



Current perception of gentle remediation options by experts and stakeholders

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Although numerous studies applying gentle remediation technologies have been conducted and published in the past 20 years, not much of this knowledge has been adapted in practice. Since the reasons for this are unclear, the objective of this activity was to interview experts dealing with trace element contaminated sites about their experience and opinions regarding gentle remediation options. A questionnaire was sent out to about 430 stakeholders and experts in eight European countries in early 2008, about 140 were returned. About 50% of the respondents had some experience with gentle remediation technologies, only 13% knew little or nothing of such options and they were largely working in city councils or other local authorities. Respondents from France, Sweden and the Czech Republic evaluated gentle remediation options more positively than their colleagues from Germany or Austria.

From the survey, the main results can be summarized as follows:

- Gentle remediation technologies are known to most respondents but rarely applied.
- Regulators are more sceptical than scientists and consultants.
- The disadvantages of gentle remediation technologies are seen in the need for long-term monitoring and the limited applicability regarding contamination and land use.
- Dealing with gentle remediation technologies improves knowledge and acceptance.

It has become quite evident, that the majority of the respondents consider gentle remediation options to be relatively cost-effective technologies with low environmental impacts, but scepticism remains regarding the effective and long-term risk reduction through these approaches. This scepticism is largely based on the poor availability of data from convincing field-trials or pilot projects applying these technologies.