



Newsletter

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After a Bavarian evening kick-off, our annual gathering focussed on technical meetings for both the roof tile and renamed masonry product groups on Thursday 22 October at CERAMITEC. This was followed by the official dinner, held in the prestigious BMW museum where we all enjoyed great speeches from both our former President, Mr Alfons Hörmann, and President, Dr Heimo Scheuch.



We close the two-day event with an Executive Committee meeting and the Annual General Assembly that brought together a great number of CEOs, senior managers and owners of companies from across the EU. We also had special guests from South Africa and Mr Detlef Stauch, Director of the International Federation for Roofing Trade (IFD). He expressed his pleasure at being involved in our General Assembly and congratulated us on a very interesting program. Closer collaboration is now foreseen between our two organisations.

So see you next year in Austria.



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Next steps in the EU natural resources strategy

Astrid Volckaert, Director, Cerame-Unie



On 14 September, Cerame-Unie invited to its CU Environment Committee meeting Mrs Rosalinda van der Vlies, Deputy Head of Unit of Unit G4 Sustainable Consumption and Production of DG Environment. Mrs van der Vlies presented the next steps for the EU waste and resource policies. She stated that the long-term EC objectives are to decouple resource demand from economic growth and further introduce the life cycle thinking approach into all EU policies. The revision of the waste framework Directive and the publication of the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Action Plan were already significant achievements in this respect. In 2010, the EC will carry out a stock-taking exercise on the waste and resource strategies after which a review of these strategies could take place in 2011. The SCP Action Plan will also be reviewed in 2012.



At the meeting, CU members had the opportunity to underline once more the importance of life cycle thinking in order to fully appreciate the long lifetime of ceramic products, to remind that sustainability consists of three equal pillars: the environment, economic and social pillar and to request again that the EC takes a more coherent approach when addressing legislation for construction products.



Also in September, the World Resources Forum published a declaration in which it urges to adopt, amongst other things, international agreements on world-wide per-capita targets for natural resource extraction and consumption and a global strategy to frame a new economic model that would directly tax raw materials instead of products and labour. This could be done by introducing 'effective policy measures to greatly enhance resource productivity as well as curbing demand over time, in the form of standards, higher taxes on resource use with the possibility of reduced taxes elsewhere, cap and trade mechanisms, etc.'



The Secretariat has been invited to take part in an informal roundtable discussion entitled 'Enabling Europe to be resource efficient -through the Resource Materials Initiative' organised by a Brussels-based lobby firm and which will take place on 17 November. The aim of the event is to support an active and informed dialogue between policy makers, industry representatives and other stakeholders, further to the EU Raw Materials Initiative and growing concerns to reduce the EU's deficit in the trade of non energy raw materials. During the discussion a number of key questions will be addressed, from the very specific e.g. how to define material criticality to the more general e.g. how to enable a resource efficient economy. The event will start with short introductory presentations from the European Commission DG Enterprise, Mrs Maria Spiliopoulou-Kaparia, and DG Environment, Mr Werner Bosmans, and this will be followed by a discussion with all the participants.



www.worldresourcesforum.org

Positive trends in EU air pollution reduction

Astrid Volckaert, Director, Cerame-Unie

The European Environment Agency (EEA) recently published a report on emission reductions between 1990 and 2007 in the 27 Member States (MS). Under the International UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), the EU reports emissions data for a number of air pollutants, including sulphur oxides (SO_x), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs), ammonia (NH₃), carbon monoxide (CO), primary particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), heavy metals (HMs) and persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

The most significant result is that across the EU 27 the largest reduction in emissions in percentage terms has been achieved for the acidifying pollutant SO_x. Emissions in 2007 were 72 % lower than in 1990. Emissions of other key air pollutants also fell during this period, including NO_x by 36%.

On 30 September, the EEA also published its annual status report on the National Emission Ceilings Directive (NECD) providing data on SO_x, NO_x, NMVOCs and NH₃. A new annex contains MS specific profiles. At EU level, measured projections imply that for some pollutants the EU emission ceilings - as defined in the NECD Annex I and II - will only be met by 2010 for SO₂ and NH₃. The EU NO_x emissions are 6 % above the aggregate emission ceiling given in Annex I and 16 % above the stricter Annex II ceiling of the NECD for the EU as a whole.

The revision of the NECD with new targets for 2020 has regularly been postponed but it is now foreseen that these will be published by the EC in May 2010.



www.eea.europa.eu/publications/lrtap-emission-inventory-report-1990-2007

www.eea.europa.eu/publications/nec-directive-status-report-2008

