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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Brussels, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009

### **Global Recycling Delivers Massive CO2 Reduction**

*Brussels, 8 December 2009:* Armed with evidence from a study conducted by Imperial College London<sup>1</sup> that recycling delivers annual CO2 reductions of 500 million tonnes, BIR (Bureau of International Recycling) will be in Copenhagen for COP15 to advocate increased global support for the industry.

"BIR's recent study on the environment benefits of recycling shows the important contribution our members make to energy, water and CO2 savings," says Dominique Maguin, BIR's President. "The figure of 500 million tonnes of reduced CO2 is a conservative estimate based on sound scientific analysis. Let me put it in context: this figure is equivalent to almost 2% of global fossil fuel emissions and represents more than the CO2 emitted by aviation worldwide."

BIR is participating in the Bright Green Exhibition and conference in Copenhagen on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2009 (stand 9), and BIR Director General Francis Veys is a member of the official delegation of the International Chamber of Commerce.

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the Environmental Benefits of Recycling, prepared by Professor Sue Grimes, Professor John Donaldson, and Dr Gabriel Cebrian Gomez, Imperial College London, October 2008. [link to report on BIR web site]

“The purpose of Bright Green is to showcase specific approaches to address climate change challenges,” explains Francis Veys. “BIR will be supported by GI, the Danish recycling federation to make the case for our industry. Our members across the globe are providing nearly 50% of the raw materials needed, and we can still increase this figure. The collection of waste can be improved and the recycling activities are indispensable for saving energy, gas emissions and natural resources. It is of paramount importance to leave a safe, clean and welcoming planet for future generations.”

The members of BIR represent a global powerhouse industry, processing over 600 million tonnes of commodities, with an annual turnover exceeding 200 billion US dollars, similar to the GDP of countries such as Portugal, Colombia and Malaysia. “Our 1.6 million employees are justifiably proud to be part of this industry,” Francis Veys adds. “And, each of them can point to an individual contribution of over 300 tonnes of CO2 reduction per year. That figure will continue to grow if recycled materials become the resources of choice in the future.”

BIR President Maguin concludes: “The UN’s 2005 Millennium Assessment Report showed that a majority of the ecosystems that provide raw materials are being degraded or used unsustainably, threatening life on Earth. We can minimise and reverse this damage by increasing environmentally-responsible recovery and reuse of valuable materials.”

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