

## **WR0608 “Emissions from Waste Management Facilities: Frameworks for Assessment of Data Quality and Research Needs”: Context Note**

### **What the project did**

The project reviewed available data on emissions from typical and upcoming networks of waste collection, treatment and disposal technologies, made assessments about the quality of these data and identified data gaps. There was no primary research involved and all the data presented in the report were already available in the public domain.

### **What the project did not do**

The project did not attempt to make any connection between emissions and impact to health or the environment. Furthermore, the project did not identify or quantify emissions of greenhouse gases, or emissions arising indirectly (for example through the leaching of pollutants from the spreading of materials to land).

### **A note on emissions**

The project reports source-term emissions, often prior to abatement. As such, these are not emissions that are directly released to the environment.

It should be noted that identification of a data gap does not imply that those emissions occur at levels which may result in harm or indeed occur at all.

### **Project limitations**

In many cases only a small proportion of the overall available information has been reviewed. This is associated with difficulties in obtaining data (i.e. data not published or difficult to access) and to the need to use data presented in similar emission units to allow for comparison. Where it was not possible to convert the data to the preferred units the data were excluded from the study. In this sense, the report is not a review of all available data, but instead focuses on identifying where there is an obvious lack of information or a high degree of variability in the identified emissions.

When identifying those emissions and data gaps that may be important some degree of subjectivity has been used. The priorities were decided based on the opinions of Defra, the Environment Agency, industry experts from a stakeholder workshop and real world experience.

### **Government’s use of this work**

The minimisation of all emissions is beneficial, even if these do not occur at harmful levels. Therefore, it is important to have a good understanding of the emissions associated with the handling of waste. This project will help inform government where further research is necessary.