



PRESS RELEASE - EuPR

EUPR WELCOMES EU TARGET FOR PLASTICS RECYCLING AND PREPARES COMPANIES FOR REACH

Brussels, 2nd July 2008

The European Plastics Recyclers body in Brussels welcomes the overall European wide target to increase recycling of plastics by 2020. “The revision of the European Waste Framework Directive sets a clear hierarchy of waste treatment as well as a target of 50% for recycling of plastics from household streams and asks Member States to set-up separate collection schemes for plastics according to Bernard Merckx, EuPR President. Member States should not lose the momentum to do this straight away in close cooperation with the plastics recycling industry.”

“European policymakers have understood that Member States have to act in order to ensure that proper waste management infrastructures are in place to deal with plastics waste. Although we are disappointed with some of the compromises agreed, it is another step forward. The plastics recycling definition is wide enough for interpretation in order to innovate in the plastics recycling industry. Unfortunately, the definition is not limited to mechanical recycling as we have wanted but the overall plastics recycling target will help our companies to remain confident for the future. However, the definition is very clear in excluding energy recovery from its scope. Plastics Recyclers offer to work closely with the national and regional authorities as well as with the European plastics industry to ensure that the targets will be met.”

“By 2020 86 million ton of plastics will be placed on the market and over 30% of it will end in the household streams. From these 26 million ton of plastics, a minimum of 13 million ton will have to be recycled by 2020. Today only 4.5 million ton are being recycled from the packaging market so there is a lot of work ahead of us if we want to comply with these regulatory targets for the 27 Member States. Nevertheless, the way of collection and the quality of sorting is key and there the plastics recycling industry must be directly involved in the discussions.”

The growing use of plastics in the household stream in Europe will provide the recycler’s sufficient raw material to invest in additional recycling capacities and to serve the growing demand of plastics converters. The CO₂ positive impact of plastics recycling will become more visible towards the general public and EuPR hopes the consumer will take care of its waste in a more responsible way.

Moreover, recycling only plastics fractions such as PET will not be enough to comply with the targets. For instance, for PET recycling there is an existing overcapacity in Europe. Therefore, more and better quality collection should be enforced. More has also to be done for recycling PP and PE in order to ensure all plastics in the household stream can be recycled.

The recycler’s biggest concern today is still the implementation of the REACH regulation and therefore EuPR will be organising a series of workshops till the end of the year to assist and train recyclers on how to pre-register all the substances that may compose their recycle placed on the market.

EuPR strongly recommends all plastics recyclers to pre-register ALL their substances before 1st December 2008. This pre-registration is free of charge and will be the insurance policy for the recycler to continue selling its recycle without problem. REACH is certainly another financial burden on our industry, yet we should also see it as an opportunity to further grow our markets in the medium and long run.

EuPR REACH Training Workshops to that extent will be held in Brussels during this summer (29/07 & 28/08) but EuPR plans to also organise meetings in several European countries, with preference to those countries where EuPR members are present.

Those recyclers and/or national plastics recycling associations who have not yet joined our association are kindly invited to apply for EuPR membership shortly. There are still a lot of challenges ahead for our industry and we should join our forces where ever possible.

More information can be obtained by visiting the EuPR website (www.plasticsrecyclers.eu).

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