



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.

PRESS RELEASE

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BIR Autumn Round-Table Sessions
Milan
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Tyres Committee :

Tyres increasingly used for material and energy recovery

Rubber granulate used in the manufacture of artificial sports pitches has been accepted by the Dutch government as a product rather than a waste, the Tyres Round-Table in Milan was informed by its Chairman, Barend Ten Bruggencate of VACO in The Netherlands.

An average of 90 tonnes of tyre-derived granulate was used in the creation of each sports pitch and provided a surface that, unlike grass, did not require cutting and was not so susceptible to weather conditions, he explained.

According to Mr Ten Bruggencate, outlets for scrap tyres had been somewhat limited only a decade ago. But as the Round-Table's guest speaker pointed out, a variety of applications had emerged to make used tyres "an opportunity" rather than "a problem". Dr Pier Clemente Mantegazza, Operations Director with Italian tyre recycling consortium EcoPneUs, pointed out that a far larger proportion of Europe's scrap tyres were now destined for material and energy recovery rather than for landfilling.

Whole tyres were being used in civil engineering projects as, among other things, erosion barriers, artificial reefs, off-coast breakwaters and embankment stabilisers. The aggregate derived from shredding tyres was used, for example, as a foundation for roads and railways, or as a drainage material in place of sand and gravel. Mr

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Mantegazza also observed that end-of-life tyres were being employed “as a source of carbon and steel during the manufacturing of steel at 1650 degrees”, while European cement kilns using tyre-derived fuel were “already complying with the Incineration Directive of 2008”.

Among the applications for tyre-derived crumbs and powders, the guest speaker pointed in particular to moulded rubber products such as wheels for golf trolleys, dustbins and wheelbarrows. Other outlets included flooring for playgrounds and sports pitches, shock-absorbent mats and roofing products.

Milan, the city hosting the Round-Table, had used sheets made from scrap tyres to reduce the noise and vibration associated with its tramway system, added Mr Mantegazza.

In his review of issues influencing or likely to affect the used tyre market, Mr Ten Bruggencate contended that controls on shipments of materials designated as waste would become “extremely strict” over the next five years. Proposals put forward during the on-going revision of EU waste shipment regulations had included a call for shipper, customer, licence and route details to be published on the Internet. If such a measure were to be imposed, he said, Internet users would be able to access previously confidential information that would quickly enable them to build up a complete picture of the market and of their competitors’ operations. “That is something we don’t really want,” he insisted.

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