

# EuPCfocus



**EUROPEAN PLASTICS CONVERTERS NEWSLETTER**  
PROVIDING EuPC MEMBERS WITH A BRIEF OVERVIEW  
OF EuPC ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

February 2007

## Internal News

### Annual Meeting 2007 in the Netherlands

EuPC will hold its Annual Meeting on 7 – 9 June 2007 in Noordwijk aan Zee. The EuPC General Assembly will take place on 8 June 2007, and will be preceded by the Packaging Forum and the Divisions Building and Construction Division, Automotive and Transport Division and the EuPF (European Plastic Films) Plenary meeting on 7 June 2007.



### EuPC Senior Executives Forum

On 17 January 2007 EuPC organised its first Senior Executives Forum in Brussels at the Sheraton Hotel Airport. **EuPC** presented its strategy and policy and started a dialogue on European level with material suppliers. Several CEOs from the plastics raw material industry and members of the PlasticsEurope Steering board joined the event. The meeting report is available at request, please contact Delphine Hebette (delphine.hebette@eupc.org).

### European Composites Industry Association, a new EuPC sector group

On 31 January 2007, a new sector group, European Composites Industry Association (EuCIA) was set up under the **EuPC** umbrella. This Euro-

pean group represents the fibre reinforced plastics/composites industry. Volker Fritz has been elected as the first EuCIA President and he has been appointed for a 3 year period. Jan Verhaeghe was appointed vice-president New Technologies and Dirk DeMoor, AGORIA Reinforplast was elected treasurer.

## EU Commission News

### Reach and plastics recycling

In order to find a solution to the plastics recycles issue, EuPC is tabling an amendment under the revision of the Waste Framework Directive to define secondary raw materials. By having a legal basis for secondary raw materials (plastics recycles) the EuPR (recyclers) will be able to ask for an exemption under the Reach regulation. Meetings with several MEPs, the EU Commission are taking place since the beginning of January in order to alert the EU Institutions about the problem the plastics industry is facing. It will be extremely difficult (and for some recycling companies almost impossible) to comply with the Reach requirements and to sell recycles to converters by preparing safety datasheets. EuPR and **EuPC** have therefore joined forces in the organisation of a specific workshop on Reach implementation for plastics recyclers on 27th April 2007 in Dublin. More info can be obtained from [www.plasticsrecyclers.eu](http://www.plasticsrecyclers.eu).

### Commission kicks off new €36 million programme for financing small businesses, in particular in new Member States

The European Commission adopted a programme to assist local banks and other credit institutions, particularly in the ten new EU

Member States. This programme strives to alleviate the difficulties of financing business, especially for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). This "preparatory action on support for SMEs in the new financial environment" will be channelled through international financial institutions: the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Investment Fund (EIF) and the Council of Europe Bank together with the KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau). The initial € 6 million of annual funding of technical assistance and capacity-building in EU countries with low levels of bank lending will be multiplied by a further 30 million euros of the participating financial institutions' own funds. This new Commission initiative is designed to enhance confidence and capacity of credit institutions, particularly from the new Members States, to provide loans to SMEs and to enable financial providers to address these challenges.

### Proposal for Anti-Dumping and AntiSubsidy duties on Imports of PET originating from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand

Since many years the European Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) converting industry has been struggling due to "unfair" duties that were imposed in the EU on the imports of PET raw material from the countries indicated above. The elimination of measures could remedy the market distortions caused by an artificial high level of raw material price; **EuPC** wishes to underline the fact that 80% of fixed costs are related to the purchase of raw materials and that pre-forms are bulk products with low transport costs, thus favouring the non EU producer which has lower costs. The raw material producer

has, furthermore, low labour costs due to the fact that its production is almost completely automatic; instead the plastic converter has a high rate of employment due to the particular type of processing industry. In addition the controls on the bulk products, at the EU borders, lack of control over pre-forms.

Such duties have generated a failure of the European industry to be able to fairly compete in its own domestic market. Furthermore, **EuPC** has noticed high level of imports of PET Pre-forms in the EU since the year 2000, i.e. from neighbourhood countries like Ukraine and Croatia.

The final duties that were imposed in the year 2000 have nearly reached their natural and legal expiration. The European Commission is undergoing a further investigation to verify if the alleged dumping continues to persist. This investigation begun in December 2005, is at this stage terminated. **EuPC** acknowledges the fact that the European Commission is asking for the duties to be re-confirmed; as the result of the meeting which took place in January 2007. **EuPC** requests to establish a common ground in which the European PET plastic converting industry is not penalized.

### **The thematic strategy analyses and assesses EU waste policy with a view to setting the strategic framework for the future.**

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The ENVI Committee adopted the draft report on the Thematic Strategy on Prevention and Recycling of Waste (Hans Blokland,

IND/DEM, the Netherlands) on 27th November 2006. 23 amendments to the text were submitted in due time.

During the vote amendment 22 (see below), presented by the Greens Jill Evans and Caroline Lucas (shadow-rapporteur), was supported by a large majority, which included both EPP-ED and ESP, even if the rapporteur Blokland (Independence/Democracy Group) expressed his disagreement about it.

### **Amendment 22**

*'25a. Calls on the Commission to follow up on its Green Paper on PVC and to propose a separate directive on PVC, given the numerous environmental and health problems over its entire life cycle, in particular when it becomes a waste'.*

This vote is concerning as the report will be submitted to the plenary session of the European parliament in February 2007 for adoption and could reopen the debate about PVC and force the Commission into taking some form of action.

However it is important to take into consideration some points before presenting the options at stake. Firstly, the report under discussion will lead to an opinion of the European Parliament, i.e. to a non-binding document. However, it may still be important given the political signal it sends to the Commission. Secondly, it appears that the Waste Thematic Strategy is a relatively low profile dossier compared to the high profile discussion generated at Council, European Parliament, industry and NGOs level by the revised Waste Framework Directive. Furthermore, amendment 22 received very low attention by

the media and for instance, amongst different sources of information, just European Environment Packaging Law briefly mentioned the amendment ("MEPs also supported the Greens' call for a separate directive on PVC, given its environmental and health problems in particular when it becomes a waste") in an article published almost three weeks after the vote in the ENVI Committee.

### **PVC industry Concerns:**

This amendment could reopen the discussions on PVC and Vinyl 2010 and could force the Commission to take action. There is also the risk that additional amendments could be tabled widening this issue further.

### **Next steps:**

Adoption in Plenary: 13-16 February 2007. During next days and weeks, the PVC network must lobby the import and opinion leaders from the large political parties EPP, ED and ESP to ensure a majority in the plenary session for a rejection of the amendment 22.

## **EuPC Personalia**

With sadness we have to inform you that the spouse of Walter Claes, Liddy Faninger passed away on 15 January in the hospital of Gent after 2 years of illness. Our thoughts are today with Walter and his children during these very difficult moments in their lives. Liddy participated for several years in our **EuPC** network and was known to many of you since many years. She will always remain in our thoughts as a joyful, highly cultivated and dynamic person sharing her life with a passionate professional as Walter.

## **EuPC Upcoming events**

14	February 2007	<b>Workshop Regulated Substances</b>	Brussels, EuPC Center
27	February 2007	Steering Committee Meeting	Barcelona, Spain
27	February 2007	Packaging Excom	Barcelona, Spain
19-20	March 2007	NPA Platform meeting	Paris
27	April 2007	REACH Workshop for Recyclers	Dublin, Ireland
3	May 2007	REACH Workshop for Calendering & Coating	Brussels, EuPC Center
6-9	June 2007	EuPC Annual Meeting	Noordwijk aan Zee, the Netherlands
19	June 2007	REACH Workshop for Injection & Blow Moulding	Brussels, EuPC Center
17-18	September 2007	NPA Platform Meeting	Brussels, EuPC Center
16	October 2007	REACH Workshop for Extrusion	Brussels, EuPC Center