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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

Raw Materials Strategy

On 2 February, the European Commission published the new Communication on the Raw Materials Strategy. The new title of the document reads "[Tackling the Challenges in Commodity Markets and on Raw Materials](#)".

Communication delayed, scope broadened

The Communication was expected to be published by the Commission on 26 January. Being postponed already from December last year, the Commission was asked to further delay publication. The reason for this was the urgent request of an EU Member State to include commodity markets for oil, gas, electricity, agriculture and food security. This unfortunately dilutes the focus on Raw Materials and specifically on aggregates, a matter on which UEPG wrote to Vice-President Tajani.

Access to resources remains a political challenge

In the new Communication, the three pillars of the 2008 Raw Materials Initiative are now preceded by 10 pages addressing commodity markets. The actual Raw Materials Initiative starts on page 11 (point 4) providing first a review of the achievements of the last two years. The second pillar of the Initiative on "fostering sustainable supply within the EU" is placed on pages 17/18 before the Communication ends with the way forward on page 20.

Need to refocus high-political attention

UEPG is currently reviewing its strategy on access to resources with regard to the Raw Materials Initiative which now lacks a focused approach. The [UEPG Position Paper](#) is based on the Leoben Review commissioned by UEPG. The paper aims at refocusing political attention at EC and national levels on the need for access to Raw Material resources, and specifically to aggregate resources.

Parliamentary Industry Committee Debate

UEPG attended the Debate of the European Parliament Industry Committee (ITRE) on 28 February in Brussels. It was a positive development that the majority of MEPs were still focusing on the three pillar structure. Vice-President Tajani also addressed the three pillars in a very balanced way, which is positive news for our sector.

Next steps

To further lobby on the Strategy, and in cooperation with the European Minerals Foundation and NEEIP colleagues, the European Minerals Dinner Debate will take place on 13 April in the European Parliament hosted by Judith Merkies MEP (S&D, Netherlands), Rapporteur of the Innovation Union flagship Initiative. The Rapporteur of the Raw Materials Initiative Reinhard Bütikofer MEP (Greens, Germany) has agreed to contribute to the discussion, as well as the following shadow rapporteurs:

- Paul Rübiger, EPP
- Vladko Todorov Panayotov, ALDE
- Marita Ulvskog, S&D
- Konrad Szymański, ECR

UEPG Members [are invited](#) to attend this important event.

Resource-efficient Europe

On 26 January 2011, the European Commission published a new Communication on "[Resource-efficient Europe](#)".

Background

A resource-efficient Europe is one of seven flagship initiatives as part of the Europe 2020 strategy aiming to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Implications for the Industry

Actions under the resource-efficient Europe flagship have close links to other flagship initiatives under the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular those on industrial policy and

the innovation union. This flagship initiative aims at creating a framework for policies to support the shift towards a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy in order to:

- boost economic performance while reducing resource use;
- identify and create new opportunities for economic growth and greater innovation and boost the EU's competitiveness;
- ensure security of supply of essential resources;
- address climate change and to limit the environmental impacts of resource use.

The Communication gives examples of synergies, one example being to increase recycling rates, which would reduce the pressure on demand for primary raw materials, help to reuse valuable materials which would otherwise be wasted, and reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from extraction processing and transport.

Initiatives for 2011

Annex 1 of the Communication sets initiatives foreseen in 2011 to deliver on the resource-efficient Europe flagship. These include the Communication on a 2020 EU biodiversity policy and strategy, planned for the 1st quarter of 2011, and the Communication tackling the challenges in commodity markets and on raw materials, which, as mentioned above, was published on 2 February 2011.

Next steps

13 Apr. 2011 European Minerals Foundation Dinner Debate, hosted by Judith Merkies MEP (S&D, Netherlands), Rapporteur of the Innovation Union flagship Initiative

Innovation Union Partnership

On 28 February 2011, key stakeholders of the extractive industry met in DG Enterprise, in order to discuss a potential Innovation Union Partnership on "Raw Materials for a Modern Society".

The framework of the partnership was presented during a plenary session, chaired by Abraão Carvalho, Director Chemicals, metals, mechanical, electrical and construction industries; Raw materials, DG Enterprise

and Industry. Presentations from key note speakers underlined that:

- Innovation was not only about technology, but also about processes, standardisation best practice, etc.
- An essential aspect to keep in mind was access to the resources



Presenting "Raw Materials for a Modern Society"

From right: Peter Dröll, Head of Unit "Policy Development for Industrial Innovation", DG Enterprise; Herbert von Bose, Director Industrial technologies, DG Research & Innovation; Gwenole Cozigou Director Chemicals, metals, mechanical, electrical and construction industries; Raw materials, DG Enterprise

Participants then split into parallel experts' sessions. Brian James, Chair of the European Platform for Recycled Aggregates (EPRA), from MPA, represented UEPG at the session dedicated to resource efficiency, "Improving the regulatory framework via promotion of excellence and promoting recycling through public procurement and private initiatives", and presented important comments on recycled aggregates.

Next steps

- June 2011** Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union on the creation of Innovation Union Partnerships
- 2012** Potential launch of the Innovation Union Partnership on "Raw Materials for a Modern Society"

NePSi Employers' Meeting

On 22 February, a NePSi Employers experts meeting was held in Brussels to present the '2010 Reporting' outcome, the preparation for 'Reporting 2012', the Constructor sector issue, the NePSi timetable and resources. It included a presentation from Dr Albert Tien, Holcim (Switzerland).

Martin Isles, UEPG Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, participated in the meeting as UEPG Representative. He emphasized the importance to communicate the benefits of the ESD Agreement to the Construction Industry.

The NePSi tools are available on the NePSi website at <http://www.nepsi.eu/projects/10-golden-rules/introduction.aspx>.

Social Dialogue - Liaison Forum

The Social Dialogue Liaison Forum is a platform where all European Social partners are invited to share their best practices and present these practices to other stakeholders, Members State Representatives and the European Commission. It was also the occasion for the European Commission to present their reports and activities under the Sectoral Social Dialogue Unit as well as by cross sectors, units and organisations on Social issues.

At the last meeting, on 7 February, Jean-Pierre Damn, chair of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Extractive Industry (SSDCEI) underlined the challenge of the Extractive Industry to obtain local access to resources, and the sector socio-economic positive impact in Europe, with the need to promote, best practices in Europe.

On March 10 & 11 the Liaison Forum will focus on Employment 2020 – Flagship skills and jobs - Strategy and workshop: Job creation, flexibility, skills and quality of employment. At the meeting the European Commission will hand out an 'Industrial Relations in Europe' Report.

On 28 March the Liaison Forum will be on Social Partners' Health and Safety at Work including a presentation on the NePSi Agreement.

Next Liaison Forum Meetings

- 10-11 March** Brussels
28 March Brussels

UEPG News

NEEIP Meeting

On 24 February, UEPG and other members of the Non-Energy Extractive Industry Panel (NEEIP) discussed common issues such as the new Raw Materials Strategy and the recent Communication on Resource Efficiency. It was agreed to link these two initiatives and to develop common lobbying messages.

It was also agreed to try to seek a common approach on biodiversity, the details being

attuned to the particular needs of each sector. Other important issues discussed included the upcoming Construction Products Regulation, EPDs, updates on REACH implementation and NePSi.

NEEIP continues to be a very important platform for linking non-energy extractive industry issues across the several key sectors involved.

Next steps

29 September Next NEEIP meeting, EUROROC office, Brussels

PR & Communication Task Force

On 14 February, the UEPG PR and Communication Task Force met in Vienna, kindly hosted by WKO. It discussed the next steps for a Strategy including goals, messages, targets, liaison with Member Associations and its PR tools.



Discussing the PR & Communication strategy
Members of the UEPG PR & Communication Task Force at the Vienna meeting.

Claire Symes, Editor of Aggregates Business Europe (ABE) Magazine, made very useful keynote comments from an external perspective on the Industry Image and need to improve it.

There were excellent UEPG Member Best Practices presented by Spain (Annual Trees and Aggregates initiative), Germany (BKS) ("Die Kiesfibel" formula for open days or Art Sand Competition), Austria ("Trails in the Sand" or Footprint work) and the UK (Biodiversity Strategy or Sustainable Development Webpage).

The UEPG Secretariat received positive feedback on its UEPG PR and Communication Strategy Questionnaire and the resulting recommendations with a special focus on the UEPG website.



The Industry's Image seen from a journalist
From the left to the right: Carl Hennrich, Chair of the Task Force, Jim O'Brien, UEPG President, Miette Dechelle, Public Affairs Officer, Claire Symes, Editor of Aggregates Business Europe, Robert Wasserbacher, Legal Adviser WKO.

The Secretariat presented EU Funding focused on Environment, which totals to around €300m/year for LIFE+ and Eco-Innovation projects and the next European Minerals Day (May 13-15), and European Minerals Forum Dinner Debate (April 13).

Biodiversity Task Force

On 15 February, members of the Biodiversity Task Force Meeting met in Vienna. Experts in Biology from the Austrian University of BOKU and guests from IMA-Europe and CEMBUREAU participated in the important exchanges.



The UEPG Biodiversity strategy will be further discussed at the Environment Committee Meeting in Budapest on 10 March.



Discussing the UEPG Biodiversity strategy
From left to right: Nicola Owen, MPA; Jim O'Brien, President; Robert Wasserbacher, Chair; Sandrine Devos, Public Affairs Officer

The UEPG strategy will be further discussed at the Environment Committee Meeting in Budapest on 10 March.

Fokus Gesteinsrohstoffe 2011

On 8-9 February, more than 180 participants and 10 exhibitors contributed in Hannover (Germany) to the success of the event "Fokus Gesteinsrohstoffe 2011" organised by the Association for the Construction and Raw Materials Industry (Vero) and the German Sand and Gravel Association (BKS).



A strong voice for the German Aggregates Industry
From right: BKS-President Michael Schulz, Claudia Kressin, Vero-President Franz-Bernd Köster, Bernhard Lemkamp, Hans-Peter Braus und Walter Nelles.

The organiser strongly encouraged companies to participate actively in the European Minerals Day 2011 on 13-15 May, co-organised by UEPG.

UEPG Meetings

- 1 March** EPRA Meeting, Brussels
- 10-11 March** Committee Meetings, Budapest, Hungary
- 13 April** European Minerals Day Première and European Minerals Foundation Dinner Debate, European Parliament, Brussels
- 14 April** Board Meeting, Brussels
- 26 May** Entrepreneurs' Forum, Lisbon, Portugal
- 27 May** Delegates Assembly, Lisbon, Portugal