

PRESS RELEASE

Recent BIR World Recycling Convention (Round-Table Sessions) in London (5-7 October 2018)

Paper Division:

Expert view is that a Brexit agreement is likely

Brussels, 8 October 2018

A waste and resource management specialist from within the UK government's Department for International Trade has expressed confidence that a Brexit agreement will be reached between the UK and the rest of the EU. Deborah Sacks told delegates to the BIR Paper Division meeting in London on October 6 that they should ignore the media "fluff" and listen to "those in the know". She insisted: "I think there will be an agreement."

Responding to talk of a "friendly divorce", she later added: "Our government is committed to making it happen and committed to making it work."

Addressing a panel debate moderated by divisional President Jean-Luc Petithuguenin of Paprec Recyclage in France, Ms Sacks underlined the "huge will to ensure that materials will continue to flow" in the wake of the UK's departure from the EU. However, she also acknowledged the possibility of more delays and increased costs for those looking to move material.

BIR World President Ranjit Singh Baxi of UK-based J & H Sales International Ltd expressed concern that a "hard" Brexit would lead to "a lot of problems" regarding documentary requirements when shipping recovered fibre. He agreed that the UK government is naturally keen not only to retain trading relationships with the rest of the world but also to take the lead in promoting the "reduce, reuse, recycle" message. UK industry is being encouraged to use more recyclables, he noted.

Also confident of a Brexit agreement that will ensure "a good cohesion" in the future between the UK and EU member states, fellow panellist Keith Trower of Viridor Resource Management in the

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UK described China's import ban on certain grades of recovered fibre as "a wake-up call" on quality. His own company has invested heavily in quality enhancement and has enjoyed success in educating local authorities about the need and means to reduce contamination and to improve infeed quality into paper plants. "It is a positive environment for us at the moment," he stated.

Ms Sacks and Mr Baxi pointed to the potential for other Asian countries to adopt fibre import policies similar to those deployed in China, with Taiwan the latest to indicate that it is considering increased controls.

Mr Baxi was then joined by Mr Trower and others in noting that Chinese companies are looking to establish production capacities in, for example, Europe and the USA in order to satisfy China's increasing demand. Panellist Francisco Donoso of Alba Servicios Verdes in Spain pointed out that China will still require packaging for its goods and that this could mean more virgin packaging.

Earlier in the Paper Division meeting, newly re-elected board member Tarek Al-Sharif from UAE-based Sharif Metals International provided solid data on paper recycling's massive environmental contribution. He explained that the recycling of a single ton of paper saves 4100 kWh of energy, 380 gallons of oil, 54 million Btus of energy, 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space, 7000 gallons of water and 17 trees, while preventing the emission of 60 pounds of air pollutants. "We keep on recycling for a better environment and a better tomorrow," he insisted.

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