

PRESS RELEASE

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2008 World Recycling Convention & BIR's 60th Anniversary Celebration Monte Carlo, 2-4 June 2008

Plastics Committee: Carbon credits for plastics recycling

The recycling of plastics reduces carbon emissions and therefore should receive carbon credits, according to BIR Plastics Committee Chairman Surendra Borad of Gemini Corporation NV of Belgium.

According to US Environment Protection Agency figures, 0.77 tonnes of greenhouse gases were saved for every tonne of plastics recycled, he explained in Monte-Carlo. "So theoretically it is eligible for about Euro 8 per tonne," he said. "This would give a good boost to recycling. I believe we have to continue discussions on this point."

The Plastics Committee meeting in Monte-Carlo also featured the traditional round of market reports. Jacques Musa of Veolia Propreté France Recycling pointed to constantly increasing demand for secondary plastics within the French market, notably polyethylene, polypropylene and polystyrene. However, he also identified two key problems in the export sphere: "headaches" regarding the disclosure requirements of the Annex VII shipment document which effectively meant "giving our business away"; and quality issues relating to shipments to China, notably surrounding film qualities mixed with quantities of agricultural or construction industry foils "which are completely forbidden".

On the subject of Annex VII, BIR's Environmental & Technical Director Ross Bartley described the document as "too complicated" and manifestly open to misuse. By way of example, he noted that 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. "It is something that very much needs to be fixed," said the speaker.

Peter Daalder of Daly Plastics BV in the Netherlands also focused on shipments. He expressed concern that even the slightest contamination found in loads could result in delays and even court action. The Spanish market report submitted by Marc Figueras, and read in his absence by Mr Musa, spoke of a "difficult period" characterised by lower demand as well as by a large number of containers blocked at domestic ports.

Reporting on India, Mr Borad noted that stricter implementation of EU Waste Shipment Regulations had led to a reduction in German imports of plastics scrap. Low-density polyethylene film accounted for around 80% of India's annual imports of around 100,000 tonnes, with PET film scrap making up the remainder. Meanwhile, India's per capita consumption of plastics was expected to surge from 6 kg to 10 kg within the next two or three years, he added.

Also reading a report submitted by Fred Jiang of Sims Group, Mr Borad stated that reprocessing of secondary plastics in Australia had reportedly exceeded 300,000 tonnes in 2007. Growth in exports of plastics scrap had led to tight conditions in the Australian market, it was noted.

Guest speaker at the Plastics Committee meeting in Monte-Carlo was Christian-Yves Crepet, Director General of plastics recycler Sorepla Industrie of France. Having emphasised the importance of rinsing to obtaining an improved yield from his PET scrap feed, he underlined 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".

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