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EU Live Issues

Implementing the Raw Materials Strategy

On 16 November, Dirk Fincke from the UEPG General Secretariat attended the first Raw Materials Supply Group meeting after the publication of the Communication on 'Tackling the challenges in Commodity markets and on Raw Materials'. He underlined the need to implement best practice on land use planning to foster access to resources within the European Union. Elisabeth Gammelsæter from the Norwegian Association for the extractive industry (Norsk Bergindustri), also a UEPG member, attended the meeting representing the Norwegian Government.



Implementing the EU Raw Materials Strategy
Members of the European Commission Raw Materials Supply Group in the Berlaymont Building, Brus-

The European Commission presented a set of indicators with the aim of following-up the progress of the implementation of best practice recommended in the ad-hoc Working Group Report on land use planning adopted by the Raw Materials Supply Group in 2010. EU Member States and stakeholders are requested to send their comments on the proposed indicators by 15 December. UEPG supports the initiative of measuring progress and in its comments will focus on local access to resources.

'Friends of the Earth' Event

On 8 and 9 November, Friends of the Earth Europe celebrated its 25th anniversary by launching a debate on Europe's resource use, in the European Parliament in Brussels.

Among the highlights of the events, and most relevant for the Aggregates Industry, were the followings:

- Next steps of the Raw Materials Strategy
- Implementation of the Roadmap towards a resource-efficient Europe, with its possible implications in terms of taxation
- Ecosystem services, including water management



The potential role of the industry to build a green economy was underlined, as were the obstacles in achieving this. Green labels, in particular a single valid label such as the Environmental Products Declaration, were considered as important for the consumers choice for more sustainability. UEPG is working on all these initiatives.

Resource Efficiency

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Environment, attended several European Parliament Committees, including the Environment and the Industry Committees, in order to present the EC Roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe. Mr Potočnik stressed the fact that although this was led by Environment, both in the European Commission in the European Parliament, it was indeed a topic which needed to be integrated into all policies, and would be translated into the proposed 7th Environmental Action Plan (EAP). The Commission was pushing as well to have the topic on the European Semester.

The leading Parliamentary Rapporteur for resource efficiency, [Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy](#)

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(ALDE, Netherlands) challenged the industry to be more precise and ambitious in their efforts towards a Green Economy. He underlined the need of a policy of “carrots” (with a greater support for innovation) and “sticks” (through taxation).

The MEP responsible for the Industry Committee’s opinion is [Kent Johansson](#) (ALDE, Sweden), who replaces Lena Ek.

UEPG is committed to progress on all aspects of resource efficiency, in particular to recycling, through EPRA.

Review of Working Time Directive

The negotiations between Social Partners on the Working Time Directive have finally started and will last nine months. The majority of EU Member States have opted-out on the current Directive in preference of national regulation. UEPG will closely follow the debate and the possibility of a review of the Directive. Its main interest is in derogation for waiting time for truck drivers.

Healthy Workplace 2010 – 2011

On 22-23 November, in Bilbao, Spain, the European Agency of Health and Safety at Work held the closure Campaign 2010-2011 on Healthy Workplaces and on Safe Maintenance.



Thanking UEPG for the campaign partnership

From left: EU Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, László Andor; César Luaces Frades, UEPG Health & Safety Committee Vice-Chair and the new Director of the European Agency on Health & Safety at Work, Christa Sedlatschek.

UEPG was invited to the ceremony as partner of the Campaign via the ‘Safer by Design’ project. César Luaces Frades, Vice-Chair of the UEPG Health and Safety Committee and Managing Director of the Spanish Aggregates Federation (FdA) received a certificate from the EU Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs,

László Andor, and the new Director of the European Agency, Christa Sedlatschek thanking UEPG for their commitment for health & safety. The meetings and workshops were an opportunity for the industry to promote its best practice.

UEPG News

President addresses SZVK Conference

President Jim O’Brien gave a keynote presentation at the SZVK Annual Conference on 27 October at Sary Smokovec, in Slovakia. The theme of his presentation was “UEPG supports SZVK in working together towards a Sustainable Aggregates Industry”. There were over 80 attendees at the conference from the industry, planners and regulators. Despite current difficult times in the industry due to the economic crisis, there were grounds for optimism created through the extensive national development plans for the road, rail and water infrastructures. As everywhere, the big challenge is access to local aggregate resources.



Briefing on UEPG activities and added value
President Jim O’Brien (second from left) at the SZVK Annual Conference.

In the evening a roundtable served to share experiences on how UEPG and SZVK could challenge illegal quarrying, which is a particularly vexed issue in Slovakia due to weak regulation and planning in the industry. It was suggested that the recommendations of the Leoben 2010 Review could indeed be a good example of practices to be adopted in Slovakia.

The occasion provided an opportunity for the President to explain the various ways that UEPG supports its Members like SZVK, and equally that it always listens to the concerns of its Members, helping in any way it can.

The occasion also provided a useful opportunity to meet a representative of Težební Unie, the Czech Mining Associa-

tion, and to encourage it to become a UEPG Member.

Effective framework for biodiversity



The European Business & Biodiversity Campaign organised on 15 November a

Workshop to explore and extract lessons learned from past and ongoing partnerships between NGOs and companies in the field of biodiversity. This would enable to provide advice on future partnerships.



Leonie van der Voort, Director of the Dutch

Aggregates Association Cascade, gave a presentation on the partnerships between the aggregates industry and NGOs in the Netherlands. Her presentation had been received very positively. The community can benefit greatly from these partnerships, which can aim at preserving biodiversity, developing recreation areas or protecting from river flooding.

UNICEM Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region

On 3 November, Michel Buzot, UNPG Deputy Secretary General and Miette Dechelle from the UEPG General Secretariat presented national and European priorities to the participants of the Delegates Assembly of the UNICEM Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region. One subject of concern for the region Nord-Pas-de-Calais was dewatering of quarries and its use in drinking water.



Addressing National and European priorities
Michel Buzot, UNPG Deputy Secretary General and Miette Dechelle, UEPG Public Affairs Manager.

Globalism to Localism

On 7 November, the Confederation of British Industries (CBI) held the Minerals Group Conference ‘Living with Minerals 4’.

The 3 working groups of the UK Minerals Forum reported their findings for consideration and audience participation and voting. The event was lively moderated by Michael Rodd, a well-known TV presenter.



Nigel Jackson, chairman of the CBI Minerals Group opened the Conference inviting Gwenole Cozigou, Director in DG Enterprise and Industry to present updates on the EU Raw Materials Strategy.



Participants were invited to attend a reception on the Terrace at the House of Commons, the UK Parliament.

ANEPAC International Conference



Following the kind invitation of President Fernando Valverde, UEPG President Jim O'Brien gave a keynote presentation at the 3rd International ANEPAC Conference which took place in Atibaia, near São Paulo, on November 9/10. His topic "Ensuring the Sustainable Supply of Aggregates in Europe – Opportunities for Brazil" was highly relevant to the huge challenges of meeting the strongly growing Brazilian demand for aggregates. Brazil and Colombia are now the leading high-

growth economies of South America, fuelled by strong exports of energy, minerals, commodities and agricultural produce.



Brazilian aggregates production is now about 600 million tonnes, equivalent to 3 tonnes/capita, but is expected to reach 1 billion tonnes, equivalent to 5 tonnes/capita, within 3-5 years. In order to particularly promote new quarries in the rapidly-developing São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro regions, ANEPAC is focused on improving the public relations for the aggregates industry. This theme was the subject of a series of keynote presentations by Jaume Puig i Canal of the Spanish Aggregates Federation (FdA), Jennifer Joy Wilson of NSSGA, Carlos Fernando Forero of ASOGRAVAS and of Moreen Miller of the Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (all downloadable from <http://anepac.org.br/wp/publicacoes/anais-de-seminarios/seminario-2011>).



Promoting the sustainable supply of aggregates
President Jim O'Brien at the ANEPAC Conference.

The Seminar was very well attended with over 130 participants from the aggregates industry, machinery suppliers, technical

experts on aggregates, asphalt and concrete, as well as high-ranking politicians and local authorities. After each group of presentations, there were lively roundtable sessions. In the final roundtable, all the international speakers were challenged in a constructive dialogue with professional media and the lively audience. The Conference was undoubtedly a significant success in promoting the image and importance of the aggregates industry in Brazil.

The Conference was preceded by a meeting of FIPA, the coalition of the aggregates associations of Spain, Portugal and Latin America, which is focused on sharing best practices in both directions across the Atlantic, and thereby to stimulate investment in the industry. The current FIPA President is Rudolfo Guerra of Cámara de la Piedra of the Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, with César Luaces Frades of Federación de Áridos as Secretary-General. Future FIPA conferences are planned for 2012 in the Dominican Republic and for 2013 in Cartagena, Colombia.

UEPG Meetings

- 2 Feb. 2012 Marine Aggregates Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 15 Feb. 2012 PR & Communication Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 16 Feb. 2012 Biodiversity Task Force meeting, Brussels
- 16 Feb. 2012 Water Management Working Group meeting, Brussels
- 17 Feb. 2012 RDS & EPD Working Group, Brussels
- 23 Feb 2012 EPRA meeting, Brussels
- 8-9 March 2012 Committee Meetings, Krakow, Poland
- 25 April 2012 European Minerals Forum Parliamentary Dinner Debate, European Parliament, Brussels
- 26 April 2012 Board Meeting, Brussels