



EU Live issues

Raw Materials Initiative

Simon van der Byl (MPA) member of Minerals Planning Working Group

Marine Aggregates

UEPG follows implementation of Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Crystalline Silica

UEPG prepares for NePSi Reporting 2010

Life+

Call for proposals 2009 published

UEPG News

UEPG Delegates Assembly 2009

Norsk Bergindustri hosted UEPG Delegates Assembly in Oslo

European Minerals Day

President Denis Mertens raised awareness of the aggregates industry's contribution

EPRA meeting

Brian James new Chair of the European Platform for Recycled Aggregates

EU Live Issues

Raw Materials Initiative

Implementing the Raw Materials Initiative, the European Commission launched two ad hoc groups on exchanging best practices on land use planning, permitting and geological knowledge sharing and on defining critical raw materials. The results will be reported to the Raw Materials Supply Group (RMSG).

Land use planning and permitting

The ad hoc group on exchanging best practices on land use planning, permitting and geological knowledge sharing will make an input to the Commission, following discussion in the Raw Materials Supply Group. It will also look into the need to develop a medium to long term strategy for integrating sub-surface components into the land services of Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) which can feed into land-use planning and improve its quality. The ad hoc group will draw on existing studies and research, and on facts and observations contained in reports produced by academics or available from other institutions and the Commission DGs.

Simon van der Byl from the British Mineral Products Association (MPA) represented UEPG in the ad hoc group on exchanging best practices on land use planning, permitting and geological knowledge sharing during its first meeting on 12 May.

List of critical Raw Materials

The ad hoc group on defining critical raw materials will make an input to the European Commission, following discussion in the Raw Materials Supply Group on critical raw materials. It will contribute to identifying critical raw materials for the EU on the basis of an agreed methodology and the criteria set out in the Communication. The preliminary assessment in the accompanying Staff Working Document will serve as a starting point for the work. The ad hoc group will draw on existing studies and

research, and on facts and observations contained in reports produced by academics or available from other institutions and the Commission DGs. The information provided should be consistent with the various relevant EU policies.

Next steps

The ad hoc group members are expected to produce a report to the Raw Materials Supply Group by April 2010.

Marine Aggregates

Pierre de Prémare from Lafarge Group (France) and Ingo Hammwöhner from the OAM-Deme Mineralien GmbH (Germany), with the support of Sandrine Devos from UEPG, represented the Marine Aggregates Producers at the first Working Group meetings on the Implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive on 14 and 15 May.



Working on the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive
Pierre de Prémare, Lafarge (left) and Ingo Hammwöhner, OAM-DEME at the Working Group

During these first meetings, Member States reported on their progress implementing the Directive. Working Group members discussed objectives and terms of reference. The contribution from stakeholders was underlined as well as the fact that NGOs and industry are welcomed to provide their input.

Background

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive established a framework where Member States are required to take the necessary measures to

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achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine environment by the year 2020 at the latest.

The European Commission established a work structure which allows all stakeholders to participate to the implementation work of the Directive, through different working groups.

UEPG is contributing to the Good Environmental Status Working Group and in the Marine Strategy Coordination Group.

The Marine Strategy Coordination Group will prepare the Marine Directors (EU Member State representatives) and ensure the execution of a Marine Strategy Framework Directive work plan at EU level, through coordination of the different working groups. UEPG was listed as a Level 1 observer of this Group – meaning that it is acknowledged as a European umbrella organisation of national or regional organisations. It also has a specific profile with regard to community marine policy and has demonstrated in the past its policy profile and relevance.

Annex I of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive lists 11 descriptors to establish whether a marine area has good environmental status. Task Groups composed of experts are reviewing these descriptors and will report to the Good Environmental Status Working Group in October 2009. The Good Environmental Status Working Group will assist the Commission in developing a formal Commission proposal on Good Environmental Status descriptor criteria and methodological standards.

Three descriptors are of direct interest for the marine aggregates industry: sea Floor integrity (6); biological diversity is maintained (1); underwater noise is at levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment (11).

This work is essential, as it will help define whether a marine area is in good environmental status, which might impact on the requirements for marine aggregates extraction.

Next steps

The two working groups will convene a second meeting in October 2009, to discuss the report made by the task group of experts

which will develop the criteria and methodological standards of the descriptors.

UEPG will identify any existing contact with the experts belonging to the Task Groups 1, 6 or 11 and collect any contribution they can make towards the work of the experts in view of the report.

The work of the working groups should be undertaken until spring 2010.

Crystalline Silica

On 26 May, UEPG contributed to the NePSi Reporting Task Force meeting preparing the reporting exercise for 2010.

The European Commission supports the Social Dialogue Agreement on Crystalline Silica and will consider the 2010 report as final using it for assessing the value of the agreement.

Task Force members agreed that it was crucial to achieve further improvement in the reporting and proposed changes to the software. This should make the reporting for national associations and companies easier. Companies may report for several sites indicating the number of sites reported and small companies with one site only may report directly.

Next steps

2 June UEPG will send national reports with 2008 data to NePSi Council
17 June NePSi Council meeting

Life+

We are pleased to inform you that LIFE+ call for proposals 2009, previously mentioned in March EU Insight, has been published on 15 May 2009 with up to €250 million available for co-financing of projects under three headings: nature and biodiversity; environment policy and governance; and information and communication. All documents are now available in different languages on the LIFE+ website at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm>

From May to September 2009, [national work-shops](#) are being organised to brief future candidates.



LIFE Nature project Mainaue, Germany
Click on the picture to get more information (in German).

Next steps

15 September Deadline for application

UEPG News

UEPG Delegates Assembly 2009

Hosted and brilliantly organised by our Norwegian colleagues, the UEPG Delegates Assembly took place on 18-19 May 2009 in Oslo.



Giving the future generation a role to play
Two girls in Norwegian traditional dress at the children's parade on 17 May 2009 in Oslo.

Delegates were invited to participate in the Norwegian National Day on 17 May when thousands of children in beautiful traditional dress were walking in the streets towards the royal palace and waving to the king.

UEPG Entrepreneurs' Forum

Michel Catinat, DG Enterprise and Industry and Chair of the ad hoc Working Group critical raw materials was the Commission guest speaker. Mr Catinat addressed participants of the UEPG Entrepreneurs' Forum and presented the Raw Materials Initiative.



Chairing the Working Group on critical minerals
Michel Catinat, DG Enterprise at the UEPG Entrepreneurs' Forum on 18 May in Oslo, Norway.

Svein Roald Hansen, Norwegian Member of Parliament and leader of the European Movement in Norway presented his views on Norway's relationship to the EU and asked why his country was so reluctant to become an EU member state.



Norway's relationship to the European Union
Svein Roald Hansen, Member of the Norwegian Parliament at the UEPG Entrepreneurs' Forum.

Other speakers were Peer Richard Neeb (Norwegian Geological Survey), Kjell Apeland (Norsk Bergindustri) and Bård Dagestad (Norwegian Directorate of Mining), Elisabeth Gammelsæter (Norsk Bergindustri) and Espen Knutsen (Oslo Natural History Museum).

UEPG Delegates Assembly

On 19 May, UEPG delegates elected Jim O'Brien as the new UEPG President and thanked Denis Mertens for his dedicated and professional leadership during the last two years.



Handing over Presidency
Newly elected President Jim O'Brien thanking his predecessor Denis Mertens for his leadership.

Denis has been one of the most committed and dynamic Presidents UEPG has ever had and made UEPG a leader in biodiversity.

The Delegates also thanked Jacques Grob, who served as UEPG Treasurer for ten years. His commitment and valuable work have been highly appreciated.



10 years of excellent work as Treasurer
President Jim O'Brien (left) thanking Jacques Grob for his long-term commitment as Treasurer.

Delegates discussed proposed changes to the UEPG statutes which are designed to improve the clarity of the articles and adapt UEPG to current and future challenges. Changes had been proposed for the membership structure, the membership contribution, the UEPG Board and to establish a Remuneration Committee. Approval of the statute changes would be sought at the extraordinary Delegates Assembly on 30 October 2009 in Brussels.

Next steps

- 30 October 2009** Extraordinary UEPG Delegates Assembly, Brussels
- 27 October 2010** UEPG Sustainable Development Awards, Munich, Germany
- 28 October 2010** UEPG Delegates Assembly, Munich, Germany

European Minerals Day

On 13 and 14 May, UEPG President Denis Mertens, together with European partner associations launched the European Minerals Day 2009 with a media event in Brussels and a major event in Prague which Commission Vice-President Günter Verheugen attended.

This year, special attention was given to biodiversity. During guided visits of restored areas, visitors could have the opportunity to come across rare plants and animal species.



Putting biodiversity higher on the agenda
Denis Mertens (left) at the European Minerals Day with Sebastian Winkler, Head of Countdown 2010/IUCN.

This and many more activities are aimed at raising awareness of the innovation and sustainability of the non-energy extractive industries. Entertaining side activities such as fossil hunting, animations for children, jeep safaris and workshops made the European Minerals Day an unforgettable experience for people of all ages.

EPRA meeting

Brian James from the Mineral Products Association (MPA, United Kingdom) is the new Chair of the European Platform for Recycled Aggregates (EPRA) leading on issues as the Recycling target of the Revised Waste Framework Directive, end-of-waste criteria, Construction Products Regulation and the recycling pillar of the Raw Materials Initiative.

Brian has also been appointed by the UEPG Delegates Assembly in Oslo to be Coordinator of the UEPG Recycling Policy supported by Reinhard Fischer (BKS, Germany) as Vice-Coordinator.



Coordinating UEPG Recycling Policy
Brian James, Mineral Products Association (MPA), United Kingdom.

EPRA decided to organise a workshop promoting recycling of aggregates presenting the potential and the future challenges the different sectors are facing.