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Editorial

Dear readers,

Welcome to the Spring 2011 edition of the PRO EUROPE newsletter! I would like to express my gratitude for the interesting contributions that we received from our members, which reflect the various attention-grabbing initiatives and developments that have been going on at national level during recent months.

PRO EUROPE has also been very active during the first quarter of 2011, of which you will get a glimpse from the stories inside. In the pages to follow you will also be able to read about recent EU developments and our North American Corner provides an update on key evolving issues in North America.

I hope you will find the contents of interest and wish you a great Spring season!

Kind regards,

Joachim Quoden
Managing Director of PRO EUROPE

At a glance...

2011 Green Week on Resource Efficiency

On 24-27 May, the 11th edition of the Green Week on Resource Efficiency, the largest annual conference EU environment policy, will take place in Brussels. (...)

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Proposal of new waste law in Spain

Last March 4th, a proposal of a new Waste Law was approved at the Cabinet meeting. This proposal will have to be approved by the Parliament and Senate within the next months (the government has ordered the urgent procedure). (...)

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PRO EUROPE represented at recent Retail Forum meeting on packaging optimisation

On 23 February, PRO EUROPE's managing director, Joachim Quoden, gave a presentation at the European Retail Forum for Sustainability on *Packaging optimization and collection and recycling of used packaging by PRO EUROPE member organizations.* (...)

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Leading U.S. Corporations forming environment-focused packaging organization AMERIPEN

New Industry Organization to Advocate for Environmentally and Economically Sound Packaging Policy Improvements. (...)

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IN FOCUS

European Packaging Waste Forum

On 9-10 March, the 18th Annual European Packaging Waste Forum took place in Brussels. The two-day conference saw the participation of among others Commission officials, industry representatives and other stakeholders active in the field of packaging and packaging waste. The topics discussed during the first day included EU policy on packaging waste, e.g. how to better implement the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive in Europe, environmental footprint of packaging and industry initiatives to

reduce packaging waste. Eco-Emballages and Öko-Pannon gave presentations about ongoing initiatives in their home country.

At the second day of the conference, which was chaired by PRO EUROPE's Managing Director Joachim Quoden, participants discussed industry initiatives to improve the sustainability of packaging and topics such as waste prevention and resource efficiency with regard to packaging waste.



PRO EUROPE's Managing Director Joachim Quoden chaired the second day of the European Packaging Waste Forum.

PRO EUROPE presented at recent Retail Forum meeting on packaging optimisation

On 23 February, PRO EUROPE's Managing Director, Joachim Quoden, gave a presentation at the European Retail Forum for Sustainability on *Packaging optimization and collection and recycling of used packaging by PRO EUROPE member organizations*. Quoden's presentation touched upon several dimensions of sustainable packaging, and he stated that the best approach to packaging is to use as little as possible but as much as necessary. Addressing the perception by some that the best option is not to use any packaging, Quoden stated that PRO EUROPE's approach is that the

most environmentally friendly packaging is "the best to do the job" and underlined that poor packaging can turn good products into bad ones. Quoden also reminded the audience that PRO EUROPE offers different packaging optimisation services to members and referred to different prevention initiatives within the umbrella organisation.

Meetings under the European Retail Forum for Sustainability are organised four times per year. They provide an opportunity for Commission representatives and key stakeholders to discuss issues of shared

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concern and exchange best practices on matters related to the European retail sector and its sustainability. The most recent meeting took place on 23 February and dealt with *Packaging Optimisation*. Presentations related, among other

things, to matters such as the EU legal framework in the field of packaging and food contact materials, optimisation and implementation of international packaging guidelines and packaging management in retail.

PRO EUROPE article published in Bioplastics Magazine

A PRO EUROPE article on *the End of Life of Bioplastics* was published in issue 06/2010 of the Bioplastics Magazine. The article, written by Gaelle Janssens and Attilio Caligiani, stresses that there are several end of life options for bioplastics and states that whereas the main focus in the discourse on biopackaging used to be biodegradability, resource renewability is increasingly gaining traction. The article gives reference to PRO EUROPE's view

that, as regards bioplastics, recovery is a better option than composting from an environmental point of view.

Among the other conclusions presented by the authors are that bioplastics should not always be considered a more environmentally friendly option to traditional plastics and that biodegradability should not be considered *the* solution to the problem of litter.



EU POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Article 21 PWD

On 23 March the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive's Technical Adaptation Article 21 Committee convened to vote on a Commission proposal to amend Annex I of the Directive (packaging/non-packaging list) but no majority in favor of the Commission's proposal as a whole could be reached. The changes in effect add new items to the packaging and non-packaging illustrative examples of the current Annex I. They will be legally-binding and will have to be implemented by Member States into national law no later than by the end of 2011. The original

plan was to publish guidelines which would not have been legally binding.

The Committee therefore proceeded to a vote on each item. Regarding the new items: fire extinguishers and agriculture film have been categorized as non packaging. The Commission will now adapt its proposal and try to get approval from the Member States through a written procedure. Discussions between the Commission and the Member states have been ongoing for 3 years.



2011 Green Week on Resource Efficiency

On 24-27 May, the 11th edition of the Green Week on Resource Efficiency, the largest annual conference EU environment policy, will take place in Brussels. The

overarching theme of this year's conference will be "Resource Efficiency - Using less, living better", the issues of resource depletion and scarcity will be



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examined in great depth. In addition, the conference will hold a large number of exhaustive sessions, whereby participants may discuss the following topics :

- Resource scarcity: drivers and EU responses.
- The Transition towards a resource efficient economy.
- Towards more sustainable consumption and production.
- Recycling policy instruments.
- Eco-innovation, optimising the eco-efficiency of products and processes.

- New business models for a circular economy.
- Market-based instruments for resource efficiency.
- Waste as a resource.
- "Food waste".
- Speeding up the revolution in how business thinks of resource efficiency.
- Resource efficiency & competitiveness.

More information on the [Green Week website](#).



Resource efficiency: Commission launches public consultation

On 25 February, the European Commission launched a public consultation, which is expected to feed into the Commission's **Roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe** scheduled to be published in June. The consultation will be running until 22 April, whereby stakeholders are invited to express their views on expected trends and obstacles relating to the use of resources and scarcities of Europe's future. Furthermore, a questionnaire on

policy options prompts stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of possible policy tools to address resource efficiency.

Given the importance of resource efficiency in forthcoming EU policies, PRO EUROPE is participating in this exercise. This is to be seen as an additional hook to promote Extended Producer Responsibility.



DG Environment study on the use of economic instruments for waste management in the EU

IEEP (Institute for European Environmental Policy) is currently leading a study for DG Environment on the use of economic instruments for waste management in the EU, whereby it will assess the possibility to move towards a common EU approach for the use of economic instruments in relation to waste management. A number of PRO EUROPE members have taken the opportunity to contribute towards the study and this would then feed into the study done by IEEP researchers. In addition to reviewing the economic

instruments for waste management, it will hope to identify links between the use of instruments and the improvement of waste management performance as a whole. PRO EUROPE is providing inputs to the study.

A website by IEPP was set up, elaborating on the aims of the study as well as publishing the documents contributed by the various responses <http://ei-waste.eu-smr.eu/>

DG Environment study on the coherence of waste legislation



BIO Intelligence Service (BIO) is currently conducting a study for the European Commission's DG Environment on the coherence of waste legislation, with particular emphasis on the in Packaging Directive (94/62/EC), the Batteries Directive (2006/66/EC), the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive (2000/53/EC), the RoHS Directive (2002/95/EC) and the WEEE Directive (2002/96/EC). The study will

aim at providing critical analysis of the adequacy of waste stream-related Directives as well as the overall waste stream approach to contribute towards resource efficiency leading towards a responsible "recycling society". The study hopes to identify alternative approaches as well as assess future challenges towards the development of EU waste legislation related to recycling.

PRO EUROPE members' news



Drink bottles under scrutiny

The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, IFEU Heidelberg, conducted a comprehensive study on the relative advantages and drawbacks of one-way PET bottles, reusable glass bottles and reusable PET bottles in the Austrian market. The study was commissioned by ARA, the Austrian Ministry of Environment and the Austrian Food and Drink Federation. Its aim was to contribute scientifically sound data to the discussion on one-way bottles vs. reusable bottles in Austria.

The comparative life cycle assessment (LCA) of one-way PET bottles and reusable glass bottles shows that, considering country-wide sales, neither of the two performed better than the other in the current Austrian market environment. This result applies to both mineral water and soft drink bottles. Looking at regional sales (radius < 60 km), reusable glass bottles turned out to have an advantage over one-way PET bottles.

One major reason why one-way PET bottles performed so well lies in the high share of recycling (including plastic bottle-to-bottle recycling) in Austria: 82 % of all 1.5l and 2.0l one-way PET bottles sold in the country are recovered, and more than 75 % of the market volume is recycled.

Room for improvement was identified in bottle weights and in the share of PET recycle used.

A definite advantage of reusable glass bottles is their low resource consumption owing to an assumed reusability of around 30 times. The biggest drawback as identified in the LCA concerns the distribution stage: Transportation routes are longer for these bottles than for one-way PET bottles. Another factor is that reusable glass bottles as well as crates need to be cleaned, which implies a higher environmental burden at the filling stage.

Packaging recycling plays a decisive role for LCA results

"The separate collection and recycling of packaging waste has greatly improved the ecobalance of PET bottles in Austria," says ARA CEO Christoph Scharff. "In the 1990s, there were still marked differences between one-way PET bottles and reusable glass bottles, but today, the two types of packaging have rather similar LCA results."

The study also included a hypothetical LCA of 1.5l reusable PET bottles, which are no longer available in Austria. Overall, these bottles show the best results in the



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LCA, as this type of packaging combines the low weight of one-way PET bottles (which is important above all at the distribution stage) with the low production and disposal burden of

reusable glass bottles.

Demand patterns, the level of consumer acceptance for individual packaging materials or economic aspects were not considered in the study.



Proposal of new waste law in Spain

Last March 4th, a proposal of a new Waste Law was approved at the Cabinet meeting. This proposal will have to be approved by the Parliament and Senate within the next months (the government has ordered the urgent procedure).

The Law transposes the European Waste Framework Directive but takes the opportunity to modify some relevant aspects of the current waste regulation. It is especially significant for Ecoembes the possibility of implementing refund systems for certain one-way packaging and the new regime for the compliance schemes.

Concerning deposit system, the proposal contains a disposition which would allow the competent authorities to implement a deposit system on household packaging. The scope of the deposit could be reusable and one-way packaging and the materials mentioned are metal, glass and plastics. The implementation of such systems are conditioned to studies on the environmental and economic viability and the necessity of guaranteeing the correct functioning of the internal market.

Although the regulation of the refund system in text finally approved by the cabinet is better than the one in previous

drafts, the problem could be that it became more imposing and restrictive at the Parliament because of the pressure of the ecologists. Therefore, Ecoembes will closely monitor this issue.

Regarding the new regime for the compliance schemes (packaging and non-packaging), according to the proposal, it is mandatory for the compliance schemes to be "associations". Besides this, any and all licensed companies would have "decision power" at the board of the compliance scheme according to the "relevance of its economic activities". In Ecoembes case, with more than 12000 licensed companies, it is obvious that it would be unfeasible to have so many companies at the board. Apart from this, the authorization process of the compliance schemes becomes more complex in the proposal.

During the next months, Ecoembes will continue working with the Environment Ministry and the Political Parties at the Congress and Senate to amend and improve the articles concerned in order to defend the interests of our licensed companies and to minimize the impact that the new Law could have on the functioning of the compliance scheme.



Can recycling campaign: 10% awareness increase

Nedvang has supported Stichting Kringloop Blik, the Dutch association for the promotion of can recycling, in their campaign to increase the awareness of the recyclability of cans. In radio commercials, it was explained to the target group that cans are recycled, regardless if they are collected separately or via residual waste. In the latter case, metals are recovered from the bottom ash

of incineration plants.

The campaign has been successful: a survey shows that the awareness of can recycling increased by 10% to 56% of the people who were interviewed. Furthermore, 58% of the interviewed people indicated that the environmental impact of the packaging plays an active role in the decision to buy products.

Going beyond Packaging - Germany introduces the Recyclables bin. New developments to assure increased high-quality recycling in Germany.

On February 28th, the Federal Environment Agency UBA, (Umweltbundesamt), invited all important stakeholders to start a formal dialogue on new ideas in waste separation.

Separating waste is, in fact, not a difficult task: organic waste, paper, and glass are put into special bins or containers. Consumers can deliver used electronics and bulky waste to municipal collection points for recycling. Lightweight packaging of plastics, metals, and composites is sorted to the yellow bin (*Gelbe Tonne*).

The European Waste Framework Directive and its transposition in German law will be the new basis for improvements. For consumers sorting is about to become even simpler as the yellow bin is expected to include other recyclable materials in the future.

Consumers can continue to dispose of packaging made of plastics, metals and composites, but also add used products made from plastics or metals in the “new” bins. At present, too many reusable materials are disposed of with other household residual waste even though much of it could be recycled. Experts at the UBA have estimated that a new single bin for recyclable materials could successfully redeem up to seven additional kilograms of waste per person and year besides packaging, which could then be recycled.

From a consumer perspective, the current practice of being able to recycle the plastic yogurt cup with the yellow bin - but not the plastic toy made of the same material- does not make sense. So, the proposal to include in future plastics and metals such as old frying pan, toys or pails is absolutely in line with ecological aspects and social behaviour. What does not belong in the new recyclables bin are products with a high pollutant content -

small used electronic and electrical devices seem also better suited for separate collection than in a common recyclables bin. DSD has already conducted pilot projects with the recyclables bin in cities like Leipzig and Berlin for 4 years.

Until a single recyclables bin can be put into widespread use, a few key questions need to be explored, on issues such as organisation, financing, collection, sorting, and recycling. All stakeholders, that is municipalities, waste management companies, dual systems, industry and trade, and environmental and consumers associations, will be taken into consideration. DSD will be taking part in the strategic working groups on this important future development.

The final reports to the three UBA research projects have been published and are available for free download at:

Bestimmung der Idealzusammensetzung der Wertstofftonne [Optimised allocation of waste items to a “dry recyclables” bin]:

<http://www.uba.de/uba-info-medien-e/4074.html>

Finanzierungsmodelle der Wertstofftonne [Financing options for the “dry recyclables bin”]:

<http://www.uba.de/uba-info-medien-e/4077.html>

Evaluierung der Verpackungsverordnung [Evaluation of the Packaging Ordinance]:

<http://www.uba.de/uba-info-medien-e/4072.html>



Der Grüne Punkt –
Duales System Deutschland GmbH





VALORLUX organises central commercialisation of packaging waste

Luxembourg counts 116 municipalities with 25 container parks where the population can bring and sort their packaging and other waste. Each container park has its own specific sorting criteria and sells on its own the material collected. In this context the administration of environment made VALORLUX responsible for proposing first standardised sorting criteria for the container parks and second a system that allows to sell this packaging material all together in order to get higher revenues.

This central commercialisation concerns clear, green and coloured PET bottles,

PEHD flasks, PE films, PP/PS yards and pots, expanded PS, metal packaging, beverage cartons. These materials represent a total of 1.200 tons a year. Glass and paper/cardboard are not concerned.

The container parks take in charge the costs of the collection of the packaging waste and VALORLUX takes the material away and covers all the costs of transport, sorting and conditioning. The revenues of the materials go to VALORLUX.

VALORLUX will start the central commercialisation in 2011.



Packaging collection in a container park



83% recycling from mixed household plastics

In 2010 Green Dot Norway achieved a recycling rate of 83.4% of plastic packaging collected from Norwegian households. Since most PET bottles go into the deposit system, mixed plastics make up the majority of Norwegian households packaging waste.

Analysis shows that used plastic packaging consists of around 44% films, 27% mixed plastics 0,5% mixed rigid plastics, 1% PS , 4,5% PP, 4% PET and 2,5% PE.

In 2010 Green Dot Norway sent approximately 22 000 tonnes of household plastics to German sorting plants, with the

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requirement that at least 75% of the total shipment should be recycled. This is a result of an agreement between Green Dot Norway and Norwegian municipalities, who want to be sure they can be honest with their inhabitants about recycling.

This is a very welcome development. Both Green Dot and the municipalities can document that the sorted plastic packaging gets a new life.

In Norway, approximately 80% of all households are given the opportunity to recycle plastic packaging in their municipality. The municipalities choose their own collection system. The most common is kerbside collection of large, transparent collection bags every 3rd or 4th week. Some municipalities, including Oslo, use an optibag system where plastic packaging is collected in coloured plastic bags. These bags have to be optically sorted before being sent to the plastic sorting plant. A smaller proportion of municipalities have chosen delivery at recycling points. All kinds of plastic packaging; PP, PET, films, PE, PS and mixed materials are included in the system. Most PET bottles go into their own deposit systems.

Approximately 25% of all household plastic packaging was collected for recycling in 2010 and was sent to sorting plants in Germany. In 2008 and 2009 only 55-58% of the collected amount was sorted into different plastic qualities, and sold for recycling. Several Norwegian municipalities and inter-municipal waste companies were dissatisfied with this utilisation rate, and found it difficult to explain to their citizens why the plastic should be shipped to Germany when more than 40% was incinerated anyway. The opinion was that this could just as well be used for energy “at home”. Although these figures meet the national target of 30% material recycling of plastic packaging when reported together with plastics from trade and industry, Green Dot Norway recognised the communication challenge and decided to do whatever we could to increase the utilisation rate.

In order to achieve this high rate of material recycling we're dependent upon the quality of the material collected. In our communications we therefore emphasize that plastic packaging need to be clean and empty before it is delivered for recycling. This way we educate our public to make the material recycling vs. energy saving decision at the kitchen counter. If the plastic packaging sent to Germany is dirty and contains product waste, it will be very difficult to maintain the high recycling rate we achieved in 2010.





STEWARDEGE

The North American corner

US EPA sponsors dialogue process on optimal performance of municipal recycling systems

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is sponsoring a dialogue process for state and local government entities, brand owners, and NGOs to discuss options for sustainable financing and optimal performance of municipal systems for recycling of post-consumer packaging and printed materials. Thirty-two packaging industry, state, retailer and product stewardship representatives are participating in this process. Two working groups have been established to focus specifically on identifying:

- opportunities to improve the performance of the existing system for recycling post-consumer packaging material at the municipal level.
- the advantages and disadvantages of various strategies including Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for financing the recycling of post-consumer packaging material at the municipal level.

The group has received presentations from experts across North America and Europe, including from PRO EUROPE members ARA,

Fost Plus and StewardEdge.

Local government participants are reported to have described the US municipal recycling system as "broken" and in need of funding and more engagement from the producers of products that result in waste. Many of the industry representatives are reported to be strongly opposed to highlighting EPR as the preferred strategy for addressing the problem at this time.

With US EPA facing significant budget cuts the dialogue in its current form will not likely continue beyond the four meetings agreed at the beginning of this process. However, other organizations including the Sustainable Packaging Coalition have voiced their interest in potentially carrying forward some of the outcomes from the two working groups.



Leading U.S. corporations forming environment-focused packaging organization AMERIPEN

New Industry Organization to Advocate for Environmentally and Economically Sound Packaging Policy Improvements.

Leading U.S. corporations have announced that they are taking steps to create a new packaging trade organization. AMERIPEN will engage on public policies impacting the packaging value chain on topics related to packaging and the environment, and will represent the

interests of the industry which includes raw material producers, packaging manufacturers, packaging users and fillers, retailers and material recovery organizations. Corporate founders include The Coca-Cola Company, Colgate-Palmolive, ConAgra Foods, The Dow Chemical Co., DuPont Packaging & Industrial Polymers, Kellogg Company, MeadWestvaco (MWV), Procter & Gamble, Sealed Air Corporation and Tetra Pak Inc.

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Modeled after EUROOPEN and INCPEN, the European and British counterparts, respectively, AMERIPEN will advocate packaging policy developments in North America focusing on measures that are environmentally and economically sound, as well as socially responsible. AMERIPEN, with a material neutral approach, will encourage science-based decision-making on sustainable packaging initiatives and provide a point-of-view and guidance to policy makers and thought leaders on the value and role of packaging.

“AMERIPEN will further enhance the packaging value chain’s commitment to continuously improving its sustainability profile and reducing packaging waste,” said Joan Pierce, AMERIPEN President. “The organization will play an instrumental role in conveying this message to opinion leaders in North America and ensuring that participants in the packaging value chain have maximum scope to innovate, compete and operate in a resource-efficient way.”

“Today, the complexity of environmental issues confronting packaging is greater than ever. Having a voice to represent common industry views of these matters

and help shape public policy is an absolute essential. In Europe our experience with such an approach over more than 20 years has been positive and productive for industry. EUROOPEN welcomes the formation of AMERIPEN, congratulates those who have led this initiative and recommends membership to every packaging value chain member,” said Julian Carroll, Managing Director of EUROOPEN.

“With the emergence of extended producer responsibility and other potential packaging legislation in the coming years, this is a critical time for our industry to offer a compelling voice,” said Gail Tavill, AMERIPEN Vice-President. “We’re committed to providing necessary expertise and insight to ensure sustainable management of packaging throughout its life cycle.”

AMERIPEN will engage with thought leaders in the packaging industry including trade associations, academic institutions, NGOs and government agencies to facilitate relevant research and identify key data and standards to advance AMERIPEN’S mission.



WE VALUE YOUR INPUT !

This Newsletter is a work in progress. Please share with us your comments and suggestions to improve it continuously.

A story to share? Please send it to us and we will be happy to give it due consideration for an upcoming issue of the newsletter. Contact us at info@pro-europe.info