



**F. I. R.**

**Fédération Internationale du Recyclage International  
International Recycling Federation  
Internationale Vereinigung Baustoff-Recycling**

**FIR Newsletter**

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**In Europe**

**Belgian presidency favors recycling**

The current presidency of the European Council, Belgium, has a strong focus on recycling. One important key issue for the presidency is Sustainable Materials Management. Europe needs to develop efficient and environmental sound use of materials, products and waste.

An inventory revealed that there are already several pieces of legislation and policy available that address sustainable materials management (for instance: the Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan, the Raw Materials Initiative etc.). These strategies are not yet fully aligned though and therefore do not provide for an integrated approach.

One of the aims of the Belgian presidency is to integrate current strategies for sustainable materials. One of the outcomes could be that a European platform will be established that will

coordinate the further progress. In a meeting with FIR, a representative of the Belgian presidency acknowledged the concerns that the recycling industry is facing. FIR put forward the issue of backfilling that hinders the development of recycling. The necessity and urgency for end-of-waste criteria was also discussed.

The Belgian presidency is preparing resolutions for the upcoming meetings of the European Council. These resolutions must clearly and definitely pinpoint the focus on sustainable resource management and recycling.



FIR meets with the Belgian presidency

**Recycling offers employment**

According to a study from Friends of the Earth, recycling offers much employment in Europe. It was estimated that when recycling in the EU would increase to 70%, 500,000 new jobs would be created. Important sectors are for instance metal and paper recycling. Recycling offers ten times more jobs than landfilling and incineration.

### **Scarcity of materials**

The Commission has investigated fourteen materials that might become scarce in the near future. These materials are mainly metals used in high tech applications. In order to make these materials available for recycling, proper collection schemes are required and export outside Europe should be reduced. The investigation is one of the activities of the Raw Materials Initiative.

### **Biowaste management**

The management of biowaste offers a continuous discussion. Recently the European Commission confirmed that it sees no need for a separate Biowaste Directive. Current legislation and policy is such that it does not prevent Member States to take appropriate action. For instance, the Landfill Directive requires a reduction of 65% of landfilling of biowaste by 2016. In many Member States biowaste is now incinerated. Better management of biowaste may however contribute to the production of sustainable energy. It was even said that proper application of the waste hierarchy could deliver economic benefits of Eur 1.5 – 7 billion. The European Parliament clearly has another view on the subject. Its Environmental Committee adopted a resolution in May that urges the Commission to present a Biowaste Directive by the end of this year.

### **End-of-waste criteria**

The current focus of the European Commission concerning end-of-waste criteria is on such materials as glass, paper and metal scrap. Criteria for recycled aggregates will not be developed this year. Even further delay might be expected as the Commission intends to first carry out studies, for instance on the relationship between end-of-waste criteria and leaching.

The European Platform for recycled Aggregates is preparing an answer to the Commission, calling for more urgency as the recycling industry needs clarity.

### **Study confirms: 70% recycling feasible**

In an extensive study Bios Intelligence Service concludes that 70% recycling of Construction & Demolition Waste is well feasible. The study identifies some potential barriers for recycling, such as misconception of the quality of recycled products and backfilling. The report provides for an overall analysis of the current status of recycling in Europe and identifies mechanisms that promote recycling. The study was carried out for the European Commission.

### **In the countries**

#### **Life Cycle Assessment in The Netherlands**

The Dutch association BRBS Recycling was involved in an extensive study into the benefits of recycling. Part of recyclable waste is currently incinerated in The Netherlands, due to historically low prices. The study made clear that The Netherlands could annually save the emissions of 2.250.000 ton of CO<sub>2</sub>, if all options for recycling are used. This includes the recycling of mixed Construction & Demolition Waste.