

PRESS RELEASE

Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Berlin (30 May – 1 June 2016)

International Environment Council.

Paperless waste shipment procedures already a reality, IEC told

Brussels, 7 June 2016

The BIR world recycling organisation and the European Recycling Industries' Confederation have both campaigned for the development of more modern, paperless control procedures for transboundary waste movements. And at the BIR International Environment Council (IEC) meeting in Berlin on June 1, guest speaker Rainer Hans declared that electronic processing of waste shipments was no longer a dream or even "rocket science" but rather "something that is already there and you could use tomorrow".

The Managing Director of Germany-based Infotech GmbH explained that his company had developed the software for the ZEDAL electronic platform for control of transfrontier movements of waste. "This is not just something that is being discussed," he pointed out, adding that more than 17,000 fully-digital ZEDAL waste movement documents had been used in transporting waste between the Netherlands and Germany alone last year.

The system "completely does away with paper", he insisted. All notes were electronically generated and then modified/processed electronically by other stakeholders, the guest speaker explained. Costs of using the system were "very low" and had saved one company around five man hours of work per day. Mr Hans added that his company was engaged in discussions aimed at persuading the European Commission to define a unique interface that would establish this as a core system for all those involved in the transboundary movement of waste.

BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS

The IEC meeting in Berlin, which was chaired by Olivier François of Galloo in France, also focused on latest regulatory developments and issues in the BIR Convention's host country of Germany, as viewed from the perspective of three of its leading recycling-related associations.

Sebastian Will of the BVSE federal association for secondary raw materials and waste management noted that Germany's Recyclable Material Law, currently in its draft phase, was intended to increase the recycling of packaging waste, reduce inefficiencies and allocate the costs of waste production. He expressed concern, however, that the rules would effectively shift organisational sovereignty from private operators to municipalities, thereby undermining well-established market structures and promoting the "socialisation" of waste management.

Daniela Entzian of the BDSV steel recycling association also spoke of "threats to the entrepreneurial rights" of recyclers. She emphasised that the recycling industry was subject to increasing costs to meet greater regulatory requirements and yet it was also a major contributor to carbon dioxide emission-saving targets.

Meanwhile, a debate within the European Commission about raw materials from "conflict" regions could lead to confusion and even excessive control of supply chains affecting a range of metals, contended Ralf Schmitz of the VDM federation of metal traders. There was a need for the European authorities to adopt a "common sense" approach so as to avoid creating a "dysfunctional" system, he argued.

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