

# 2013 Year-end letter to members and friends of the Global WTERT Council

From: Prof. Nickolas Themelis, Chair GWC

Dear members and friends of WTERT,

In 2013, the research activities of the Earth Engineering Center (EEC) were expanded to two engineering schools in New York City, Columbia University and City College of New York (CCNY). Greeting cards from the two research groups are attached to this letter.

In December 2001, the Earth Engineering Center and the School of Public Affairs of Columbia submitted to Mr. Bloomberg, then Mayor-elect of New York, the ground-breaking report "[Life After Fresh Kills](#)". After 12 years of WTERT public meetings and publications and a lot of other efforts, this year [New York City agreed](#) to send 800,000 tons/year of MSW to WTE facilities over a 20-year period.

Some of the highlights of WTERT 2013 activities were:

1. The completion of the Columbia University 2013 Survey of Waste Management in the U.S. This Survey was co-sponsored by the Plastics Division of the American Chemistry Council and showed that in 2011 the U.S. generated a total of 389 million tons of MSW, of which 22.6% was recycled, 6.3% composted, 7.6 % combusted with energy recovery (WTE), and 63.5% landfilled. The MSW generation has not changed much from the last Survey, but the landfilled tonnage decreased by 20 million tons while recycling increased by nearly the same amount.
2. A new WTE course, introduced by Prof. Marco Castaldi at Columbia University, is believed to be the first such course in the English language.
3. Waste-to-energy was included in the 3-volume book "[Renewable Energy Systems](#)" (Springer Publishing, 2013).
4. The EEC 275-page "[Guidebook for the application of WTE technologies in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)" was published on the web. It provides A-Z information on the implementation of WTE in developing nations and was sponsored by Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). It includes three case studies on the potential application of WTE in Buenos Aires, Valparaiso (Chile) and Toluca (Mexico).
5. With the help of EEC, Ranjith Annepu of WTERT-India founded the novel web-based medium [Be Waste Wise](#). It bridges the information gap between world experts on sustainable waste management and the public.

6. WTERT partnered with the D-Waste organization, founded by Mr. Antonis Mavropoulos of ISWA, in the newly published *Waste Atlas*. This is an interactive world map that provides waste management information for countries and cities worldwide.

7. WTERT-Greece, EEC, and Tamiz Shahar Co. of Baku organized an *intensive course* on waste management. It included a visit of the new WTE plant built in Baku by CNIM using Martin technology. A similar *course* is planned for May 2014 in Accra in collaboration with the Institute for Sanitation and Waste Management founded by Zoomlion Waste Management Company of Ghana.

8. This year, the EEC-Columbia and EEC-CCNY groups of graduate students reached the record high of 25. In addition to the books mentioned above, there were 24 technical publications.

8. The Global WTERT Council ([GWC](#)) now consists of fourteen national groups. In 2013, the Presidential Global Initiative Fund of Columbia provided a planning grant for increasing Latin America membership of GWC. The multiple 2013 activities of our sister organizations are described in their web pages.

With best wishes to all for the holidays and the New Year,

Nickolas J. Themelis, Chair Global WTERT Council.



