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EU Live Issues

Environmental Impact Assessment

The last triologue meeting (representatives from European Commission, European Parliament and EU Member States) took place on 18 December. This was a decisive one for the Aggregates Industry, as one of the pending issues was the modification of Annexes I and II, i.e. deleting the threshold of 25 hectares for quarries to decide whether or not they should automatically undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment. Although Member States had deemed this unacceptable, the Lithuanian EU Presidency wished to examine further the European Parliament's proposal.

In coordination with the other sectors from the Non-Energy Extractive Industry Panel (NEEIP), UEPG has launched an intense campaign towards the Permanent Representations in order to explain how such a measure would impact the many SMEs it represents. We would like to thank those UEPG Members who had been very active and lobbied their national authorities.

An agreement was reached between the European Commission, the EU Lithuanian Presidency and the European Parliament, later confirmed by the COREPER meeting on 20 December.

This agreed text for a new EIA Directive is now much more reasonable as Annexes I and II have not been opened. The Annexes remain as they are in the current Directive. It was also confirmed that the Scoping will not be mandatory but will be at the request of the developer. An option will be left to Member States to require scoping if they deem it necessary.

Next steps

The agreement paves the way for the formal adoption of the new Directive. The text still needs to be formally adopted by the Parliament, whose vote in plenary is expected to take place in March 2014, and by the Council, which is due to take its decision after the vote in Parliament.

Resource Efficiency

Following 2013 as the Year of Air, 2014 will be the Year of Resource (use) Efficiency. As part of the theme, several concepts will frame the European Environment Agency's work throughout the year. One is the 'circular economy,' in which waste is seen as an important resource to be fed back into the human economy. Another is the 'green economy', interpreted as an economic system which simultaneously uses resources more efficiently, enhances human well-being and maintains natural systems.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY
saving resources, creating jobs

In 2014 the European Commission will set out new proposals enabling Europe to unlock the potential of the circular economy.

The 2014 edition of Green Week, the biggest annual conference on European Environment Policy, will take place from 3 to 5 June in Brussels. The theme will be Circular Economy, Resource Efficiency & Waste.

Air Policy Review

In December 2013, the European Commission launched the [Clean Air Policy Package](#), which is the result of an in-depth review of EU's air quality policy.



Source: European Commission, Audiovisual Services

The Communication recommends a combination of regulatory and non-regulatory measures. The principle ones with a potential impact on the Aggregates Industry are the following:

- Revision on the National Emission Ceilings Directive (NEC Directive);
- Reduction obligations for the four original air pollutants (SO₂, NO_x, non-methane VOCs, and NH₃), and for two new ones: primary PM_{2.5} and CH₄;
- Revision of the Non-Road Mobile Machinery Directive, which will generate substantial benefits by extending the capacity range and machinery types covered, and by aligning controls with the Euro VI heavy-duty limits.

The main concern for the Aggregates Industry would be the methodologies proposed to measure emissions.

Next steps

The package will now be considered by the other EU institutions, with a view to negotiate

and agree on the different elements in package. This process may take 1-3 years.

Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

There is currently no EU framework for tackling IAS comprehensively. In September 2013, the European Commission proposed a [Regulation on Invasive Alien Species](#). This topic is part of the 6 targets defined in the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy.

The proposal is now being discussed by the European Parliament and by the EU Council, with the objective to be adopted before the European Parliament Elections in May 2014.

Sandrine Devos, Public Affairs Manager attended a Parliamentary debate on 20 January, co-organised by IUCN.

Content of the proposal

The proposal addresses both prevention and management (e.g. eradication) of invasive alien species, though, it gives priority to prevention. Member States would need to:

- adopt early detection and eradication systems;
- adopt management measures and
- report to the European Commission.

The European Commission took a risk-based approach by focusing on the “worst” species (terrestrial, aquatic and marine) alien to the EU territory.

Debates on the proposal

Major concerns from MEPs or Member States are related to the list of species targeted by the Regulation:

- there is a cap of 50 species, which is criticised
- the principle of subsidiarity has been emphasized by the three EU Institutions: Member States need flexibility to tackle IAS at regional and national levels;
- no derogations based on economic principles.

The list will be developed after the adoption of the Regulation by a Committee composed of experts and Member States.

Implications for the Aggregates Industry

As the Regulation focuses on Species alien to the EU territory and not on what might be alien at national or regional level, the impact should be limited for the Aggregates Industry.

Member States will however need to make substantial investments to prevent and manage the establishment of IAS. Stakeholders should monitor at national level how these measures will be financed and what will be the contribution requested from the Industry, e.g. to implement measures on site to eradicate species.

Next steps

- 30 Jan. 2014** Vote in European Parliament's Environment Committee, Brussels
- 15 April 2014** Indicative Plenary date, 1st reading, Strasbourg

Funding Sectoral Social Dialogue

On 27 January the European Commission Liaison Forum of the Sectoral Social Dialogue took place in Brussels to brief Members on the 2014 programme, priorities, upcoming calls and events.

In 2014, new efficient calls of proposals for EU co-funded projects aims at fostering Sectoral Social Dialogue. Improvements are in the format and timeline. The first call should be on ‘Support of Social Dialogue’ with 90% co-funding to be published in February. Deadline for applications will be April 2014.

The next Liaison Forum will take place in March organised in a roundtable format to discuss Industrial Policy or Risk Assessment.

Harmonised Products Standards

In December 2013, the CEN Management Center (CCMC) decided to withdraw some 2013 standards and reactivate the 2002 versions. This is a result of the situation surrounding the 2013 versions of EN 12620, EN 13043, EN 16236, EN 13139, EN 13242, EN 13383-1 and EN 13450. Indeed, the published standards contained some mistakes/errors, which were to be addressed and it was planned that TC154 would have

proceeded with a corrigendum to rectify editorials errors, followed by an amendment to correct technical matters.

The French Member AFNOR saw these as technical changes. As a result the CEN Management Centre decided that a serious breach of CEN rules had taken place.

The CEN/TC 154 Chairman's Panel, suggested having a joint meeting of all affected sub-committees and working groups in order to discuss the amendments of the standards. This meeting took place on 16 January 2014, convened by Jean-Marc Vanbelle, Chair of the UEPG Technical Committee and Chairman of TC154/SC6/TG12.

The intention for a way forward, was to ask CEN/TC 154 to deliver a timeframe for the circulation of the revised documents in order to solve the current situation without delay. The resulting drafts are to be circulated by CCMC for approval using the shortened Unique Acceptance Procedure (UAP) taking only 3 months. Considering the discussion held at the Technical Committee Management Group (TCMG) meeting, special attention shall be given to EN 13383-1 where a quick solution is expected.

Meeting of TC154 Sub-Committees and WGs

TC154 Sub-Committees SC1 (Aggregates for Mortar), SC2 (Aggregates for Concrete), SC3 (Aggregates for Asphalt), SC4 (Aggregates for Unbound and hydraulic use), SC6 (Aggregate Test Methods), WG10 (Armourstone) and WG11 (Railway Ballast) discussed the major agenda item concerned the process to be used to get the family of Aggregate Product standards editorially and technically corrected as soon as practically possible.

A shortened UAP procedure was considered however the participants at the meeting felt that there was too great a risk of getting a number of negative votes which would then result in additional time being taken up through going to full CEN enquiry.

Agreement was reached that the Chairman would present a proposal to TC154 to take the standards through full CEN enquiry. The possibility of shortening the time taken by starting the CEN enquiry with English

language versions of the standards was discussed, with the French and German translations following on when completed. Both The German (DIN) and French Standardisation Institute (AFNOR) have to confirm that this would be acceptable before it could be progressed by TC154 as CEN rules demand that all the three language versions have to go through CEN enquiry at the same time.

It was noted that the Armourstone standard did not have the perceived technical error problems of the other standards and therefore it was not clear whether this standard would need to be part of full CEN enquiry. Due to its linkage to EN 16236, it will still have to be part of the package for publication at the same time.

There was discussion over the number of editorial inconsistencies in terminology and the format of category designations across all the standards. It was confirmed that TC154, and not CEN editorial, was in charge of the correction and, thus, the review of the standards by a TC154 editorial panel was felt necessary.

In respect to the work required, all Sub-Committees will arrange meetings to take place at their earliest convenience but at least before the middle of March 2014 so the work can be progressed using the 2013 withdrawn versions. This would allow making the appropriate corrections to such major issues as the shading out of categories in the tables which are not applicable to the standard in which they sit.

UEPG News

Who is doing what?

President Arnaud Colson invited for a coordination meeting between UEPG Committee Chairs which took place on 7 January in the UEPG office. The objective was to briefly address all the main live issues UEPG is working on and to see which Committee is best suited to address and/or lead on the item. This would avoid duplication of work and provides clarity to UEPG Members.

The PR & Communication Task Force should assist in identifying cost- and time-efficient ways to ensure that the priorities recommended by Committees are well communicated to UEPG Members and suggest PR tools on how to raise external awareness, in particular to EU decision makers.

The new priority listing in the UEPG Live Issue Matrix will be suggested to the respective Committee at the next meetings on 6-7 March 2014, in Bucharest, Romania.

Upcoming UEPG meetings

- 5 Feb.** Water Management Task Force meeting, Conference call
- 12 Feb.** Recycling Task Force meeting, Brussels
- February** Biodiversity Task Force meeting, Conference call
- 20 Feb.** Marine Aggregates Task Force meeting, Hamburg, Germany
- 27 Feb.** RDS & EPD Working Group meeting, Brussels
- 6-7 March** Committee meetings, Bucharest, Romania
- 13 March** PR and Com Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 23 April** Board meeting, Brussels
- 24 April** Site Visit with EU representatives, Brussels area
- 26-27 May** Delegates Assembly, Bern, Switzerland
- 22-25 May** European Elections, EU
- 8-9 Oct.** Committee meetings, Brussels
- 10 Oct.** GAIN – Global Aggregates Information Network meeting, Brussels
- Nov. 2014** NEEIP Forum (tbc), Brussels
- 26 Nov.** Board meeting and Policy Dinner, Brussels