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## Green lobby, SCP policy, EU Swedish Presidency & housing



On 27 May the European Environment Bureau (EEB) organised a conference calling for radical change to the EU Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) policy. For the green lobby group, this EU policy must move on from "marginal change" and "technical progress", go further than eco-design and eco-labelling initiatives and develop a new economic model based on sustainability rather than growth.

The EEB event launched their "blueprint" for EU SCP policy and representatives from the Swedish and UK governments were in attendance to welcome the blueprint. Bob Ryder, UK environment ministry, said that national economic recovery plans wrongly focus on preserving the current economic model. More so, Gunilla Blomquist, Swedish environment ministry, stated that SCP would be a priority under Sweden's upcoming EU presidency (1 July to 31 December 2009) and, amongst other things regretted that the action plan did not, focus on housing.

[http://www.eeb.org/publication/2009/0905\\_SCPBlueprint\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.eeb.org/publication/2009/0905_SCPBlueprint_FINAL.pdf)

## 2009 European Parliament election results

The citizens of all 27 Member States (MS) have now elected the 736 members of the European Parliament (EP) who will be in place until 2014. The results show a clear success of the centre-right (named at EU level the European People's Party, EPP), a defeat of the centre-left (EP Socialist Group, PES) and a good performance of the Greens.

The success of the EPP-ED is mainly due to the victory of the centre-right parties in the six largest MS (France, Germany, UK, Italy, Spain and Poland). According to the current forecasts, the EPP remains the largest group, with 264 seats (from 288 in the outgoing EP). Its total number of seats decreases due to the reduction of the total number of MEPs (from 785 to 736) and to the decision of the British and Czech conservatives (31 MEPs) to create a new European conservative party, the exact name is yet to be determined.

The PSE is the main loser of these elections. Its seats will fall from 215 to 161, even though it

will remain the second largest group in the EP and will sign an alliance with the 21 Italian MEPs of the *Partito Democratico*. This new coalition is looking for a new name, the latest information mentions the 'Alliance of Socialists and Democrats'.

Among the other parties, the elections registered a slight decrease of the liberals (ALDE) (from 100 to 80 seats) and a good performance of the Greens who will now be represented by 53 members (from 43).

The increasing abstention level (57%, the lowest since direct elections to the EP began 30 years ago) could affect the democratic legitimacy of the EP, clearly showing that despite the growing legislative powers of the EP, the institution has not yet caught on with the European citizens.

The next step will be the nomination by the Council of the European Commission's president for a five-year term of office. José Manuel Barroso was formally asked to stand again by

Czech Prime Minister Jan Fischer. However, Liberals, Greens and Socialists have started joining forces to prevent Mr Barroso from being re-appointed, instead proposing Belgium three-times former PM Guy Verhofstadt. Any Council nomination has to be approved by the EP and as the EP vote is secret, the EPP will need external support to get Mr Barroso re-elected.

With these political games and the Lisbon Treaty ratification process still ongoing, it seems unlikely that the Council will nominate the next EC President at its 18-19 June meeting. More probably, the EU leaders may postpone this nomination until September.



## EU Presidency & Swedish Environmental priorities



On 1 July 2009, Sweden will take over the EU Presidency from the Czech Republic. Sweden has always been pro-active in the field of environmental legislation and will use its term of office to promote certain dossiers in this field of EU policy. Some of the Swedish Government environmental will have to followed closely, such as climate change, biodiversity and eco-efficiency.

With the UN climate change conference coming up in December, the Swedish Presidency will have to work on the preparation of the global agreement on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction. At this meeting a new post-Kyoto Protocol climate agreement is due to be concluded and Sweden will be the EU representative. Sweden plans to press ahead with the development of a EU CO<sub>2</sub> emission tax (see March and April 09

editions of the Newsletter). This tax would apply to those sectors that are not currently covered by the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and it would be part of the revised EU Energy Taxation Directive (2003/96/EC). However, the EC has recently delayed the publication of its proposal because of the current economic climate.

Last but not least, resource efficiency will be the focus of an informal meeting of member States environment ministers next month. Sweden will promote efficiency improvements as the solution for simultaneously tackling the energy, climate and financial crisis. The next revision of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (COM(2001) 264) is also scheduled before the end of 2009.

[www.se2009.eu](http://www.se2009.eu)

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## Information day: EC PPPs Energy Efficient Buildings, Factories of the Future Brussels, 13 July 2009

In order to support the preparation of proposals, DG Transport & Energy and DG Research of the EC are holding an information day on research Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) on 13 July 2009 in Brussels. The aim of this event is to inform you about the new research PPPs and the first Cross-thematic Coordinated Calls related to them. In particular, the research areas open and the conditions for participation will be explained. Participation may also help you to come in contact with other potential proposers and partners. As a reminder, the EC will invest €1 billion in R&D in the initiative dedicated to the construction sector, "Energy-efficient Buildings".

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/industrial\\_technologies/lists/events-fp7-information-day\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/industrial_technologies/lists/events-fp7-information-day_en.html)

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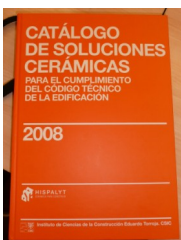
## Conclusions CEN CSN conference Milan 14-15 May

In our February edition of the Newsletter, you were invited to attend the 2009 edition of the CEN Construction Sector Network (CSN) conference. Most of the presentations are now available on the CEN website and you may want to check in particular the presentation on the impact of the (draft) Construction Products Regulation (CPR) on CEN activities presented by Mr Vicente Leoz Arguëlles, Head of the DG Enterprise construction Unit in the EC. More so, information on the introduction of sustainability aspects in Eurocodes as promoted by Dr John Moore (UK, CSN rapporteur) can be found in the report from BT/WG 206 - CEN contribution to the EC Lead Market Initiative on sustainable construction, introduction.

<http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/sectors/sectors/construction/events/csnconference2009.asp>

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## Publication of interest: *El Catálogo de Soluciones Cerámicas para el cumplimiento del Código Técnico de la Edificación*



Our Spanish member, Hispalyt, recently published "El Catálogo de Soluciones Cerámicas para el cumplimiento del Código Técnico de la Edificación". No English version currently exists but some of our colleagues have had the chance to check this 400 pages hardback catalogue, which includes a CD-rom.

You can download or order a copy using the following link:

[http://www.hispalyt.es/catCeramico.asp?id\\_rep=3672](http://www.hispalyt.es/catCeramico.asp?id_rep=3672)

You can then click on "descargar el catálogo" if you want to download a copy of the catalogue or on "solicite el catálogo" if you want to request a free copy but please note that you will be charged for posting and packaging.

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The next edition of the Newsletter will be issued in September.  
The Secretariat will be closed from 1 to 21 July included.  
The Cerame-Unie office will be open throughout the summer.  
Enjoy your holidays.

