



For immediate release

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EuPC Reach Conference confirms problems for plastics recyclers in Europe

On 7 December 2006, the Brussels based converters' body EuPC, held its 3rd conference on REACH regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemicals) that will come into force in June 2007. Experts from the industry such as Walter Claes (EuPC), Danny Maes (Borealis), Mark Burstall (BPF Recycling Council), and representatives of the European Union such as Geert Dancet (REACH Head of Unit, DG Enterprise) and AnnaLiisa Sundquist (Permanent Representation of Finland to the European Union) examined in detail the implementation of REACH. Geert Dancet stressed that the priority is to conclude the legislative procedure without delays, to provide key elements of the guidance by entry into force and to make REACH workable for SMEs.

Alexandre Dangis, EuPC Managing Director, highlighted in his opening remarks that *'the situation is still unclear in particular regarding the future use of plastics recyclates in our industry and a lot of work needs to be done now with the EU Commission in drafting the REACH implementation guidelines. A political deal has been made between the EU Institutions and we will have to learn how to operate under this future chemicals regulation from June 2007 onwards.'*

The European Plastics Converters and Recyclers debated today the compromise package on Reach achieved last week and confirmed that still further clarification and interpretation is needed in order to secure the future use of plastics recyclates in Europe.

The European plastics recyclers association (EuPR) is very disappointed because many MEPs had written letters of support to their problem. Bernard Merkx (EuPR President) says *'that the waste framework directive is calling for more recycling whilst REACH could stop all activities because of impracticable. When recycling post-consumer plastics it is impossible to know which substances have been used to manufacturer the finished product or article. The safe use of generic information in these safety data sheets is the only alternative for recyclers. We therefore will consult with the EU Commission on how to implement REACH for our recyclates. Only a few months are left to prepare our case and I therefore call on all plastics recyclers to assist our technical work in EuPR to achieve this goal.'*

Dangis, managing director of the Plastics Converters association further elaborated on the additional costs for the plastics industry for registration of the monomers of imported polymers into Europe. *'This additional financial and bureaucratic burden at a time of high raw material costs will certainly not help our industry to plan new investments in Europe.'*

After 5 years of work as lobby organisation for the interests of the plastics converters, compounders and recyclers EuPC has now set up a REACH Helpdesk within its service company (www.eupc-services.org) to assist the many small and medium sized companies to implement REACH. This helpdesk is composed of 9 qualified experts in Europe who have been a part of the process since it early start a few years ago. Geert Dancet of the EU Commission applauded EuPC, especially Walter Claes's involvement in the establishment of the REACH implementation project.



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