

Plastics



In Europe, there are concerns about access to raw material because available tonnages are no longer increasing.

The plastics recycling industry should explore the possibilities of obtaining carbon credits to reflect its positive impact on carbon dioxide emissions. This was the view expressed in Monte-Carlo by BIR Plastics Committee Chairman Surendra Borad of Belgium's Gemini Corporation NV. 'Industries or actions which result in reduction of carbon emissions are eligible for carbon credits,' he explained to delegates. Having noted an indication on a United Nations website that '20% of such projects are registered under the category of waste handling and disposal', he contended: 'I strongly believe that plastics recycling reduces carbon emissions and therefore is eligible for carbon credits.'

Mr Borad went on to quote a US Environment Protection Agency statement that 0.77 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions are saved through the recycling of a single tonne of plastics. Based on what the speaker regarded as a realistic credit objective of Euro 10 per tonne for certified emission reductions, he believed plastics recyclers were eligible to receive upwards of Euro 8 per tonne. He concluded: 'This would give a good boost to recycling. I believe we have to continue discussions on this point.'

Consumption growth in India

Mr Borad also provided a market report on India where, he told delegates, per-capita consumption of plastics remained well below the interna-

tional average of 24 kg per annum at some 6 kg. However, strong growth over the next two to three years was expected to push per-capita consumption to 10 kg. 'Primary plastics production capacity will be 12.5 million tonnes per year in the next two years,' he said. 'By 2030, demand is expected to rise to 100 million tonnes per year.' As for secondary plastics, low-density polyethylene film accounted for almost 80% of India's annual imports of around 100 000 tonnes, with PET film scrap making up the remainder, according to Mr Borad. In many ways, the Indian government regarded plastics scrap imports as 'something not to be encouraged' and had therefore handed out no new import licences for some time.

Reporting on the Chinese market, Jacques Musa of Veolia Propreté France Recycling pointed to demand for all forms of plastics scrap but also to continuing quality issues, notably in relation to film qualities mixed with quantities of agricultural or construc-

Credit where it's due for plastics recyclers?

In common with the content of several other meetings in Monte-Carlo, the BIR Plastics Committee dwelt on the contribution of recycling to carbon dioxide emission reductions – although the theme was approached from a somewhat different angle. Enduring concern over Annex VII shipment documentation was also apparent.

tion industry foils 'which are completely forbidden'. He added: 'We must insist with all suppliers to avoid problems of quality.'

A report submitted by Fred Jiang of Sims Group stated that reprocessing of secondary plastics in Australia had exceeded 300 000 tonnes last year, with growth in exports of plastics scrap leading to tight conditions in the domestic market.

The European market

In the first of a number of reports covering the European market, a submission from Marc Figueras of Spain highlighted lower demand, higher stocks and a large number of containers blocked at domestic ports. The French market, meanwhile, was characterised by constantly increasing demand for secondary plastics – notably polyethylene, polypropylene and polystyrene, according to Mr Musa.

The same speaker revealed continuing 'headaches' for plastics scrap exporters regarding the Annex VII shipment

document which requires disclosure of the names of suppliers and customers. These demands effectively meant 'giving our business away', he complained.

BIR's Environmental & Technical Director Ross Bartley described the Annex VII document as 'too complicated' and open to misuse. The government of an unspecified country had been collating information from Annex VII forms – including details of suppliers and consumers – on a database which was subsequently made available to two commercial companies, he noted by way of example. 'It is something that very much needs to be fixed,' said the speaker.

Possible court action

Peter Daalder of Daly Plastics BV in the Netherlands contended that, owing to the strictness of the Dutch authorities, even the slightest contamination found in loads bound for export could result in delays and even court action. Earlier in the meeting, it had been noted by Mr Borad that stricter implementation of EU Waste Shipment Regulations had resulted in a reduction in India's imports of plastics scrap from Germany. Guest speaker Christian-Yves Crepet, Director General of plastics recycler Sorepla Industrie of France, expressed his concern about access to raw material. Available tonnages were no longer increasing whereas 'washing capacities are growing to create an enormous overcapacity in Europe'. □



The Board of BIR's Plastic Committee. From left: Peter Daalder of the Netherlands, Jacques Musa of France and Chairman Surendra Borad of Belgium. To the right, guest speaker Christian-Yves Crepet of Sorepla Industrie in France.