

BIR speakers discuss the value of scrap as a resource

Association's International Trade Council also looked at how terminology affects trade issues.

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Use of the terms "scrap", "secondary raw materials" or "recycled raw materials" fully reflects their value as resources, the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) International Trade Council's (ITC's) Chairman Michael Lion underlined at the body's latest meeting in Hong Kong 22 May as part of the Brussels-based association's World Recycling Convention.

Lion of Hong Kong-based Everwell Resources made these observations in the context of two guest presentations, the first from Adina Renee Adler, senior director of government relations and international affairs at the U.S.-based Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI). She argued that terminology was essential to achieving clarity on trade issues, such as those raised by China's National Sword initiative.

Regarding the likely impact of America's new President Donald Trump on trade policy, Adler said his clear priorities are U.S. job protection and creation. The fact that the U.S. recycling industry was supporting well more than half a million U.S. jobs duly provided a useful starting point when talking to government, she said.

According to Adler, the president's pronouncements have tended to indicate that he is a supporter of free trade who will nevertheless take reciprocal action when another country raises a trade barrier.

Hon-Meng Wong, assistant director of Waste Reduction and Recycling within the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China's Environment Protection Department, informed delegates to the ITC meeting that only 35% of Hong Kong's municipal solid waste (MSW) was recovered for recycling and that the remainder was consigned to landfills at a daily rate of 1.39 kilograms per capita.

Hong Kong's blueprint for the sustainable use of resources sets the target of a 40% reduction in the waste disposal rate by 2022. To assist in reaching this goal, the intention was to introduce a quantity-based MSW charging scheme in 2019 "to bring about behavioural change," the speaker explained. He also noted that the government had spent more than \$3.5 billion on green procurement between 2013 and 2015, partly to boost markets for recycled products.