

CASE STUDY 2: USED VEGETABLE OIL RECYCLING IN COCHABAMBA AND LA PAZ

Introduction

The recollection of used vegetable oil is crucial considering both health as well as environmental aspects. In Bolivia many people and most of all informal food sellers, use oil several times for frying, which causes severe acute and chronic health problems if consumed. Once used, the oil is usually being dumped into the sewage system where it produces clogging and problems in the wastewater treatment.

Initially it was a challenge for Ecovecindarios to achieve its goals in the management of used vegetable oil, especially since the initial work was done with operators that produced soap on a very small scale.

It is in the municipality of Cochabamba where in 2018 a new contact was made with a transnational company called Green Side, which independently had already started the collection of used oil in the city. The company is specialized in the recollection and pre-treatment of oil to export it to countries in Europe (mainly Spain) for the production of biodiesel as a renewable energy.

Once having identified a serious and large-scale recycling option, the Secretariat of Municipal Environmental Management of La Paz, in articulation with the project, generated a management model for used oil based on the environmental policy of the municipality to start with its recollection and recycling.

How the project contributed to the recollection system

Initially the project supported the private operator to first regularize all legal and administrative documentation, as well as make the link with the public authority to enable a system of recollection and treatment of this waste. It supported the municipality to find an adequate place to collect and temporarily store the oil in safe conditions and helped to establish a control mechanisms with the according particle measuring equipment to be able to measure the point when the oil needs to be discharged. This control was coordinated with the quartermaster's office of the municipality which is in charge of supervising the activities of all food sellers and control if they fulfil sanitary and food safety issues.

With the signing of an agreement between Green Side and the municipality of La Paz, investments were made by Green Side for the whole logistics and operations, including the buying of an exclusive vehicle for the recollection in La Paz.

The beginning of the collection was marked by a press conference, a propitious opportunity to show how the system and quality control works, since the recollection of used oil was a new topic for the citizens. This was accompanied by a communication and awareness building campaign to sensitize and train the generators on the problem and encourage them to be part of the solution. For this, the municipality developed a slogan called "Recycle with Taste" ("Recicla con gusto" in Spanish) which was spread in form of adhesive to restaurants, retailers of public markets and other generators that fulfil criteria for safe management of this waste, preventing it from reaching a black market (some informal companies or individuals buy used oil from factories or food courts and sell it again to cheaper food providers).

Results

Once having the system at place, the pilot recollection started in 2 main markets of the city. During 2018, 84 m³ of oil had been recollected from the 2 markets and 99 additional restaurants and food expenditures.

Opinions of the different actors involved

"The collection of used oils is absolutely timely and necessary for our municipality. We have received different demands from different economic activities to solve the problems related to this type of waste. Swisscontact has collaborated with us in the methodological design of the collection. The management allows us to gradually provide a solution to this issue and thus prevent oils from being deposited in storm drains and the sewage system, contaminating the water sources of our city." **Mariana Daza – Director of the Secretariat of Municipal Environmental Management**

"The project has helped to improve the collection in quantity and quality. We as operators were more dedicated to the oil recollection in industry, but now we have contact with restaurants and other generators. The support of the project has allowed us to contact the actors of the management chain and especially ally with the public entity, which was fundamental to start the recollection system in the cities of Cochabamba and La Paz." **Antonio Montoro – Representative of Green Side.**

"We invite all our clients to come to the market of Camacho because as you can see, we are taking care of your health. We received several trainings to know how to recycle the oil, we always do it." **Saleswomen at the market of Camacho, interviewed by the TV channel ATB**

The campaign in printed media

La Paz:

<https://www.paginasiete.bo/sociedad/2018/9/13/alcaldia-recoge-aceite-vegetal-en-desuso-193701.html>

http://www.la-razon.com/sociedad/La_Paz-activa-plan-piloto-recoleccion-aceite-cocina-desuso_0_3000899927.html

Cochabamba

<http://www.lostiempos.com/actualidad/cochabamba/20171117/aceite-quemado-mal-silencioso-que-ataca-sociedad>

<http://www.opinion.com.bo/opinion/articulos/noticias.php?a=2018&md=0131&id=243943>

<http://www.opinion.com.bo/opinion/articulos/noticias.php?a=2018&md=1202&id=275129>

The campaign in television channels:

Merchants Join Program to Recycle Vegetable Oil:

<https://www.atb.com.bo/seccion/sociedad/comerciantes-se-suman-al-programa-para-reciclar-aceite-vegetal>

Pilot Oil Collection Plan - Recycle with Taste: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5rzIbEve2M>