

BIR urges clarification and amendment of China's import stance

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China: The BIR world recycling federation has called on the Chinese government to clarify and consider changes to its scrap import policy, due to be enforced from the beginning of March next year. In particular, BIR is asking Beijing to re-define 'carried wastes' in the Chinese GB Standards 'so as not to include materials that may be separated and recycled'.



According to the Brussels-based world federation, 'carried wastes' should be defined as wastes which are fit only for landfill or incineration. It also argues against using quality thresholds in the GB Standards as pass/fail trade controls specifically where there is no significant human health or environmental impact from 'carried waste' and where the 'carried waste' does not affect subsequent recycling processes or utilisation of secondary raw material in manufacturing.

In a letter, BIR urges differentiation between what the Chinese government describes as 'foreign garbage' and inclusions in processed scrap. 'Inclusions are generally controlled in commercial specifications so they do not harm human health or the environment and do not hinder the use of the recycled raw materials by manufacturing industries,' the organisation points out.

Alluding to China's 'extremely high thresholds' for inclusions or 'carried waste', BIR emphasises the difficulty of processing large tonnages to such very high qualities and 'the resultant cost increase in the processed secondary raw materials'.