sword



In July 2017 China notified the World Trade Organisation of the import restrictions on 24 categories of waste



China's Minister for Environmental Protection, Li Ganje, on an inspection visit to Shaanxi earlier this month



The filing with the WTO covers:

- Eight categories of plastics waste (covering LDPE, HDPE, PET, PVC and PS) from
- living sources (we take this to mean post-consumer)
- One type of paper waste (unsorted mixed papers)
- Eleven types of textile wastes (not clothing)
- And four types of metal slag (containing vanadium).

The Minister also confirmed that “municipal waste plastics, unsorted waste paper, waste textile materials, and vanadium slags, are listed as wastes prohibited from import”.



MATERIAL percentage	
Smelt slag	0.5
Wood	0.5
Paper	0.5
Ferrous	0.5
Non-ferrous	1
Waste electric r	0.5
Wires & cables	0.5
Metal scrap	0.5
Vessels	0.05
Plastic	0.5
Autos	0.3

The percentage limits for contaminants/contraries which are likely to be allowed next year by China (January or March 2018?)



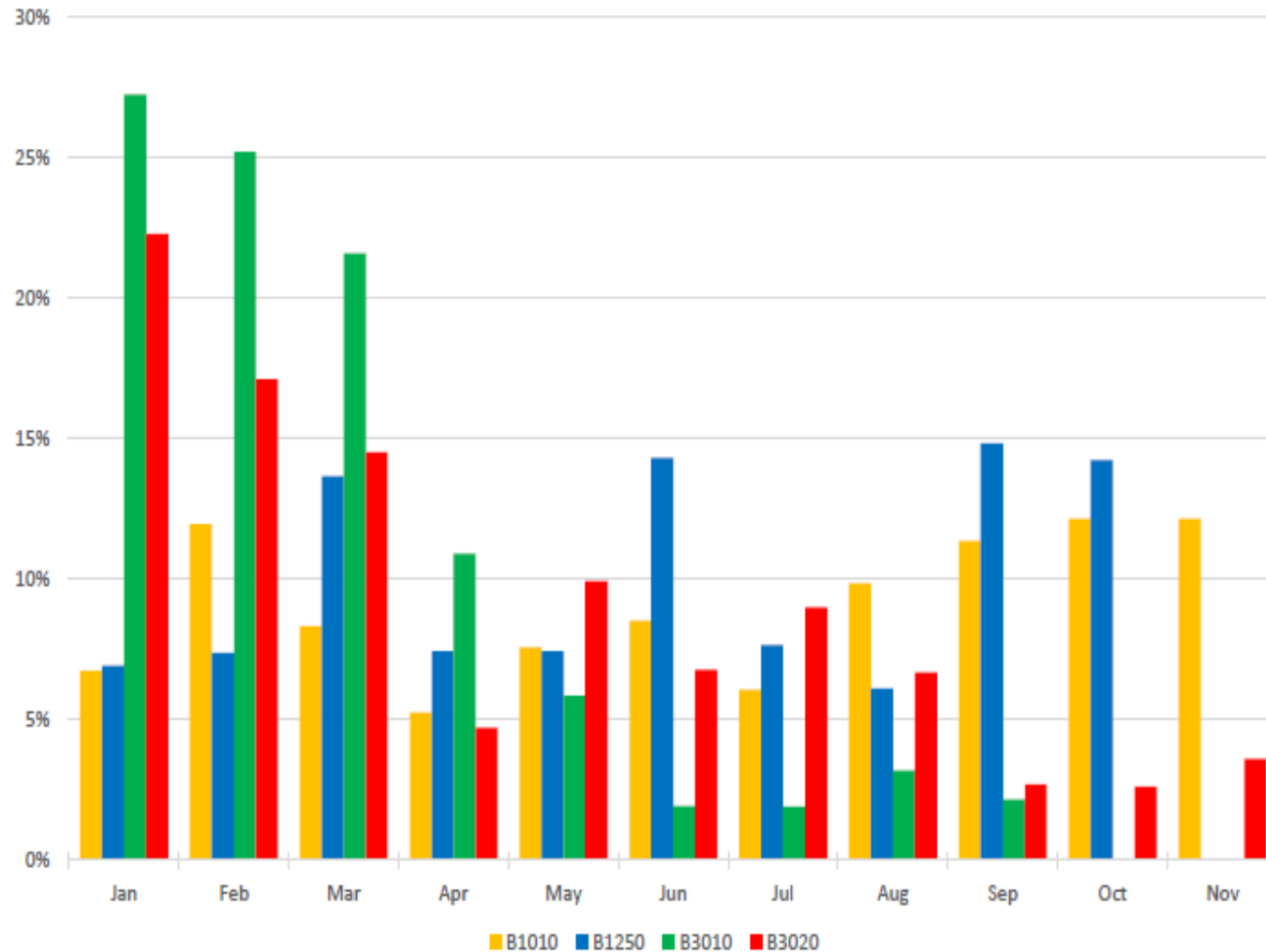
UK Media information:

- *1,792 importers of waste in China have been consulted. Waste sites have been checked “so that the foreign wastes have nowhere to hide”.*
- *Licenses permitting the import of solid waste have become more strict*
- *an uncompliant company cannot apply for the import of wastes within the year from its non-compliance breach*



Effect of the Import restriction

- UK waste industry very concerned
- containers are re-routed to other unknown destinations;
- waste will be sent to other destination countries (more vulnerable countries?)
- more landfill and incineration of waste in Europe
- recycling targets not being met
- Stockpiling
- Increasing internal capacity
- Illegal activity?



Waste exports from Northern Ireland (UK) to China in 2017 (to 20 Nov)



Changes seen in NI

Paper B3020

- Shipments to China decreasing
- Shipments to Netherlands increasing
- New markets to Germany and Vietnam

Plastic B3010

- Shipments to China decreasing
- Shipments to Turkey increasing
- New markets to
Malaysia/Vietnam/Germany/Belgium/Poland





What are we doing in the UK?

- There is a need to recognise that the quality of recycled material needs to improve
- Recognition that whilst we have started using other European countries, competition will be heightening
- Material Recycling Facilities need to improve their infrastructure to meet maximum contamination levels if they wish to continue shipping to China
- The challenge is with PET trays, PS and PVC. The markets for these are very limited – redesign packaging!



Discussion

- What negative and positive effects have you seen/do you expect as a result of the China ban?
- What kind of challenges do you face as a result of the China ban?
- Have you had waste returned from China?



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Thank you!

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