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European Aggregates Association
UEPG aisbl
Rue d'Arlon 21 – B-1050 Brussels
Tel: +32 22 33 53 00 – Fax: +32 22 33 53 01
E-Mail: secretariat@uepg.eu
Internet: www.uepg.eu

EU Live Issues

REACH and Recycling

On 23 September, the European Standardisation Committee responsible for aggregates (CEN/TC 154) adopted unanimously a resolution highlighting the fact that aggregates are produced for specific end uses in accordance with harmonized product standards. The standards require that aggregate particles are produced with specified, defined and precise shape and surface characteristics. These characteristics determine the function of the aggregate to a far greater degree than its chemical composition. CEN/TC154 concludes that aggregates produced in accordance with European Standards under the Construction Products Directive and Mandate M/125 are articles according to Article 3.3 of the REACH Regulation.

Background

On 3 July, Jean-Marc Vanbelle briefed Otto Linher from DG Enterprise and Industry on recycled aggregates under REACH. Aggregates including recycled are used because of their physical properties and not for their chemical properties. For the time being and depending on the national legislation, recycled aggregates can be considered waste or articles in relation to REACH. For this reason we assume that at the moment no (pre-)registration is required.

5th meeting of Competent Authorities

On 25-26 September, the European Commission hosts the 5th meeting of Competent Authorities to discuss the implementation of REACH. In preparation of this meeting, the Commission circulated a document still considering recycled (recovered) aggregates as preparation or substance applying the definition of an article only where the individual item has a very clearly defined shape, surface or design (e.g. a whole brick) but not where the material consists of a large number of grains with varying shape or surface, even if they are sorted for a particular grain size or overall shape (e.g. round, sharp).

UEPG has ensured that the representative of the REACH Alliance and Business Europe will oppose the Commission's view, underlining the position of

the aggregates industry supported by the resolution of CEN/TC 154. UEPG has been informed that the French and the Dutch representatives will also reject the current position of the European Commission.

Next steps

UEPG is actively following the developments on this issue and will keep you informed.

Natura 2000 guidance paper

On 17 September, the third meeting of experts took place in DG Environment discussing the content and size of the Natura 2000 guidance paper.



Discussing extraction of marine aggregates

Klaus Bäättjer (right) from the German Marine Aggregate Producers Association (Seekiesverband) and Jochen Krause from the German Environment Ministry in DG Environment in Brussels.

Natura 2000 and marine aggregates

In addition to the chapter on the terrestrial application of Natura 2000, the Commission included a new chapter dealing with Natura 2000 objectives and its compatibility with marine aggregates extraction. Gerry Sutton from the Marine Aggregates Research Network (Maggnnet) presented the environmental impacts of extraction pointing out also potential positive effects on some fish populations. UEPG was represented by Klaus Bäättjer from the German Marine Aggregate Producers Association (Seekiesverband) and Dirk Fincke from the General Secretariat. Mr. Bäättjer underlined the difficulties and administrative burden the marine aggregate industry is confronted with and asked for a coherent application of environmental legislation in the EU.

UEPG warned not to apply a terrestrial model of Natura 2000 at sea due to the significant differences of the marine environment and the availability of high resolution data.

Next steps

30 September Deadline for comments to the draft guidance paper
 27/28 November Last meeting of expert group
 End of 2008 Publication of guidance paper

Soil Protection

On 4 September, UEPG attended the plenary session of the European Parliament in Brussels where Miroslav Ouzký, Chairman of the Parliamentary Environment Committee asked for the state of play of the Soil Protection Directive, blocked on 20 December 2007 in the Environment Council by Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

On 15 September, the French Presidency proposed a new and much shorter text in preparation of the meeting of the Working Party on the Environment which took place on 19 September. The new text still obliges the owner or the prospective buyer of a site where a potentially polluting activity occurs or has occurred to produce a soil status report (Article 14). While mining installations are amongst the potentially polluting activities listed in Annex II, waste facilities for inert waste are exempted.

UEPG was informed that EU Member States are not entirely happy with the proposal and asked the French Presidency to comment on their proposed amendments and to come up with a clearer version leaving less space for interpretation. There are doubts whether the French Presidency will achieve a compromise package for the Environment Council meeting in December. Having in mind that the European Parliament will cease working on May 2009 for the elections, the Soil Protection Directive might be further delayed in the second half of 2009.

Next steps

UEPG will coordinate a common position with its partners of the Non-Energy Extractive Industry Panel (NEEIP).

21 October NEEIP meeting, Brussels

UEPG News

Atlantic Alliance meeting in USA

On 25-26 September, the 5th meeting of the Atlantic Alliance took place at Lansdowne Resort, United States of America.

As the representative of the European quarrying and quarry products industry, UEPG urged global manufacturers and suppliers of mobile plants to address the needs of their customers in respect of mobile plant which is inherently safe as standard. This can be done more effectively together with our US colleagues from the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA) within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance.



Committed to reduce accident/incident rate
 Martin Isles, Chair of UEPG Health & Safety Committee at the Atlantic Alliance meeting.

The UEPG team was led by its President Denis Mertens. He was supported by the Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, Martin Isles, who has played a key role in organising this event. Other speakers from UEPG members included César Luaces Frades, Vice-Chair of the Health & Safety Committee and Director General of Federación de Áridos, Jean-Marc Vanbelle, Chair of the Technical Committee and Ulrich Hahn, Managing Director of the German Aggregates Federation (MIRO).

The European Aggregates Industry has to come up with effective tools to measure the success without putting additional administrative burdens on companies. At EU level, these tools are integrated in the sustainable development indicators initiative – launched by the European Commission and further improved by UEPG in 2008.

QPA Policy meetings

On 24 and 25 September, Simon van der Byl, Director General of the Quarry Products Association (United Kingdom) presented the QPA Sustainable Development Report 2008 to key officials of the European Commission.

The report includes social progress, environmental protection, natural resources and economic prosperity covering all aspects of sustainable development in a balanced manner. The document will be available on the QPA website www.qpa.org.

UEPG also arranged a meeting with Director Ladislav Miko responsible for Protecting the Natu-

ral Environment. Mr Miko was very interested to learn about the achievements and challenges since the last meeting in December 2007 and put an emphasis on biodiversity and the cooperation with the aggregates industry in the Natura 2000 guidance Working Group.



Demonstrating compatibility with Natura 2000
 Simon van der Byl (left) and Director Ladislav Miko, DG Environment.

With reference to the implementation of the Marine Strategy Directive Simon briefed Mrs Sif Johansson from DG Environment on the industry's views on the EU Maritime Policy.

UEPG Staff Changes

Stéphanie Badillo will join the General Secretariat's team as Public Affairs Officer on 1 October. Stéphanie's background is:

- Masters in Law (French and UK) from University Aix-en-Provence, France
- Erasmus studies at University of Sheffield, UK
- Parliamentary Assistant of Alain Esclopé MEP (EDD, France), 2003/2004
- Contracts Agent in Europe Aid, European Commission, 2004-2008
- Project Officer from May-October 2008, DG Research, European Commission
- Has travelled widely in Europe, Asia and the United States
- Language skills: French mother tongue, English, Spanish, Italian and some Portuguese



Reinforcing the UEPG team
 Stéphanie Badillo, Public Affairs Officer in the UEPG General Secretariat.

These staff changes do not involve an increase in the overall UEPG budget.

UEPG's support for steinexpo exhibition further strengthens its international reputation

Hermann Reifenscheid, Board Member of the European Aggregates Association (UEPG) and Managing Director of LZR Lenz-Ziegler-Reifenscheid GmbH underlined in an interview the international reputation of the steinexpo, as in the case of the 'Hillhead' exhibition. For many years, UEPG and its German member the German Aggregates Federation (MIRO) are supporting the internationally recognised exhibition. UEPG President Denis Mertens appreciated in his welcome address development and opportunities offered.



Demonstrating the complete production process
Extraction, processing, transport and consignment at the steinexpo 2008.

MIRO is supporting steinexpo for the 7th time, since launching it in 1990. As the national event became more international with regard to the exhibitors and visitors, UEPG started to support the event.

Partner regions of steinexpo 2008 were Central and East Europe. UEPG welcomes this focus as its membership includes Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey and is striving for expansion to Baltic States, Bulgaria, Hungary and Ukraine in particular.



Steinexpo exhibition area
Plenty of space and a genuine environment offered the quarry Nieder-Ofleiden in the centre of Germany.

UEPG contributed to the international reputation of steinexpo by communicating it amongst its members.



Support from MIRO and UEPG for steinexpo 2008
From left: Ulrich Hahn, Managing Director of MIRO, Denis Mertens President of UEPG and Peter Nüdling, President of MIRO.

UEPG President Denis Mertens addressed visitors at the steinexpo 2008 during the opening ceremony and outlined three key projects of the European Commission with UEPG's contribution, e.g. the Communication on the Raw Materials Initiative focusing exclusively on the non-energy extractive industry, the Natura 2000 guidance paper aiming at facilitating the decision process for competent authorities and making it more transparent to companies, and the design of sustainable development indicators.



Increasing activity in Central and East Europe
UEPG President Denis Mertens highlighting EU live issues and the need to have Central and East Europe on board.

These are important projects which could help to make the situation at national level much clearer, with regard to the contrary phenomenon in Germany considering Natura 2000 areas as 'no-go-areas' for the raw materials industry. Staff mem-

bers of MIRO active within UEPG informed visitors about all other live issues currently discussed in Brussels.

Mission accomplished

Results regarding the number of visitors were better than previous expectations of 32,000. Steinexpo 2008 attracted 250 exhibitors and 43,280 visitors demonstrating machinery in action in a quarry from 3-6 September. The increase of exhibitors and branches of 16% and a 35% increase of visitors is the result of the successful concept of organisers. Visitors appreciated the complete demonstration of production processes including extraction, processing, transport and consignment. The exhibitors welcomed the high percentage (90%) of trade visitors and the numerous international visitors.



Attracting young people to the industry
Students visiting steinexpo 2008 interested in the work of an engineer.

UEPG and the Association of construction plants and machines (VDMA) promoted steinexpo at international level. The organisers ensured articles in international press and launched a multi-lingual website www.steinexpo.de. Guests from Poland, Czech Republic, Croatia, Mongolia, China, Turkey, Italy, Russia and from the Baltic countries referred to these information sources or to announcements in their national associations – thanks to the international network of UEPG and VDMA.

Exhibition Managing Director Dr. Friedhelm Rese thanked UEPG and considered steinexpo 2008 as a milestone putting up a new standard on which the next exhibition in 2011 will be based on.

Next steps

31 Aug. – 3 Sept. 2011 8th Steinexpo