

EuPC focus on Packaging



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

March 2008

EuPC Packaging Division

EuPC Packaging Forum, 2008 Edition

Athens will be the host city for the Plastic Packaging event of 2008, organized by **EuPC**.



The **EuPC** Packaging Forum has become a traditional occurrence for the Plastic Packaging Industry, thanks to the

consolidated experience gained in many years of organization and promotion. The event will occur in occasion of the **EuPC** General Assembly. The 2008 event will see a combination of speakers coming from, not only the plastic industry but also from the European Institutions. Important speakers have accepted with enthusiasm to express their views and challenges for the next years in the field of plastic packaging: The Greek Plastic Association, BASF, BASELL, European Commission and European Bioplastic Association has all showed interest in joining the annual debate of **EuPC** in the field of plastic packaging.

On 22nd May 2008 (from 9.00 – 9.30) the Packaging Division of **EuPC** will re-elect the Packaging Division Excom Members, the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen.

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Bioplastics and biodegradability: Q&A

EuPC, has published a 'Questions and Answers' document on Bioplastics and biodegradability. This factual brochure giving answers to the commonly asked questions on the subject follows the preparation of a detailed internal industry position paper issued to **EuPC** members in 2006, the fruit of co-operation with Plastics Europe. 'Bioplastics' are generally considered to be types of plastics derived from natural resources such as wood (cellulose), vegetable oils, sugar or starch and the aim of the document is to give clear and concise information in order to clarify precisely what is meant by the terminology used and to correct possible misinformation which has entered into circulation about this family of materials. The document will also help the reader understand the relationship between bioplastics and biodegradation, positioning biodegradation within the wider context of

degradation as a whole. The plastic converting industry is today looking for other sources of raw materials that can have the same properties compared to traditional raw materials. Even though bioplastics still constitute an immature



market, they have the potential to grow exponentially in the next years. **EuPC** wishes to express its thanks to the ad hoc working group established to create this important document

which has encountered the appreciation of the members and the wider audience.

EU Regulatory Affairs

1999/177/EC: Commission Decision of 8 February 1999 establishing the conditions for a derogation for plastic crates and plastic pallets in relation to the heavy metal concentration levels established in Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste

In relation to Commission Decision 1999/177/EC regarding the exemption for heavy metals in plastic crates and pallets recycled in a closed loop **EuPC** has decided to support the initiative to ask for a further prolongation. **EuPC/EuPR** is preparing a position paper that will be agreed by the **EuPC** Packaging Division and then sent to the officials of DG Environment and DG Enterprise & Industry in order to ask for a further prolongation of the exemption. This position paper will go in inter-service consultation and then transmitted to the European Parliament and the European Council. **EuPC/EuPR** was informed that the Member States will meet in September 2008 to take a decision on this issue. If the European Union wants to keep high levels of recycling in Europe it must keep stable those markets that function very well and that contribute to the overall saving of natural resources cutting down, at the same time, on CO₂ emissions. More information:

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Revision of EU Waste Legislation

2008 is an extremely important year for the revision of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD). The overall intention of the EU Institutions is to have clear definitions, a simplification of the EU waste legislation and to have a clear legal status on what are the most preferred waste management options. The European Council adopted its common position in December 2007; from a legislative point of view the dossier now is in the hands of the European Parliament. The rapporteur for the Waste framework Directive, MEP Caroline Jackson has presented its amendments to the Environment Committee of the European Parliament on 25 February 2008. The Parliament has also indicated a deadline to present amendments and this was established for 4 March 2008. According to the procedure laid down, namely the co-decision procedure, the European Parliament has 3+1 month to approve partially or in total or to make comments to the common position of the European Council; this will be done in spring 2008 in what is called the second reading. **EuPC** has learned that there is a political willingness to avoid the conciliation phase, thus most probably the Directive will be approved in second reading and will come into force in Summer 2008 (under the French Presidency). If, instead, there will be conciliation it will take place under the French presidency in autumn 2008. In addition, Member States will have between 15 and 18 months to implement the Directive into national law; thus we are looking at 2009/2010 possible entry into force of the WFD in the Member States.

Next EU Presidencies

Slovenia	January - June 2008
France	July - December 2008
Czech Republic	January - June 2009
Sweden	July - December 2009

Vassiliou set to succeed Marcos Kyrianiou

President Barroso has given his agreement with the nomination by the Republic of Cyprus of Mrs Androula Vassiliou as a member of the Commission. She will, should she get the approval of the Council, take over the "Health" portfolio. She

studied Law at and International affairs before going on to practice Law in Cyprus for twenty years. She was Member of the Cyprus House of Representatives. As a Member of the European Affairs Committee, she participated actively in the harmonization process of Cyprus with the Aquis Communautaire. She has been Vice President of ELDR and also served two terms as President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

European Acquis for the Plastics Industry

EuPC, the Romanian Plastics Processor



Employers' Association, the Bulgarian Association Polymers, the Croatian Chamber of Economy and the Turkish Plastics Manufacturers Research, Development and Educational Foundation have been granted by the European Commission to spread the European acquis in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey. **EuPC** warmly thanks *PlasticsEurope* for their support enabling the extra participation of Greece to this 15 month programme. The overall objective of our action is to help SMEs become familiar with the EU legislation and standards which are relevant to the plastics industry and to give our partners the means to promote a positive image of the industry they represent towards local authorities, users and consumers. Through this action, we will have our partners produce a number of publications and organise workshops and various events and activities. Meanwhile some of these promotional materials and actions will be used to raise awareness amongst their members about the acquis and the standards which will affect their businesses; others will be used



Mrs. Pehneć (Croatian Plastics Association), Mr. Riva (PlasticsEurope) and Mrs. Martinović (Croatian Chamber of Economy)

to make users and consumers aware of the existence and the setting-up of collecting, sorting and recycling systems for plastics. As a result of this action, we expect to have companies perfectly aware of the EU legislation and standards affecting their business and well prepared to produce goods which are safe for consumers and the environment according to the rules applied in the EU. We also expect consumers in the target countries to become conscious of their role as suppliers of the recycling industry in the systems that have been set-up to protect their environment from plastic waste. More information: song.la.ophaso@eupc.org

National Issues

Latvia

A draft law was presented which aims at reaching the following provisions:

- an increase in the rate of natural resources tax for plastic shopping bags, in order to encourage a reduction in their use;
- a reduction in the rate of natural resources tax for shopping bags made of bioplastic, in order to encourage the replacement of plastic bags with bioplastic bags;

Poland

In November 2007 a draft Resolution was presented by the City Council in Łódź aiming at implementing a ban on disposable plastic bags; the resolution was regarded unconstitutional, also thanks to **EuPC** letter and legal opinion. The author of the resolution prepared a civic project of the bill amending the Packaging and Packaging Waste Act with which 1000 signatures of Polish citizens were collected, necessary to register the draft bill in Polish Lower House. If he collects 100 000 signatures in total the draft will be presented in the Polish Parliament. More information: office@tworzywa.org.pl

Spain

There are two Spanish legislative drafts which concern plastic packaging industry in general and the plastic bags in particular:

- The revision of the Spanish packaging law (calls for a promotion of reusable bags and the substitution of single use packaging for reusable packaging).
- The draft for the 'II national plan for

urban waste management' (calls for a reduction of 50% in the use of single use bags by 2009 and a ban of the single use and non biodegradable bag by 2010).

- It is not expected that the ministry will publish anything before the next Spanish General elections in March. There will be a concern for the next political government.

More information: anaip@anaip.es

Italy

Due to the political elections in April, the project established by the previous government to ban plastic bags is temporarily suspended. This situation will be followed in the course of the current year. More information:

info@federazionegommaplastica.it

Portugal

In August 2007, Portugal and in particular the Ministry for Environment has proposed a draft legislative decree calling for an tax on all one way plastic shopping bags that are given to the consumer to pack the products that he has bought; this tax will be progressive: it will begin at 0,05€ per unit and it will arrive at 0, 10€ per unit. APIP (The Portuguese Plastic Association) has immediately initiated discussions at official level to stop this decree; they have spoken to the Ministry of Economy explaining that the plastic bag industry, in Portugal, is a healthy industry and that, if this tax is approved, it will cause a terrible situations in terms of employment, mainly in certain regions of Portugal; in addition these plastics bags are always reused to pack domestic garbage. Thanks to this initiative the government has put temporarily a brake on this ecotax. A waste management operator (LIPOR) situated in the region of Porto has asked the citizens, through a petition, to ban plastic shopping bags from the retail stores. In addition newspapers and television have begun a campaign against the use of plastic shopping bags in Portugal. Two local supermarket chains have put, voluntarily, an additional cost on the plastic bags (namely of 0,02€ per unit). In the meantime the Portuguese government is in the phase of proposing another legislative proposal. APIP and their film manufacturers will initiate very soon a campaign to sensitize the citizens on the benefits of plastic in general. More information: apip.lisboa@apip.pt

EuPC Upcoming events

04 April 2008
21-24 May 2008
22 May 2008
16 June 2008
16 June 2008
June 2008

EuPF EXCOM Meeting
EuPC Annual Meeting
Packaging Forum
Communications Committee Meeting
Trade Committee Meeting
HSE Meeting

Brussels, EuPC offices
Athens, Greece
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