



BIR is the **international trade association of the recycling industries**. Around **70 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 **three commodity 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

Recent 2010 BIR World Recycling Convention (Autumn Round-Table Sessions), 25-26 October, Brussels

Plastics Committee:

"Tremendous" future for plastics recycling

Brussels, 5th November 2010

New regulations, general public perceptions and resource conservation fears are combining to create a "tremendous" future for plastics recycling, according to Surendra Borad of Belgium-based Gemini Corporation NV.

The Chairman of BIR's Plastics Committee told its latest Round-Table gathering in Brussels that a plethora of new environmental initiatives - relating to, for example, carbon emission reductions and recycling targets - will have an enormous impact on the recycling industry. Having asserted that anything with a "green" association is becoming increasingly popular, Mr Borad also insisted that recycling is widely accepted as "the most obvious solution" to the ever-deepening scarcity of resources.

Against this backdrop, the same speaker reiterated his call for plastics recycling to be eligible for carbon credits.

On another positive note, Mr Borad explained that plastics consumption in India is likely to grow strongly given that current per capita usage of 6kg per year falls well short of the world average of 27kg. In the weeks leading up to the Brussels meeting, however, demand from India had declined significantly, he added.

According to Jacques Musa of Veolia Propreté France Recycling, the Chinese plastics scrap market has been “weaker than expected” in 2010 as many buyers have adopted a “wait-and-see” policy. Demand has been affected, he suggested, by a number of events within China, including the development of prime polyethylene production, energy-saving restrictions, tighter customs controls, higher labour costs and exchange rate movements.

As an illustration of China’s importance to the global market, Mr Musa pointed out that the country imported 3.14m tonnes of plastic scrap in the first five months of this year.

Commenting on the French market, Mr Musa contended that “strong” demand for secondary material has resulted in some “low qualities” coming forward. And in his report on the German and Dutch markets, Peter Daalder of Daly Plastics in the Netherlands complained about the substantial additional costs entailed by the increased frequency of container scans at ports. He also called for a stop on the production of biodegradable plastics to avoid any problems in the recycling process.

In the first of two guest presentations, Faisal Baig of optical sorting specialist Buhler Sortex Ltd in the UK provided illustrations of how value can be added to a material stream by introducing optical sorting at various stages on PET, HDPE, uPVC and WEEE processing lines. Through judicious use of sorting options, recyclers can achieve “70-80% of the virgin price”, he insisted.

He was followed at the lectern by Dirk Segers, Managing Director of Belgium-based Marsh SA, who underlined the importance to exporters of re-evaluating risks on a regular basis in order to ensure optimum insurance cover. He also urged exporters to “know your customers” and also to gain an understanding of shipping-related issues that may apply to their country or region.

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