

# EU Highlights

N° 10 – 31 OCTOBER 2007

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## Editorial

*September and October 2007 have been rather busy months on the European scene and for Eurogypsum activities.*

*The three committees (STC, MCC and ERMIC) met and took important decisions in their field of competence, approved by the Board of Directors.*

*Step by step, Eurogypsum has progressed in its image building. We have now a brand new website and two published brochures.*

*In view of REACH, ERMIC decided to review the specifications on synthetic gypsum other than FGD Gypsum. A European recycled content percentage in plasterboard has finally been established.*

*STC starts working hard on a Campaign with the European Parliament to profile the industry on the forthcoming revision of the Construction Products Directive. STC also profiles it self in the field of R&D by organising a workshop on EU funding in January 2008.*



*Serge Azais  
President*



*Christine Marlet  
Secretary General*

## EU General Policies

### In July 2007, Council gave approval for the adoption of the Euro in Cyprus and Malta

The Council fixed at 0.585274 the rate at which the Cypriot pound will be converted into Euro. The equivalent rate for the Maltese lira is 0.429300 for one Euro. In the coming months, both countries will have to complete and finalise their crucial practical preparations to ensure that the changeover to the Euro takes place smoothly, as was the case in Slovenia this year.

### Portuguese Presidency opens Intergovernmental Conference to draft new Treaty

Following the agreement reached by the European Heads of State and Government in June, the Portuguese Presidency opened on July 23 an Intergovernmental Conference, which is in charge of drawing up the "Reform Treaty", under the detailed mandate given by the European Council. The Conference is expected to finish its work by October 2007, so the ratification process can be complete before the European Parliament elections in June 2009.

### New Website for the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme

The Directorate General Enterprise and Industry has recently put online a new website dedicated to the threefold programme. The Commission will publish on the website all the information related to:

- The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP);
- The Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP);
- The Intelligent Energy Europe programme (IEE).

Further information: <http://ec.europa.eu/cip>

### Industrial Property: EU joins International Designs Treaty

The European Community submitted to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in Geneva its instrument of accession to the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement concerning the international registration of industrial designs. This accession will allow EU companies, with a single application, to obtain protection of a design not only throughout the EU with the Community Design, but also in the countries which are members of the Geneva Act. It will simplify procedures, reduce the costs for international protection and make administration easier. The system will become operational for businesses on 1 January 2008.

As from 1 January 2008, when the system enters into force, Community designers will be allowed to apply for international protection of their designs under the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement. Conversely, designers established in one of the contracting parties of the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement will be entitled to apply for protection of their designs under the Community design system.

The Geneva Act system allows designers to obtain protection through a single international application filed with the International Bureau of WIPO, replacing a whole series of registrations with different national regional offices. An international registration produces the same effects in each of the designated countries as if the design had been registered there directly, unless protection is refused by the competent Office of that country.

#### Further information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/en/indprop/design/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/en/indprop/design/index.htm)

<http://oami.europa.eu/en/design/hagueagreement.htm>

<http://www.wipo.int/hague/en/>

### European Commission launches Public Debate on Adaptation to Climate Change

The European Commission presented a Green Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change

advocating the adoption of climate change policies throughout EU legislation. The Paper, which builds upon the work and findings of the European Climate Change Programme, is a first concrete step in raising awareness of the need for climate adaptation and opens a public debate on what adaptation policies should encompass.

In particular, the Paper calls for adaptation activities to be integrated into infrastructure projects so that buildings, bridges, ports and motorways built to last decades are able to withstand future climatic changes. It calls for medium to long-term investments in infrastructure to be "climate proof". Adaptation will also create **new markets for climate-proof building techniques, materials and products**. Therefore, targeted actions should be focused on building codes and methods.

- ❖ Mr. Heinz Zourek – Director General DG Enterprise;
- ❖ Mr. Pedro Ortun – Director FG Enterprise;
- ❖ Mr. Patrick Hennessy-Director DG Enterprise;
- ❖ Mr. Timo Makela – Director DG Environment.
- ❖ Mr. Nils Behrndt- Member of Vice-President Verheugen Cabinet
- ❖ Mr. Giotakos – Members of Commissioner Dimas Cabinet

## Raw Material and Environment



René Moretti

### Waste Issues

The Eurogypsum Waste Policy Paper has been published and sent to the relevant Commission Officials, the Environment Committee of the European Parliament, and the Environment Delegates of the Permanent Representation of the Member States to the EU, the EU Press and relevant European Associations.

A personalized letter with the brochure has been sent to:

- ❖ Vice-President Verheugen, Enterprise;
- ❖ Commissioner Dimas, Environment;
- ❖ Mr. Mogens Peters Carl- Director general Environment;



### European Recycled Content Figure

The European recycled content percentage covering the use of FGD Gypsum in products as well as paper and construction waste has been established at 44%.

### REACH

During its committee meeting on 18 September 2007, the ERMC recommended to the Board to pre-register calcium sulphate above 80% independent on the origin and if the need may be, register it.

The Substance ID card on Calcium Sulphate has been adopted by the Committee and is available on demand.

The Safety Data Sheet on Calcium Sulphate needs to be checked by experts before final approval.

Finally, the Board of Directors decided to present a dossier to the European Commission to have calcium sulphate listed in Annex IV of the REACH regulation. This would then mean that FGD gypsum will be exempted from registration. Eurogypsum has reasonable chance to succeed in this operation.

### Specification for Synthetic Gypsum other than FGD

During the ERMIC committee meeting of 18 September 2007, Members unanimously agreed to create a working group for reviewing the specifications of other synthetic gypsum than FGD gypsum, on the basis of the last specification done by Eurogypsum in 2003. We will include in this work the specifications on recycled content of Gypsum.

#### Members of the WG

1. Hans Jörg Kersten (Chairman)
2. Jean-Pierre Caspar
3. Rolf Hueller
4. Elena Antuna
5. Yves de Froidmont
6. Heidi Barnard

#### Deadlines:

- ❖ Recycled Gypsum: March 2008
- ❖ Other synthetic Gypsum : September 2008

On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007, a meeting with the titano-dioxide manufacturers association, Eurométaux and Cembureau will be held in Brussels to assess the way forward for registration of synthetic gypsum.

### FGD Gypsum Outdoor Storage

FGD Gypsum production will increase in the near future due to the obligation of Eastern European countries to retrofit old power stations. This means for us bigger needs for outdoor FGD Gypsum storage and more data on how this is currently done in Europe.

The ERMIC Committee decided to make a survey via Eurogypsum with the following questions:

1. Who operates FGD outdoor storage?
2. What size is the outdoor storage?
3. What is the ground and cover of the outdoor storage?
4. What is the national legislation covering this issue if any?

### EU Proposal to adopt UN standard on Chemical Classification, Labeling and Packaging

The European Commission has presented a proposal for a Regulation on the classification, labeling and packaging of chemical substances and mixtures. The rules would implement in the EU the United National Globally Harmonised System of classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). The current laws on classification, labeling and packaging of chemical substances (Directive 67/548/EEC) and mixtures (Directive 1999/45/EC) will be replaced as a result.

The proposal introduces new classification criteria for substances, requirements for labeling, and safety data sheets and hazard symbols (pictograms). The proposal will also replace provision under the new chemical legislation (REACH) with regard to the notification of classifications, and the creation of a harmonized classifications list and a classification and labeling inventory.

### ETS: Six more National Allocation Plans assessed for Second Round of Emissions Trading

In July 2007, the European Commission delivered its decision on six national allocation plans (NAPs) for trading carbon emission allowances during the second trading period (2008 to 2012) of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. In an unusual move, the Commission has decided to restore just over 1 million tones allowances for Ireland despite a ruling last December that the Irish cap should be cut.

**Ireland** will be allowed to distribute 22.3 millions tones of allowances per annum. For **Latvia**, a cap of 3.43 million tones has been approved, down from a proposed 7.7 million

tones. For **Lithuania**, the cap is set at 8.8 percent. The Commission has agreed that no auctioning will be provided for under the Luxembourg NAP, with a cap set at 2.5 million tones. Sweden retained 90.5 percent of its proposed cap, set at 22.8 million tones. A 23 percent cut in the annual allocations proposed by **Cyprus** has been demanded by the Commission. This would amount to 5.48 million tones per annum.

The four remaining NAPs –Portugal, Denmark, Romania and Bulgaria- are due to be scrutinized in autumn while Germany and Slovakia are still waiting for feedback after having revised their initial NAP.

## Consultation on Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy

The aim of the internet-based consultation was to gather input from the public and stakeholders to help the Commission prepare Action Plans to address these challenges. The consultation closed on 23 September 2007.

### The public consultation explored actions under five headings:

- ❖ Leveraging Innovation,
- ❖ Better Products,
- ❖ Leaner and Cleaner Production,
- ❖ Smarter Consumption and
- ❖ Global Markets.

### The Commission intends to focus its action on key environmental issues:

- ❖ climate change and the creation of a low-carbon economy,
- ❖ sustainable and efficient use of natural resources,
- ❖ energy and materials,
- ❖ Hazardous substances.

### The Action Plan would build on several existing EU policies related to:

- ❖ Industrial Policy
- ❖ Integrated Product Policy,
- ❖ the Eco-design of Energy-Using Products (i.e., computer),
- ❖ the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources Strategy,
- ❖ the Energy Policy for Europe,
- ❖ Cohesion policy and other product legislation and labeling schemes.

**Eurogypsum replied to the consultation and drafted key messages.** For more details, please ask the Secretariat.

## TC 350-Sustainability of Construction Works

National Members of the Sustainability Construction Work Committee (CEN/TC 350) of the European Committee for standardization have rejected the framework document for assessing integrated building performance-Part 1: environmental, health and comfort and life cycle cost performances. Fourteen Members rejected the framework while seven approved and seven abstained from the vote.

## Netherlands implements EU Liability Law

The Dutch Parliament backed draft legislation implementing the EU environmental liability directive on 20 September 2007. Meps agreed to make firms liable even if they pollute within permit rights or use best available technology. No new mandatory insurance schemes are proposed.

## EU Commitment to improve Access to Raw Materials

Raw material supply has now become a **strategic priority on the agenda of Vice-President Verheugen**. This will most probably lead to European Community Communication in 2008.

NEEIP is currently working with the Commission to outline a feasible, realistic and helpful action plan.

## Scientific and Technical Issues



**Mike Ward**

### Manual Handling Brochure

The brochure entitled: Manual Handling of Gypsum Products-Gypsum Products Ergonomics based on Risk Assessment has been published and sent to Commission Officials, the Employment Committee of the European Parliament, and the national Labor Inspectorate of the Member States to the EU, the EU Press and relevant European Associations.

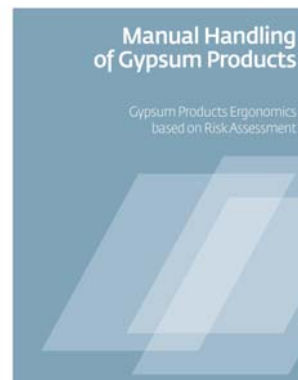
A personalized letter with the brochure has been sent to:

- ❖ Vice-President Verheugen,-Enterprise
- ❖ Commissioner Dimas-Environment
- ❖ Commissioner Spidla - Employment
- ❖ Mr. Mogens Peters Carl- Director general Environment
- ❖ Mr. Heinz Zourek – Director General DG Enterprise
- ❖ Mr. Nikolaus Van der Pas- Director General Employment
- ❖ Mr. Pedro Ortun – Director FG Enterprise
- ❖ Mr. Patrick Hennessy-Director DG Enterprise
- ❖ Mr. Timo Makela – Director DG Environment
- ❖ Mr. Jukka Takala –Director European Health and Safety Agency
- ❖ Mr. Nils Behrndt- Member of Vice-President Verheugen Cabinet
- ❖ Mr. Giotakos – Members of Commissioner Dimas Cabinet

The STC is of the opinion that no further action should be taken for the time being as we have

obtained what we wanted: a common policy on how to handle Gypsum products.

Upon feedback from the EU institutions on the manual handling brochure, we might decide another way forward.



### Lighten the Load Campaign Closing Event

On 26 February 2008, a closing conference will be held in Bilbao, the seat of the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work and will conclude the European year on MSDs.

**Eurogypsum has been invited to speak on the Manual Handling Brochure.**

### Revision of the CPD

The interservices consultation on DG Enterprise proposal has started on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007. They are not expected to be finalized until the end of November 2007.

The STC Committee with the support of the Steering Committee agreed to meet Meps with the objectives to:

- ❖ make the Gypsum Industry known as a construction material of value and reinforce the Gypsum Industry Voice at the EP;
- ❖ Inform the key Meps on the current CPD and the changes planned by the



Commission for the revision of the CPD.

- ❖ Forward our key messages (which are the same as CEPMC key messages) for a good revision of the CPD.
- ❖ Build trust and confidence with the Meps so that we have a leverage power during the revision of the CPD.
- ❖ Influence the choice of the rapporteur.

## R&D Workshop

The Board of Directors approved the organisation of a two days in-house workshop related to European funding for research and development.

This specific **training programme** will help members to identify the most appropriate funding opportunities in the field of Research, Competitiveness and Innovation and then to set up projects that match the expectations of the European Commission and the strategic objectives of the various programmes. The training will equip them with a proven methodology to enhance their success rate when presenting applications.

The workshop will be held on 31st January 2008 and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2008. For more details, please ask the Secretariat.

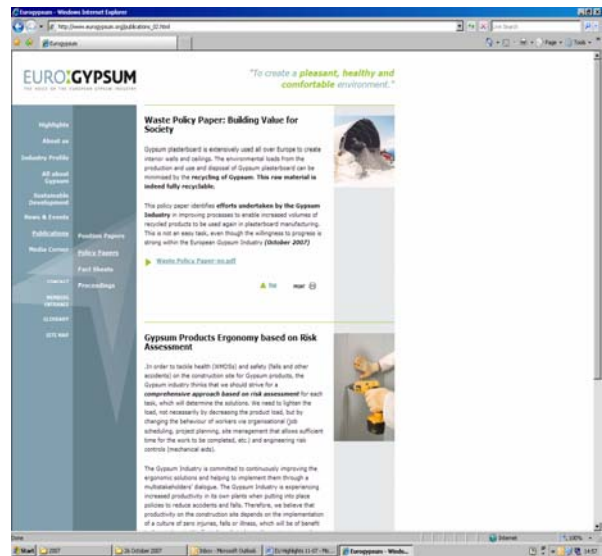
## Marketing and Communication



Dr. Markus Schroeppf

## Eurogypsum revamped Website on line

<http://www.eurogypsum.org>



## Communication Tools

The following timetable is foreseen:

1. The development of the interactive book "Living with Gypsum" will start in November 2007 and be on line in December 2007;
2. The design of the association brochure will start in December 2007 with the printing foreseen for January 2008;
4. Stand display and poster will be done in January 2008;
3. The design of the sustainability brochure will start in February 2007 and printed end of March 2008.

## Press Development

Eurogypsum will sign a collaborative agreement with the European Electronic Media Platform Euractiv.com for one year. The fee gives the right to the following

### Communication

➤ **10 weeks visibility** in relevant policy sections, split in 2-3 communications campaigns

➤ **Professional** team providing creative input and **design** of communication tools

➤ **PR & Advocacy ads** for any relevant press release

➤ Your **events in the EurActiv agenda** (with links and priority on policy sections homepages)

➤ **Use of the conference room** of Euractiv



### Networking

➤ **Logo** on all *EurActor* lists and name with **link** on one relevant policy section

➤ **Facilitation of contacts** with EurActiv editorial team

➤ **Invitation** to EurActiv events

## **EU Court of Justice backs Germany on Green Insulation**

The European Court of Justice has rebuffed an attempt by manufacturers of mineral wool insulation to block subsidies introduced in Germany for rival materials made of renewable materials. The complex judgment is still being digested by bodies close to the case. Outside a tiny eco-niche, the European buildings insulation market is dominated by mineral wool. Germany introduced subsidies for renewable types of insulation such as hemp or sheep's wool in an effort to encourage these kinds of materials. In 2003, the European

Commission approved the subsidies under EU state aid rules.

German mineral wool producers challenged the Commission's decision. They argued that the Commission should have opened an in-depth investigation rather than approve the subsidies through a fast-track procedure.

The Court has disagreed. According to information provided at the time renewable insulation materials have significant environmental advantages, and the Commission was therefore right to approve subsidies as it did, it concluded.

## **Eurogypsum Workshop**

The workshop was held on 25 October 2007 with 40 participants. The presentations have been original and useful to the attendees. More photos and explanations will be given in the next EU Highlights.

## **Eurogypsum Forthcoming Events**

### **Synthetic Gypsum WG**

To be held at BVGips (Darmstadt) on 20 November 2007 from 14h00 to 17h00

### **ERMC Meeting**

To be held on 19 March 2008 at IMA Offices from 10h30 to 17h00

### **STC Meeting**

To be held on 18 March 2008 from 10h30 to 17h00

### **MCC Meeting**

To be held on 1st April 2008 from 10h30 to 17h00 at IMA offices.

### **Eurogypsum Board Meeting**

To be held on 12 June 2008 in hotel le Méridien

### **Eurogypsum Congress**

12 June 2008: cocktail  
13 June 2008: conference  
14 June 2008: optional excursion