

EuPC focus on Packaging



EUROPEAN PLASTICS CONVERTERS NEWSLETTER
PROVIDING EUPC MEMBERS WITH AN OVERVIEW
OF EUPC PACKAGING DIVISION ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

November 2006

Packaging Division news

Elections of the 2006-2008 Packaging Excom, the President and the Vice-Presidents



Mr Borgardt

During the last Packaging Division meeting the new President, the four vice-Presidents and the Excom members have been elected.

Mr Bernhard Borgardt, Mr Marcel de Botton and Mr Mohsen Eskandar were confirmed respectively President and vice-Presidents of the Division; while Mr Jordi Sabadell and Mr Joachim Eckstein have been newly appointed vice-Presidents.



Mr de Botton

The full list of members of the **EuPC** Packaging Division Excom 2006-2008 are:



Mr Eskandar

Mr Borgardt, President, IK, **Mr De Botton, Vice-President**, APIP, **Mr Eskandar, Vice-President**, Federation de la Plasturgie, **Mr Sabadell, Vice-President**, ANAIP, **Mr Eckstein, Vice-President**, Erpa/Eupet, **Mr Law, Excom**, BPF, **Mr Kelterborn, Excom**, GKV, **Mr Groenewegen, Excom**, FebelPlast, **Mr Merkx, Excom**, EuPR, **Mr Dainelli, Excom**, Federazione Gomma-Plastica, **Mr Bruder, Excom**, IK, **Mrs Gerardi, Excom**, Plasteuropac.



Mr Sabadell



Mr Eckstein

EuPC Packaging Forum, 2006 Edition: Great Success!

EuPC organised its fourth Plastics Packaging Forum, in Helsinki, Finland. The event, saw the contribution of important speakers such as Dr Pekka Sutela (Head of Research Unit for economies in transition Russia - Bank of Finland), Mr Russell Tew (Marketing Manager Moulding, Borealis), Mr Timo Keski - Mattila (General Manager, Consumer Goods Huhtamaki Oyj),

Mr Bernard Baert (Vice-President of Polyone Corporation) and Mr Dario Dainelli (Quality Manager and Regulatory Affairs Manager, Sealed Air Corporation); the Convention was chaired by the President of the **EuPC** Packaging Division, namely Bernhard Borgardt.

The topics discussed gave an overview of possible business opportunities to invest in Russia; a supplier perspective of the plastic packaging market; a leading plastic packaging manufacturer point of view of the current market situation in Scandinavia; a look into new materials, namely BioPlastic; and a deep insight on the most important sector in plastic packaging, food contact applications.

EU Regulatory Affairs

Food Packaging: legislative update

Two legislative requirements are now in force:

1. Traceability for food contact materials (art. 17 of the Framework Regulation). For reference on how to implement this traceability, the industry under the chair of **EuPC** compiled a guideline, which is now edited on the European Commission reference laboratory website, the Joint Research Centre.

2. The second amendment of the plastics directive also comes into force, which causes practical implementation problems. It is indeed very difficult to obtain information on dual use additives from suppliers and unclear which information to transmit to customer. The **EuPC** list of dual use additives provides suggestions for implementing this provision. It is however foreseen to develop in cooperation with food industry a shorter and hence more understandable reference list of dual use additives to be disclosed.

When looking into future legislation, some delay is to be expected in the publication of several piece of legislation in preparation: 4th amendment to the plastics directive, regulation on restrictions and regulation good manufacturing practices, which could postpone the publication of those

legislations to early 2007. However new requirements are coming; especially a precise declaration of conformity, and the need to constitute a "supporting documentation", including justification for reaction products and impurities (non intentionally added substances). Without adequate scientific tools that can be used by companies and could affect the competitiveness of plastics converters. The **EuPC** consortium Expoplast is developing those "exposure based" risk assessment tools. It is of strategic importance for all companies in food contact to be able to have these tools and to use them.

Anti-Dumping Complaint on Plastic Bags

EuPC welcomes the publication of EU anti-dumping duties on the imports of plastic bags from China and Thailand

EuPC welcomes the decision of the EU Member States and the Commission to impose final measures on the imports of plastic bags in the EU Member States from China and Thailand.

After having completed its investigations, the European Commission has found clear evidence of dumping of certain types of plastic bags from China and Thailand; and as indicated under EU Regulation 1425/2006 of 25 September 2006, definitive measures were imposed as high as 28.8 percent; Variations on the percentage of the duty imposed depend on the country and on the companies that were investigated. The measures imposed will last for at least 5 years (after the five year period, the duties will be subject to revision to verify the existence of the dumping and of the injury to EU manufacturers) for polyethylene plastic bags, including refuse, carrier, retail, freezer and fruit and vegetable bags.

The route to arrive to this result has being long and complex; many difficulties had to be overcome in order to reach the final goal of restabilising a level playing field for all economic operators. Being a highly competitive industry, the plastic bag industry welcomes an equal competition from imports. Thirty European plastic bag

producers, together with **EuPC** and Plasteurofilm, created a solid block to convince, with factual evidence, the European Commission of the illegal dumping of plastic bags into the European Market and the damage it was causing to employment and profitability.

A New **EuPC** Sector Group: **EuPF** (European Plastic Films)

On 20th October 2006, **EuPF** (The European Plastic Films Association) was created under the umbrella of **EuPC Packaging and Building & Construction Division**. The First elected President of **EuPF** is CEO Mr Björn Hoem from the company CeDo Foliën. It will be composed of 5 working groups, namely: Bags & Sacks, Agri, Construct & Industrial, test methods and Printing. The following structure will form the initial base of members, which with time **EuPF** hopes to enlarge: Associations (CSEMP, PIFA, AFILPLA, UNIONPLAST, VvF and IK); Film Extruders (Valeron Strength Films (B), Norfolier (NL)); Associated Members (Total, Biotec, Borealis, Sabic).

NATIONAL ISSUES

FRANCE

On 14 August 2006, the European Commission received the notification of a Draft Decree, currently being discussed at national level in France, related to the prohibition as of 1st January 2010 of "single-use carrier bags made of non-biodegradable plastic". The products concerned relate to single-use plastic bags with integrated straps, distributed free or paid for at the point of sale of goods.

In **EuPC** opinion, this Decree will generate: A) An obscure environmental benefit; B) An artificial market push towards the use of biodegradable plastic; C) An infringement of EC Law (Infringement of the EC Treaty and Infringement to European Secondary-law, namely the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive).

An official **EuPC** position was sent to the European Commission to express concerns regarding the development that the above Decree is having and will have on the plastic packaging market.

CSEMP (The French Plastic Packaging Association) has been deeply involved at Ministerial level to work out a result that would have been acceptable by the plastic packaging industry, taking into account that the first draft Decree aimed at a general ban of all plastic packaging manufactured using traditional plastic. The result of CSEMP lobbying is that the Decree will be applicable only to single-use carrier bags made of non-biodegradable and the biodegradability has to be proven with EN Standard 13432. It will not be applicable to advertising bags and fruit and vegetable bags. A second decree is currently being prepared in the frame of the agricultural law and some usage of plastics will be chosen made from material based on renewable resources. The products discussed are among the categories of products such as refused bags, agricultural film and products like ear tips are under proposal. No decision has been taken for the moment; the French government is in the process of elaborating the text.

UK

Retailer's action towards biodegradable packaging

UK plastic industry, especially in the field of plastic bags and plastic packaging, is facing attacks from the retailers. The background story is that the UK government is pushing retailers to become greener; this has led to the so-called "Green Store Wars". As a consequence, some retailers are trying to push the use of biodegradable plastic. BPF (The British Plastic Federation) has made clear to the gov-

ernment on several occasions that plastics offers many environmental advantages and resource savings and that artificially pushing the market to use this new raw material would cause some serious consequences: i.e. disturbance of recycling; issues connected to greenhouse gasses; the necessity to get the raw material; issues related to OGM; Ethics of using crops for industrial use when a proportion of world's population is short of food.

ITALY

Environmental Decree and a success story from Italy

Decree-Law no. 152/2006 (namely the Environmental Code) repeals more than 30 existing measures and transposes eight EU directives. CONAI, the National Packaging Consortium, is responsible for meeting the targets set up by the 2004/12/EC Directive. CONAI's membership has been in the past years compulsory; however, the decree introduces the possibility that producers and users of packaging do not have the obligation to join CONAI if they handle packaging waste themselves at nationwide level or join one of the material consortia. However, CONAI will control the waste handling.

In the framework of the draft Environmental Code, Italy new left wing government tried to introduce an amendment to ban the use of traditional plastic bags made from traditional raw material as from 2010 (following the French example). The Environmental Committee of the Parliament approved the introduction of this amendment in October 2006. Thanks to the successful lobbying of Federazione Gomma-Plastica, the amendment proposed failed to pass and was deleted from the Decree.

EuPC Upcoming events

23	November 2006	EMPM meeting	EuPC offices, Brussels
29	November 2006	HSE Meeting	EuPC offices, Brussels
4	December 2006	Packaging Plenary Meeting	EuPC offices, Brussels
5	December 2006	Trade Committee Meeting	EuPC offices, Brussels
5	December 2006	Steering Committee Meeting	EuPC offices, Brussels
7	December 2006	REACH Conference	EuPC offices, Brussels
12	December 2006	Regulated Substances Conference	EuPC offices, Brussels