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EU Live Issues

Raw Materials Strategy & Innovation Union

European Minerals Foundation Dinner Debate in the European Parliament

On 13 April, at 19h30, Members of the Parliament, the Commission, of the Hungarian Presidency and from the several sectors of the Minerals and Quarrying Industry were participating to the European Minerals Forum Dinner Debate. If Resource Efficiency means different things to the different sectors, a very common point to all sectors is that all sectors are hugely committed to Resources Efficiency. All sectors are promoting good practice and innovative projects, therefore minerals sectors will be actively following up on the Innovation Union Partnership request for proposals.



Discussing access to local resources
Arnaud Colson, Chair of the Environment Committee and Gwenole Cozigou, Director Chemicals, metals, mechanical, electrical and construction industries; Raw materials at DG Enterprise & Industry

Both, MEPs and industry speakers, hammered home the need for access to regional and local mineral and aggregates resources. The RMI report on sharing of Good Practices said it all, emphasizing again and again the need for better minerals planning and more efficient permitting systems. The industry credentials now also prove that responsible industry can indeed work harmoniously within conservation areas, and indeed enhance rather than destroy biodiversity. These key conclusions of the RMI must not be let gather dust or be forgotten through inaction.

Jim O'Brien in his conclusion called the Parliament and Commission to insist on Member States to do actually implement better planning and permitting in their own ways in the various Member State legislations. For SMEs in particular, good minerals planning and effective permitting is essential to survival.

EESC Public Hearing

On 28 April, Dirk Fincke from the General Secretariat presented the UEPG Position on the EU Raw Materials Policy. The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) held a Public Hearing inviting European Commission and key industry stakeholders to present their views on the preliminary draft opinion. Rapporteur is Josef Zbořil (Czech Republic) and Co-Rapporteur Enrico Gibellieri (Italy).

Biodiversity

Brainstorming Meeting with IUCN

On 14 April, Jim O'Brien, President, Arnaud Colson, Chair of the Environment Committee, Dirk Fincke, Public Affairs Manager and Sandrine Devos, Public Affairs Officer, met with Hans Friederich, Pan-European Regional Director of IUCN, and Shulamit Alony, to discuss future cooperation of UEPG with IUCN.



Hans Friederich, Pan-European Regional Director of IUCN

"I have seen your report. I have seen your CD. It's impressive stuff! ... / Through you we can achieve a lot"

Following the presentation on the contribution of the Aggregates Industry to biodiversity, Hans Friederich acknowledged he was impressed by the achievements of UEPG and confirmed that he was aware of the track record of the Aggregates Industry.

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Hans Friederich had great expectations on a UEPG-IUCN partnership to influence policy, and understood the importance of SMEs in protecting biodiversity, and further contacts were expected in order to elaborate on the future cooperation.

Background

In 2007, UEPG and IUCN signed the Countdown 2010 Declaration as part of their cooperation on biodiversity. In 2010, UEPG was the first industry association to join the European Commission Business@Biodiversity Platform. Further strengthening the cooperation between UEPG and IUCN, Shulamit Alony was Jury member of the UEPG SD Awards 2010.

Green Infrastructure Consultation

The EC is launching a new initiative on Green Infrastructure, which will be part of the EU strategy for Biodiversity.

On 31 March, UEPG participated to the first meeting of the working group in DG Environment in Brussels. This might be an opportunity for quarries to demonstrate potential in linking restored areas into "green corridors" to facilitate migration, "stepping stones" to reverse ecosystem and habitat fragmentation.

Next steps

24 May 2011 2nd meeting
6 Sept 2011 3rd meeting

Workshop on biodiversity indicators

On 12 April, a Business and Biodiversity Campaign Workshop on biodiversity indicators took place in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Michael Rademacher, from HeidelbergCement, and Sandrine Devos, from the UEPG General Secretariat, participated in the meeting.

A proposal on indicators for the most important drivers of biodiversity loss was presented by Marion Hammerl, European Business and Biodiversity Campaign, and thoroughly discussed, together with a paper on considerations on methods to assess the biodiversity impacts of business operations, drafted by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation.

Michael Rademacher gave a presentation on raw material extraction and its impact on biodiversity. Sandrine Devos presented the UEPG Biodiversity KPIs. These two presentations made clear that the extractive sector

needed practical and smart indicators which should be established from within the sector.

Implementing TEEB

On 12 April, the European Parliament Inter-group on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development organised a session on "The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity: Implementing TEEB".

François Wakenhut, Head of the Biodiversity Unit in DG Environment emphasised the need to progress on eco-auditing while focusing on the "no net loss" approach. Other key speakers were Hans Friederich, Pan-European Regional Director of IUCN and Jacqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency.

Some confusion still exist on the appropriate set of indicators and whether TEEB is about taking the economic value of ecosystems services into account (audit) or whether it is about putting a price on nature. UEPG supports the former if based on scientific data, but opposes the latter.

Marine Aggregates

Background

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) establishes a framework where Member States are required to take the necessary measures to achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine environment by 2020 at the latest. UEPG is closely following developments in the context of marine aggregates.

Good Environmental Status

Sandrine Devos from the UEPG General Secretariat attended the last Good Environmental Status Working Group.

There were considerations and attempts to identify and develop synergies between Water Framework Directive and MSFD, and similarly between the Habitats and Birds Directive and MSFD with a contract with DG Environment, which should release a paper in Spring 2011 on this topic.

Another field of discussions had been how the changes in policies would affect stakeholders, (such as businesses), directly by putting restrictions on their use of the marine waters or indirectly through taxes.

The Technical Subgroup Noise reported progress on two sub-indicators and would meet in October.

Next steps

10 May 2011 MSCG meeting in Brussels
6-7 Oct 2011 Technical Subgroup Noise meeting in London

Marine Spatial Planning

The European Commission is launching a consultation on marine spatial planning, linked with the Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Next steps

9 Sept 2011 Meeting of the Marine Aggregates Task Force in Brussels

Review of the Working Time Directive

The Working Time Directive is a nine years work, which is not yet satisfactory for all parties, as illustrated by the opting-out of 16 countries, 5 in all sectors and the others on some sectors. One of the major issues is 'flexibility' on this Health and Safety Directive, including one of the main challenges for all which is the 'on call time'. In 2010 the European Commission started reviewing the Working Time Directive, asking for consultations and made proposals. As a result, the stakeholders agreed to open discussion on 9 months basis.

On 14 April at the European Parliament, the Employment and Social Affairs European Parliament Committee had invited the Social Partners and the European Commission to present their proposals before starting discussion. The main issues presented for discussion were 'on call time', 'sick leave and annual pay leave', 'annualisation of the working time', 'work time balance' and the concern to reduce the number of Members States' opting out. It seems that the positions were the same as before, and the discussions might not get to an agreement. Most European Parliament Members' interventions were criticizing the European Commission proposals. For its defence the European Commission mentioned that a serial of 35 infringements against Members States on this issue were opened. At UEPG the Working Time Directive Review is monitored especially on 'drivers time break' up-to-date, an issue of consequence for truck aggregate deliveries.

Eco-Innovation

Eco-innovative projects aim at the prevention or reduction of environmental impacts or which contribute to the optimal use of resources. However, more specific priorities are being set up considering their important environmental impact and policy priorities of the European Union, e.g. water and recycling. Although the competition is opened to any companies, priority will be given to SMEs* and private beneficiaries.

On 27 April 2011, the 2011 call for proposals opened until 8 September 2011. Application packs are available on the [website](#).



On 28 April, UEPG participated to the European Info

Day 2011 to obtain more information and advice on how to develop a good project proposal and apply successfully for UEPG Members. It was also the exchange views and share expertise on projects from across Europe. For more information please contact the UEPG secretariat at secretariat@uepg.eu.

UEPG News

UEPG Board meeting

On 14 April, UEPG Board Members discussed the reporting and recommendations to the Delegates Assembly on key financial and policy issues. The Board discussed the UEPG priorities and future members in their recommendations.



Deciding on UEPG future strategy
President Jim O'Brien (centre) and Members of the Board.

The nomination of Jim O'Brien to continue his mandate of President for another year was warmly and unanimously accepted. Board Members had acknowledged both the achievements and the work done so far and

the need for continuity of the Presidency in the coming year.

European Minerals Day Premiere



On 13 April, at 18h00, almost 100 people, amongst policy makers, NGOs, and all other stakeholders, participated at the Premiere Event of European Minerals Day testifying the importance of the EMD event. Judith Merkies MEP Rapporteur in the ENVI Committee on the Raw Materials Initiative, Herbert Reul MEP, Chair of Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, Gwenole Cozigou, Director, DG Enterprise and Industry, European Commission, Thierry Salmona, IMA-Europe President, Hans Friederich, IUCN Regional Director for Pan-Europe, Michael Rademacher, Manager Biodiversity and Natural Resources from HeidelbergCement and Jim O'Brien, UEPG President were invited to speak on the EMD initiative.



Encouraging the sector to continue its positive contribution
Herbert Reul, MEP (EPP, Germany), Chair of Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

One of challenges identified by MEP Judith Merkies is to change behaviours, responding to the triple challenges of Resource Efficiency, Innovation and the 2020 Strategy. MEP Herbert Reul encouraged the sector to continue to adopt new and positive ways of doing things and to be smart. In response to both these interventions and to Mr Cozigou's advice to further share best practices, Mr O'Brien pointed out that industry is indeed developing many new ideas. He mentioned the need for better access to resources. He also underlined the continued efforts made by the sector on biodiversity and technical innovation, all summarised in the position paper which all participants received.

Hundreds of events will be organised across Europe in 2011 and the European Launch Event will be held on the 13th of May in Bulgaria. For more information, please do contact the UEPG General Secretariat.

MPA Members Environment and Mineral Planning Conference



On 5 April 2011, MPA held its 4th Members Environment and Mineral

Planning Conference. The successful event was attended by a full capacity audience of over 120 delegates and feedback has been very positive.

The main theme was the Government's "Localism" agenda, which possibly heralds the most



profound change to the planning system for a generation. The conference looked at the work being done by MPA to ensure that the planning system remains fit-for-purpose, as Government strives to apply this new "bottom up" approach to established strategic planning processes. Other valuable updates were delivered on mining waste, biodiversity, protected species and European issues.

Meeting with Catalan regional government



On 26 April, the Catalan Association, Gremi

d'Àrids, Member of the Federació de Àridos, had a working group meeting with the local competent authorities. This group has been monitoring since 2005 the aggregates demand & supply in the Catalanian region, and how the sector mitigates its environmental impacts.

Sandrine Devos, Public Affairs Officer, presented the UEPG Environmental activities, and gave a detailed presentation on the EC non-energy mineral extraction and Natura 2000 Guidance Document. Participants in the meeting underlined the compatibility between aggregates extraction and biodiversity.

UEPG Meetings

- 26 May** Entrepreneurs' Forum, Lisbon, Portugal
- 27 May** Delegates Assembly, Lisbon, Portugal