



CLOSING LOOPS – RECIPE FOR A TRULY CIRCULAR ECONOMY

EuRIC Annual Conference

6 MARCH 2018 | **Bluepoint Brussels**
Brussels, Belgium

Key facts – Growing audience, vivid debates!

Sponsored by leading companies - Suez, Metallverwertungsgesellschaft Gottenheim, Paprec Group, DSM, Grupo Otua, Anamet Recycling – as well as National Recycling Federations, EuRIC Annual Conference gathered more than 200 participants who discussed the hottest topics for the recycling industry.

Discussions around welcomed Waste Package Deal and Plastics Strategy

The audience widely welcomed the positive outcome of the negotiations, presented by Eve Tamme, Counsellor for Environmental Affairs at the Permanent Representation of Estonia who led the negotiations on behalf of the Council during the Estonian Presidency. Higher recycling targets, a harmonized calculation method to avoid comparing „apple with oranges“ across Member States as well as a set of new rules to foster recycling are among landmark measures agreed in the package. These measures include binding requirements to ensure that no more than 10% of municipal waste are landfilled by 2035, obligations to prevent the incineration of separately collected waste or eco-modulation of fees paid to EPR Schemes on the basis of the recyclability of products placed on the market.

The newly launched Plastics Strategy presented by Sarah Nelen, Head of Unit for waste management and secondary materials at the European Commission's Environment Directorate (DG Environment), also received many positive feedbacks but equally triggered some discussion.

Need to support welcomed revised policy framework by ambitious incentives

To move out from a kind of chicken and egg dilemma, Denis Bonvillain, from SUEZ, stressed the need for binding measures to pull the demand for recycled plastics, be it in the form of mandatory inclusion of recycled material content for specific product category or market based instruments to close the price gap with virgin plastics. Keith Fregard, Director at Axion Polymers, stressed the importance of putting CO₂ savings stemming from plastics recycling at the heart of the Plastics Strategy, a parameter which is highlighted in the Strategy but not rewarded for the time being. That plea was strongly echoed by Manuel Burnand, Director General of FEDEREC, the French Federation of Recycling Companies, which showcased the Study carried out together with the French Environment & Protection Agency, ADEME, which quantifies the CO₂ and energy savings enabled by recycling based on a life cycle analysis. Beyond staggering

numbers according to which recycling in France saves the equivalent of CO₂ emitted by 100% of the annual emissions from air transport in France, Burnand presented the operational software developed based on this study which is a handy tool to help rewarding CO₂ benefits from recycling that current market prices simply fail to internalize.

Ecodesign at the heart of the Circular Economy

Fulvia Raffaelli, Head of the Clean Technologies and Products Unit at DG GROW of the European Commission gave further details of how the Commission increasingly includes resource efficiency requirements to foster products' recyclability in eco-design regulations and standards.

The instrumental role of ecodesign for recycling was exemplified by Andreas Kessler, Director Business Unit Plastics, SUEZ Recycling & Recovery - Benelux & Germany, who explained through practical case studies why, in a circular economy, it is no longer feasible to design products by omitting to take into consideration how they can be effectively recycled when they reach end of life. For Kessler, eco-modulation of fees is key to ensure that good players [taking onboard recyclability at design stage] are not paying for the bad ones, as currently the case. For plastics, he called to go a step beyond by introducing CO₂ credits, reduced tax rates, green public procurement or even minimum recycled content rates to provide long term certainty on higher demand for recycled plastics, which is key to increase the plastic recycling capacity in Europe: stable demand is needed to encourage investment.

Ward Mosmuller, Director EU Affairs at DSM, a global science based company, made a lively presentation about NIAGA, a technology developed by DSM to design everyday products, such as carpets, barely recyclable today when using conventional technologies, into fully recyclable ones thanks to a complex combination of smart engineering, materials design for recycling and tailored approach to consumers' sustainable needs.

Waste and chemicals lively discussions as recyclers call for clarity and predictability of the legislation to avoid disrupting circular flows

In his opening statement, Michael Schuy, EuRIC President, stressed how important it is to strike the right balance when it comes to the interface between waste, chemicals and products' legislation. Recent examples demonstrate the genuine and significant negative impacts that newly proposed classification of substances under the chemical legislation, especially for metals like Cobalt or Lead, can have on the entire metal value chain. For Schuy, it is instrumental to consider, alongside with socio-economic impacts, the actual risks posed by a substance, especially when embedded in a material and not simply the hazards. The importance of a risk-based approach taking into consideration bioavailability was further emphasized by Christer Forsgren, Head of Technology & Environmental Science of Stena Metall Group and Adjunct Professor at the Chalmers University of Technology, who explained that we often speak about concentrations close to the detection limits, resulting in the fact that nearly everything can be found everywhere. Hans Regtuit, Stainless Steel Environment Manager at EUROFER and Keith Freegard, Director at Axion Polymers, provided practical examples about the importance of ensuring that chemical laws are suited to circular flows. Both of them stressed that some of the current proposals can be "recycling inhibitors" if passed, be it in the field of steel or plastics. Mr. Enrique Garcia-John, Policy Officer for Chemicals at DG GROW explained the work made by the European Commission to streamline the interface between waste, products and chemicals laws and urged stakeholders to respond to the upcoming public consultation in order to voice their opinions on the policy options proposed.

Building an internal market for recycling in the field of waste shipments

Chris Slijkhuis, Public Affairs Manager for E-waste Recycling at MüllerGuttenbrunn Gruppe (MGG) and Dr. Robine van Dooren, Project Lead, Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO) showcased the Fast-track notification for WEEE Green Deal as part of the North Sea Resources Roundabout (NSRR). This International Green Deal aims at facilitating trade & transportation of secondary raw materials through the harmonization of national interpretation and enforcement of (waste) legislation between participating countries, and optimal use of possibilities within current (EU) legislative framework.

For cross-border shipments for WEEE recycling, Slijkhuis “dream” is to make of the fast-track notification procedures the rule rather than the exception for compliant recyclers across Europe, so as to ensure that such procedures follow the pace of businesses and do not hamper the circular economy. The cooperation of public authorities from NL, AT, BE, UK & FR and private operators (MGG & HKS Metals) in this Green Deal is a practical step forward towards this objective.

Challenges & opportunities for recovered paper as China’s ban impacts the sector

Hans van de Nes, President of ERPA – EuRIC paper recycling Branch, explained that China’s ban on waste imports was both a challenge and opportunity. A challenge since there are no alternative markets for Europe’s 8 million tons oversupply for recovered paper, causing market instability and price falls which have adverse knock-on effects in the industry. An opportunity, in the longer run, if measures are taken swiftly and implemented effectively. He referred in particular to the urgent need for eco-design measures to ensure that packaging products are effectively recyclable, as well as green public procurement or mandatory recycled content in newly produced items in order to pull the demand for recovered paper. Last but not least, he stressed the importance of improving quality, through separate collection, to prevent cross-contamination of paper at source, and the importance of EN 643 standard for quality recovered paper production.

ELV whereabouts

Artemis Hatzi-Hull, Policy Officer in charge of end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) within the DG Environment of the European Commission unveiled the key elements that will shape tomorrow’s EU regulatory landscape in the field of ELVs. First in terms of responsibility, design responsibility should lead producers to design more recyclable vehicles, limit the use of hazardous substances and use more recycled materials in new cars. Second, the 4,6 million missing ELVs in 2014, according to a figure from the Öko-Institut remain a challenge both for the regulator and for the industry. Thomas Papageorgiou, Chair of the European Shredder Group and Compliance Director at ANAMET Recycling, advocated for a carrot and stick approach, combining well-framed incentives to strengthen the certificate of destruction (CoD) and ensure that vehicles are delivered to authorised treatment facilities (ATFs) on the one hand, and a better enforcement of requirements set in the ELV Directive on the other hand. Third, the adaption to new types of vehicles placed on the market, in particular electric ones, and their impacts on end-of-life treatment were also touched upon. Last but not least, Artemis Hatzi-Hull announced, as part of the waste package agreed, a proposal for a review of the ELV Directive by 31 December 2020.

Mind recycling globally

Arnaud Brunet, Director General of BIR, concluded an intense day of debates by introducing the first ever Global Recycling Day on 18 March 2018. Launched at the initiative of BIR, this day aims at promoting throughout the world the urgency of recycling more for a greener future and at encouraging the world to think resource NOT waste. Brunet provided insights about the various initiatives which will take place across the world on March 18th and invited participants to join this initiative.

Date & Place of the European Recycling Conference (ERC) announced 10 September 2018, Berlin

Mr. Emmanuel Katrakis, Secretary General of EuRIC, warmly thanked the numerous speakers, participants and sponsors. He announced that the second edition of the European Recycling Conference (ERC) organised by EuRIC together with VDM, BDSV and BVSE will take place on 10 September 2018 in Berlin.

For more information:

- EuRIC website: <https://www.euric-aisbl.eu/>
- Presentations, pictures and list of participants of EuRIC Annual Conference 2018 available on: <https://www.euric-aisbl.eu/closing-loops-event-registration#downloads>
- EuRIC Secretariat email: euric@euric-aisbl.eu
- Twitter: [@Euric_Recycling](https://twitter.com/Euric_Recycling)

Through its Member Recycling Federations from 20 EU and EFTA countries, EuRIC represents today over:

- 5,500+ companies generating an aggregated annual turnover of about 95 billion €, including large companies and SMEs, involved in the recycling and trade of various resource streams;
- 300,000 local jobs which cannot be outsourced to third EU countries;
- An average of 150 million tons of waste recycled per year (metals, paper, plastics, glass and beyond).

Recyclers play a key role in a circular economy. By turning wastes into resources, recycling is the link which reintroduces recycled materials into the value chains again and again.

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