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2011 focus on "Resource efficiency – Using less, living better"

Resource Efficiency

New Road Map on Resource Efficiency expected in September 2011

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Keynote speakers and constructive debate on resource efficiency and biodiversity

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EU Live Issues

Green Week 2011

From 24 to 27 May 2011, the Green Week took place in Brussels. The theme this year was "Resource efficiency - Using less, living better". The following sessions (headlines are hyperlinked) were relevant to the aggregates industry:

Photo credit: European Commission



"In a vast majority of cases longer-term planning with resources in mind leads not only to environmental protection, but also to very sound economic and social policy".

Janez Potočnik, Commissioner for the Environment, European Commission, during his speech at the Green Week 2011 opening session.

Recycling policy instruments

This interactive session looked at different policy instruments available to national and European policy makers to boost recycling in Europe. Eco-taxes on raw materials and taxes on landfill were mentioned, with a specific reference to the UK Aggregates Levy. Standards for the use of recycled construction and demolition waste were also proposed. It was however underlined that recycling, on its own, cannot decouple economic growth from the use of raw materials.

Water efficiency

This session dealt with the practical management of water, but also certification and foot-printing systems.

Land is a resource - how can we use it best?

The different aspects of land-use were discussed in relation with eco-systems, together

with policy initiatives such as green infrastructure.

Market-based instruments

Discussion around taxes, charges and trading schemes which could be a permanent incentive to use natural resources more efficiently.

Biodiversity: a key resource

Eco-system services and green infrastructure are highly important issues for EU institutions.

"Construction / green buildings"

The session focused on a coherent framework to take into account the environmental as well as the social and economical implications of the various policy measures, in particular on the competitiveness of construction sector companies.

Resource Efficiency

Christian Haeser from the German Aggregates Federation (MIRO) and Dirk Fincke from the UEPG General Secretariat presented the industry's position on resource efficiency and recycling to Pavel Misiga, Head of Unit C.1 - Sustainable Production and Consumption in DG Environment and to Niall Lawlor from DG Enterprise & Industry. The new Road Map on Resource Efficiency is expected to be published in September 2011.

NePSi Workshop in Bulgaria

The NePSi Workshop, co-organised by the Bulgarian Association of Aggregates Producers (BAPIM) took place on 7 April and was the first event of its kind in 2011. Around 50 representatives of public institutions, private companies, trade unions, and industry associations attended the workshop. Thanks to the support of UEPG and other partners, key speakers of the event were well-known experts in the area of Health and Safety such as Michel Buzot, Deputy Secretary General of the French Aggregates Association (UNPG), Peter Schallert, Health and Safety Manager from Euromines and Krassimira

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Kazashka-Hristozova, Health and Safety Manager at Sibelco Group.

The workshop aimed at preparing participants for the 2012 reporting, to discuss the implementation of the NePSi agreement and to learn about the reporting experience of associations and companies at European and national level.

Following the success of this event, BAPIM and partner organisation will continue convincing member companies to participate in the NePSi reporting 2012 and to raise awareness about the importance of workers' protection against respirable crystalline silica.

Social Dialogue on Health & Safety

On 19 May an extraordinary Liaison Forum of the Social Dialogue on the potential and the contribution of European social dialogue to improving health and safety at work took place at the Borschette Centre of the European Commission.

Photo credit: European Commission



How to further improve Social Dialogue?

Jean-Paul Tricart, Head of Unit for Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations, DG Employment.

Jean-Paul Tricart, Head of Unit for Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations, DG Employment, and Costas Constantinou, Head of Unit for Health, Safety and Hygiene at Work, DG Employment welcomed participants and gave an introduction on European social dialogue and health and safety at work.

The first session was dedicated to Social partner initiatives to improve risk assessment, promote risk prevention and reduce accidents. On this occasion two tools in particular were presented: the NePSi Agreement and a guide for developing a health and safety management system in the construction sector.

The European Agency for Health and Safety at Work (EU-OSHA), Bilbao called for social partner contributions to the development and

adaptation of online interactive risk assessment tools.

Miette Dechelle from the UEPG General Secretariat made an intervention on the Safer by Design good example for risk prevention and reducing accidents to the social partners' participants of the Liaison Forum. The Safer by Design project should be further discussed with social partners of the extractive Industry at the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Extractive Industry (SSDC-EI).

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ANIET Entrepreneurs' Forum

On 26 May, the Portuguese Aggregates Association (ANIET), organised the 2011 Entrepreneurs' Forum in Lisbon. The event gathered more than 60 high level representatives from the aggregates industry. Key speakers included Victor Albuquerque, President of ANIET; Abraão Carvalho, Head of Unit Metals, Minerals, Raw Materials in DG Enterprise & Industry; Carlos Caxaria, Vice General Director of Energy and Geology, Portuguese Ministry of Economy; Maria de Lurdes Antunes, Member of the Board of Directors, National Laboratory of Civil Engineering (LNEC) and Shulamit Alony, Regional Business and Biodiversity Officer, International Union for Conservation of Nature. UEPG President Jim O'Brien gave a presentation on behalf of Slavko Šolar on the Progress Update on the SARMa Project.



The way forward on resource efficiency and biodiversity

From left to right: Abraão Carvalho, DG Enterprise and Industry; Victor Albuquerque, President of ANIET; Shulamit Alony, IUCN.

This was an ideal opportunity to present the challenges of the Portuguese Aggregates Industry and to link them with the ongoing implementation of the European Raw Materials Strategy.

Abraão Carvalho reminded delegates of the importance of all 3 pillars in the Raw Materials

Strategy and invited the industry to participate in the European Innovation Partnerships (EIP). Progress on fostering sustainable access to resources within the EU can be made through exchange of good practice on planning policies between EU Member States but also through streamlining EU environmental legislation.

22nd UEPG Delegates Assembly

Hosted and brilliantly organised by our Portuguese colleagues, the UEPG Delegates Assembly took place on 27 May 2011 in Lisbon.

Due to the new statutes of UEPG, which extends UEPG Presidencies from 2 to 3 years, and in view of the great achievements of the current President, UEPG delegates extended the mandate of Jim O'Brien for an extra year. Consequently, Members of the Board and Committees and Task Forces Chairs agreed to extend their mandate accordingly.



UEPG leadership

UEPG President Jim O'Brien (centre) with his two Vice-Presidents Alain Pasquier (left) and Denis Mertens.

UEPG Delegates thanked Simon Van der Byl for his outstanding contribution to the work of UEPG both as long-serving Board Member and as one of its earliest founders. Nigel Jackson, from the Mineral Products Association, would take over the UK representation at the Board as of November 2011.

At its meeting on 14 April, the Board had formally adopted the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee and agreed to propose to the Delegates Assembly that Dirk Fincke be appointed Secretary-General as of 1 September 2011. UEPG Delegates thanked Antony Fell for his totally dedicated involvement with UEPG since its very foundation and for his tireless leadership and loyalty as UEPG General Secretary: his advice, support, patience and diplomacy have always been greatly valued. He will continue to support UEPG as an EU Advisor. UEPG Delegates warmly welcomed and approved the nomination of Dirk Fincke as Secretary-General.

EMD launch event

The EMD 2011 Launch event took place in Ruse in Bulgaria on 12-13 May. The event was co-organised by the Bulgarian Association of Aggregates Producers (BAPIM) and the three EMD Partners. On 12 May an evening reception was organised in the Historical Museum of Ruse where EU, National and local Officials and a large public were invited to see the winners' work of an international drawing contest where 300 children were asked to bring their ideas on quarrying to paper. The visitors were then invited to see an exhibition on the 'story of stone' from prehistoric times via the middle ages to nowadays with the non-energy extractive Industry.



On 13 May, representatives from the European Commission, a Bulgarian MEP, the Bulgarian Government, the region and municipality as well as Representatives from the company, Chamber of Mining, BAPIM and EMD partners launched the event before visiting the Vetovo extraction site of well preserved and rehabilitated bird habitats, wetlands and natural reserves.



Raising awareness and contribution against the loss of biodiversity
Participants of the EMD Launch event in Bulgaria.

Christopher Boyd from the Biodiversity Unit, DG Environment emphasised the importance of raising awareness on the loss of biodiversity and making a contribution to halt the loss.

Interview with Karl Falkenberg

In preparation of the presentation of the 'Livre Blanc' at roundtables on 3 May, UNPG prepared short films to be presented at the beginning of each roundtable.



Outlook on EU Environmental legislation
Karl Falkenberg, Director General of DG Environment interviewed by Miette Dechelle (UEPG).

UEPG was asked to use its EU network and contacts to arrange an interview with Karl Falkenberg, Director General of DG Environment on the future of EU environmental policies, more particular on resource efficiency, biodiversity and the contribution of the European Aggregates Industry.

Livre blanc

On 3 May, Dirk Fincke from the UEPG General Secretariat attended the UNPG Colloquium presenting a White Book (Livre blanc) for the French aggregates industry looking at the time horizon 2030.



Thinking ahead – the industry in 2030
UNPG President Nicolas Vuillier (right) thanking Jean-Marc Michel, Director General in the French Ministry for Environment for his contribution to the Livre blanc.

The event included four roundtables with key stakeholders and industry representatives professionally moderated by a journalist. Each roundtable was headed by a short video challenging the panelists and triggering a lively and constructive debate. The White Book delivers 22 proposals for a sustainable development of the industry by 2030.

Meeting with Cascade

On 9 May, UEPG President Jim O'Brien and Sandrine Devos, Public Affairs Officer, presented the added value of UEPG membership to Leonie van der Voort, new Director of Cascade and Hans 't Hoen, Senior Advisor and Michiel Danker, Chairman of Cascade, the Dutch Aggregates Association.

The meeting served to exchange views on the main challenges of the Dutch Aggregates Industry, Natura 2000 and archaeology.



Exchanging on the aggregates industry challenges
From Left to right: Leonie van der Voort, Director; Hans 't Hoen, Senior Advisor and Michiel Danker, Chairman.

This meeting was followed by a site visit of the "Over de Maas" project. With a production of sand of 17 million tones, and a size of over 200 hectares, this project, will participate in lowering the highwater level by 148mm and at attracting new species on this previously agricultural land.



Over de Maas
UEPG President Jim O'Brien (second from right) learns about the installations of the project.

UEPG Meetings

- 7 September** PR & Communication Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 8 September** Biodiversity Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 9 September** Marine Aggregates Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 13 September** EPRA meeting
- 6-7 October** Committee Meetings, Brussels
- 30 November** European Minerals Forum & Board Policy Dinner
- 1 December** Board Meeting