



BIR

Bureau of International Recycling

BIR is the international trade association of the recycling industries. More than 55 countries are represented through their national trade associations and individual companies which are involved in recycling. BIR comprises four commodity divisions: iron and steel, non ferrous metals, paper and textiles, and has committees dealing with stainless steel and special alloys, plastics and rubber. BIR's primary goals are to promote recycling and recyclability, thereby conserving natural resources, protecting the environment and facilitating free trade of secondary raw materials.

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BIR Autumn Round-Table Sessions
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Paper Division :
Strict quality regime in India

India's central government has moved to tighten its grip on the quality of imported recovered paper and board, it was confirmed at the BIR Paper Round-Table in Milan. BIR Paper Division Vice-President Ranjit Baxi of UK-based J&H Sales International explained that, in late September, India's finance ministry had underlined tougher measures relating to the "import of banned municipal and other wastes in the guise of recovered paper or paper board". If a container was found to contain "a mixture of contaminated garbage/municipal waste or plastic waste", it would not be permitted customs clearance "under any circumstances" and the importer would be compelled to re-export it "at their own risk, cost and consequences immediately or latest within a fortnight".

As part of the country's stricter quality regime, almost all containers were now being inspected, Mr Baxi told a meeting which also heard about the growing importance of India as a consumer of recovered paper. Expansion programmes and new projects announced for the period 2005-2008 would add more than 500,000 tonnes per annum to the country's recovered paper requirements. Of this total, 240,000 tonnes of new capacity was already "ready to start", said Mr Baxi.

Meanwhile, China has remained a leading outlet for recovered paper and is likely to import more than 16 million tonnes this year, as against 12.2 million tonnes in 2004 and 9.3 million tonnes in 2003. Figures provided by Mr Baxi showed that US recovered paper exports to China totalled 4.522 million tonnes in the first seven

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months of this year, while the country received a further 2.485 million tonnes from Europe and 1.707 million tonnes from Japan.

China's top European supplier, the UK, shipped just short of 794,000 tonnes to the South East Asian giant in the first seven months of this year. Maarten Kleiweg de Zwaan, President of the European Recovered Paper Association, said that the UK was on course to export a grand total of more than 3 million tonnes of recovered paper in 2005 and that the figure "could double in the next three or four years". He also noted that, as a whole, Europe's exports had increased by 48% to 4.9 million tonnes last year while its recycling rate had reached 54.6%. In the context of the European Declaration on Paper Recovery, he stated: "It can be expected that we will reach the target set in 2000 of 56% in 2005."

In his UK market report, David Symmers of the Independent Waste Paper Processors Association agreed that his country's exports were likely to exceed 3 million tonnes this year but added that, in many instances, the recent upward trend in fuel prices had thrown into question the viability of widening collection activities. He also drew attention to a consultation paper issued recently by the British government which proposes that all yards are covered and enclosed. Any such move would entail "tremendous" costs, he argued.

BIR Paper Division Vice-President Giuseppe Masotina of Masotina SPA in Italy said that, thanks to the considerable increase in domestic collections and to the opening up of export markets in Asia, his home country had become a net exporter rather than a net importer of recovered paper - "something that would not have been thought likely five or six years ago".

Guest speaker at the Paper Round-Table was Philippe Chalmin, Professor at Dauphine University in Paris and President of commodity market research company CycloPe. Having described paper as "the only commodity not to have boomed" during the recent global price surge, he added that there was still "some excess production, at least in Europe and North America". He also noted that the market lacked an international-level price indicator.

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