

WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE CAMPANIA REGION: FROM MYTH TO REALITY with PROF. GIOVANNI DE FEO



On the 11th of October we had the pleasure at Global Governance to host a very dynamic and passionate guest, Prof. Giovanni De Feo. Currently, Prof. De Feo teaches at the University of Salerno in the degree course of Industrial Engineering. Yet, he is much more than just a professor. He has distinguished himself for his personal engagement in the protection of the territory, especially in the area of the Waste Management. The project that saw him involved in the forefront for the preservation of the territory from the male-administration of the waste management in the Campania region is the so-called “Greenopoli”. The aim of this project is “to talk to people from kids of 5 years old to those of 95 years old” as he said in an interview.



Indeed, with him we had a very interesting lecture that dealt with the problems that are involved in the disposal of the waste management system considering the particular case of the Campania region. He started quoting an Italian musical group, Marta sui Tubi, that say in their song “ Salvagente”: “when you will start looking at the world in a different way, the world will start to change”. We can say it is a summarizing motto of his work, and we will understand why. Therefore, professor de Feo asked us to look at population in a different perspective and addressed us a question that might seem simple, but that hides a tough reality: “How much do people waste?”. Numbers are surprising: in Naples is produced 1 million

of waste and we recycle only the 22% of it. “That 1 million is not the cause but is the effect of our problems” mentioning Prof. De Feo 's words, “The real and main cause is the lack of organization”. An important particular to be added to the story is that the major part of waste is not urban but industrial. If we make an actual computation, we will find out that in 1 year we produce 25000000 kg of waste. That corresponds to 1 kg of waste every day by each of person.

After this brief introduction on the subject, Professor De Feo, went more deeply on the topic of the Campania Waste Crisis occurred in 2008.

For what concerns Campania Waste Management, the first thing to say is that in Campania there is one incinerator at Ancerra, situated in the middle of Campania: area that is famous for being particularly fertile. Due to this reason we can say that it wasn't the best place where to place an incinerator. Anyway, people usually think incinerators are dangerous, but we really need them: not have them would be like not having the toilet at home!

What makes singular the case of the Campania region is that there we have a particular phenomenon: the so-called “Ecoballe” that have been accumulated between 2001 and 2003. “Eco- balls” are basically treated garbage that has been compressed and is ready to be burned. When material is transformed in bails becomes the so-called RDF material whose name stays for Refused Derived Fuel. These bails, in effect, will be used to produce fuel with very high calorific value.



Between 2001 and 2003, 5500000 of “eco-balls” were produced, that it could be resembled as like if each person in Campania has its own bail. At this point the question is: What happened between 2001 and 2003 so to make a so huge accumulation of waste happen?

In 1996 the expected plan was the building of 5 incinerators but in 1998 a change occurred: this plan was postponed to 20 years later. This resulted in 2003 in the arise of powerful movement against incinerators and in a cities overwhelmed by waste. In 2005 the major of Ancerra opposed to the building of a new incinerator while, not far from there, we had a completely opposed situation. Giovanni Romano, the former major of Mercato San Severino, was considered at that time the best in the management of waste. To this extent, they planned a pay-as-you-throw system so that the avoidance of waste was easier. The system works with the people collecting rubbish already divided, and putting it outside the door: garbage will be collected through a door-by-door method. Each one will have its own code, so that the owner of the waste could be recognized, and the amount of the materials he has collected weighted. The last steps regards the owner of the garbage to be payed for the service he provided to the community: we are assisting at a kind of reverse supermarket.

In 2008 again rubbish appeared in the streets of the cities. So much waste had been accumulated during years that there was no space left to place it. On March 26th in 2009 Berlusconi and Bertolaso started the operations for the incinerator of Ancerra. On March 4th 2010, a judgement by the Italian court expressed the failure of the management of waste with a penalty to be paid, while, in Baronissi the 80% of the waste recycling was reached! On May 30th 2016, the Prime Minister of Campania in 3 years removed 6

millions of bails. However, Where eco-balls had been disposed? The answer is abroad, and those who will gain by that will be only truck drivers, while, pollution will keep on increasing.

In addition, a second terrible phenomenon is present in the Campania region and is the one of the “Land of Fires”. The “Land of Fires” is an area where usually happen accidental, and non, fires. Those people working in non regular activities cannot throw waste into the regular system so they burn it causing massive damages to the environment.

Of course, these facts that have occurred have created a bad reputation around the name of the Campania region. According to Prof. De Feo's opinion, have given an image of Campania even worse than reality, while, as said before, it is instead a patrimony for the Italian peninsula.

With that, to draw a conclusion on this amazing and interesting lecture, we can say there is still a lot of work to be done, but we are for sure blessed to have such personalities as Prof. De Feo, that devote their work and time to important issues as the one of the Waste Management.

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