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EU Insight is edited by the UEPG General Secretariat as part of its communication service to UEPG Members

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EU Live Issues

Croatia's accession to the EU

On 1 July 2013, [Croatia](#) will become the European Union's 28th Member State. Zagreb and Brussels are working hard to prepare the accession.



legislation. More progress is requested by the Commission in air quality, water and waste management and environmental impacts assessment.

Croatia will also benefit from Regional Funds of the EU but has, at the same time, to declare and manage Natura 2000 areas. The European Commission [Natura 2000 Guidance](#), where UEPG has contributed to, will become even more important to members of the Croatian Aggregates Association (PROMINS).

Croatia already has [12 observers in the European Parliament](#), equal to the number of future seats allocated to Zagreb. Those observers take part in the proceedings of Parliament and have a right to speak in Committees and Political Groups. Until accession of Croatia, they have not the right to vote or to stand for election to positions within Parliament.

Zagreb is equally an observer in the EU Council and European Commission Committees. After joining the European Union, Croatia will have 7 votes in the Council, out of a total of 352. At least 260 votes will be required for legislation to be adopted by qualified majority. Croatian will be recognised as an official EU language, and all EU acts will also be drawn up in Croatian.

The [2012 Comprehensive Monitoring Report](#) on Croatia shows the progress made by Zagreb in implementing EU

LIFE+ 2013



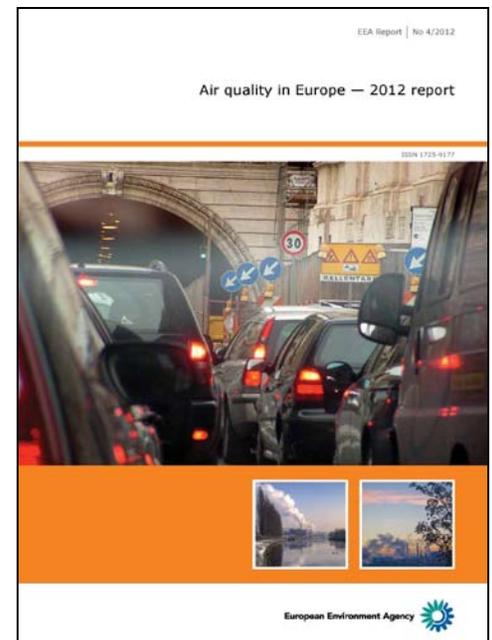
The LIFE+ call for proposals in 2013 is planned to be published on 14 February. Information available at that date will be sent to UEPG Members and published on the UEPG website. The deadline for applicants in 2013 is foreseen for 25 June.

The [5th European River Restoration Conference](#), as part of the LIFE+ Information & Communication project [RESTORE](#) will take place on 11-13 September 2013 in Vienna, Austria.

Next Steps

The Commission has presented a proposal for a new LIFE Programme with a significantly increased budget to cover the period 2014-2020. The Irish Presidency will seek in the next five months an early agreement on the new Programme for Environment and Climate Action.

2013 – Year of Air



2012 was the Year of Water, with milestones such as the Green Week, and ended with the

publication of the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's Water.

In a similar way, 2013 will be the Year of Air. The European Commission has launched a comprehensive review of its air policy building on the 2005 Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution and Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) initiative. A public consultation is currently being undertaken (to which UEPG will contribute). The Air review will be an important focus of the 7th Environmental Action Plan, and should be finalised in 2014. The Air review will be building as well on the European Environment Agency's [report on Air quality 2012](#).

The European Commission [Green Week 2013](#) will take place from 4 to 7 June and the theme is air quality. The website for the Green Week is online right now.

Aggregates extraction and Natura 2000



The European Commission has published a [leaflet](#) presenting the Guidance on Non-energy mineral extraction within or close by to Natura 2000 areas, available in English, French, German and Spanish. This leaflet should help you to promote the compatibility between aggregates extraction and Natura 2000 in your country.

The UEPG General Secretariat offers UEPG members assistance at your national events or meetings with stakeholders.

Social Dialogue Liaison Forum

On 28 January 2013, Martin Isles, Chair of the UEPG Health & Safety Committee attended the Sectorial Social Dialogue Liaison Forum. The meeting focused on 2013 EU Social Policies which could be of benefit for UEPG such as initiatives on skills, sectoral fact

sheets based on the 5th European Working Conditions Survey and the development of sectoral Online Interactive Risk Assessment tools (OIRA tool).

SMEs and Standardisation

The European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) will organise a conference addressing '[SMEs and Standardisation](#)' which will take place on 28 May 2013 in Brussels. The event aims at better communicating the benefits of standards to SMEs. An [SME Toolbox of Solutions](#) had been developed in 2012.

UEPG News

UEPG achievements in 2012

Throughout 2012 UEPG successfully lobbied to make sure that the interest of the European Aggregates Industry were represented and taken into consideration by the European Union Institutions. Herewith is an overview of selected UEPG achievements in 2012.

Environment

- **Biodiversity** remains a top priority for UEPG having signed with IUCN a Letter of Intent in order to develop stronger links between biodiversity practitioners and SMEs, and to facilitate biannual meetings between UEPG and IUCN over the next three years, seeking to develop specific biodiversity projects.
- **Water** is an increasingly important topic. Following the good preparatory work of the Water Management Task Force, UEPG is now well prepared for its lobbying campaign.
- UEPG has been campaigning for a better image of the Marine Aggregates Industry and aims at joining forces with other sea bed users.
- UEPG continued to follow very closely developments on the proposed 7th Environmental Action Program, Blueprint to safeguard Europe's waters, soil protection, dust emissions and implementation of Natura 2000.

Technical

- UEPG maintained its monitoring of the implementation of the Construction

Product Regulation (CPR) as its replacement of the Construction Product Directive (CPD).

- UEPG has produced a Model Environmental Products Declaration (EPD), on a cradle to gate basis. This includes all aggregates, that is sand & gravel, crushed rock, recycled and marine aggregates. This model EPD has been prepared on currently available published industry data, and therefore gives guidance on typical upper limit values, which therefore should cover most situations and could be adapted individually to local conditions.
- The Technical Committee keeps monitoring and being actively involved in the drafting and revision of standards.
- The European Platform for Recycled Aggregates (EPRA) promotes the development of reasonable end of waste criteria.

Health and Safety

- The members of the Sectorial Social Dialogue for the Extractive Industry (SSDCEI) agreed to support the Safer by Design project at European level. Martin Isles, Chair of the UEPG Health & Safety Committee successfully chaired the SSDCEI in 2012.
- Despite the current economic climate, 2012 NePSI Reporting was a success. More countries, sites and employees were covered by the Report.
- UEPG Members strongly lobbied Government representatives of the Advisory Committee on safety and health at work of the European Commission for Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS) to be included within the legal framework of the Chemicals Agent Directive and not Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive.
- UEPG, together with other stakeholders created a Task Force to better implement the Directive on the identification and traceability of explosives for civil uses by the whole supply chain. The implementation date is now 5 April 2013 for manufacturers and importers. Labeling and obligations on data collection and record keeping for the whole supply chain will be postponed by three years to 5 April 2015 ensuring that new IT systems in place will work properly.

- UEPG was selected to be a Partner of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work 2012-2013 Healthy workplaces Campaign called 'Working together for risk prevention'.

Economic

- Continued high level awareness was given to sustainable access to resources when implementing the EU Raw Materials Strategy in EU Member States. Many UEPG members launched their national sector strategies aiming to improve permitting procedures and land-use planning.
- UEPG supported the European Parliament Report on an effective raw materials strategy for Europe in its belief 'that a tax on mineral resources is not an adequate fiscal tool for increasing resource efficiency' and stressed that message with EU Institutions.
- UEPG claimed for years that TEEB is not about putting a price on nature. This was taken up by NGOs. Quarry and pit restoration should be the tool for offsets rather than payments.

PR and Communication

- A Strategy, with messages and tools was prepared for a better UEPG visibility.
- The 25th Anniversary of UEPG was celebrated at the Delegates Assembly in Limassol, Cyprus.
- A new website with more features for full members was launched.

External biodiversity experts meeting

On 15 January 2013, Jim Rushworth, Chair of the UEPG Biodiversity Indicators Working Group, led a web conference with external biodiversity experts and with members of the UEPG Biodiversity Task Force. The purpose of this online based conference was to make progress in developing a methodology which would measure biodiversity taking into account scientific credibility and limited resources of SMEs.

The agreed methodology has yet to be further refined and agreed by all UEPG members. The consensus, so far is, very satisfactory to both biodiversity experts and the industry.

UEPG SDA 2013

We would like to remind you that the UEPG Sustainable Development Awards Ceremony 2013 will take place on **27 November 2013** at the European Parliament in Brussels.

The extended deadline for entries is on **1st March 2013**.

Ready to go? See you at the Ceremony in Brussels!

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hahn – 1950-2013



It is with the deepest sadness and sorrow that we announce the death of our friend and colleague Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hahn, Managing Director of the German Aggregates Federation (MIRO). His passing away on Sunday, 27 January 2013 has been a terrible and sudden shock to us.

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hahn was a fervent believer of UEPG, and brought his expertise to the European Aggregates Association since its early stage.

On behalf of Arnaud Colson and all UEPG Members we pay our condolences to his wife Elisabeth and his family. MIRO will organise a fare-well event on 19 March 2013 in Cologne, Germany open to all UEPG Members.

UEPG Meetings in 2013

- 1 March** Deadline for entries for the UEPG Sustainable Development Awards 2013
- 4 Feb.** Task Force on Explosives, Brussels
- 5 Feb.** PR & Communication Task Force, Brussels

- 6 Feb.** Biodiversity Task Force, Brussels
- 6 Feb.** Water Management Task Force, Brussels
- 7 Feb.** Marine Aggregates Task Force, Brussels
- 22 Feb.** RDS & EPD Working Group, Brussels
- 27 Feb.** EPRA meeting, Brussels
- 7-8 March** Committee meetings, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
- 24 April** European Minerals Foundation Parliamentary Debate, Brussels
- 24 April** Board Policy Dinner, Brussels
- 25 April** Board Meeting, Brussels
- 6 June** Entrepreneurs' Forum, Helsinki, Finland
- 7 June** Delegates Assembly, Helsinki, Finland
- Sept.** Task Force meetings, Brussels
- 10-11 Oct.** Committee meetings, Brussels
- 27 Nov.** European Minerals Foundation Forum, Brussels
- 27 Nov.** UEPG Sustainable Development Awards 2013 Ceremony
- 28 Nov.** Board Meeting, Brussels

UEPG at the services of the Industry

The UEPG General Secretariat wishes you a successful and prosperous Year 2013. We are a small but highly dynamic and efficient Brussels based team at your services. Our priority is to lobby for your interests. Feel free to ask us on what we could do for you.



The UEPG team

From left: Miette Dechelle, Public Affairs Manager; Arnaud Colson, President; Sandrine Devos, Public Affairs Manager; Dirk Fincke, Secretary General.