



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

Tyres Committee:

Europe – a leader in tyres recycling

Brussels, 5th November 2010

With a recovery rate for end-of-life tyres of 96%, Europe is “the leader” in the world of recycling. That was the positive message conveyed to the latest BIR Tyres Committee Round-Table in Brussels by its Chairman, Barend Ten Bruggencate of Vaco in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, significant EU funding is available to promote research into outlets for the recovered tyres. Opportunities exist not only to work with universities but also for multi-nationals to conduct research into potential new business initiatives. Research has already helped to devise ways of vastly reducing Europe's “mountains” of used tyres, with asphalt emerging as “the best solution for the long term”, according to Mr Ten Bruggencate.

The BIR Tyres Committee Chairman went on to highlight significant tyre recovery and recycling progress in some of the EU's Eastern European member states and in the Baltic countries. Mr Ten Bruggencate also pointed to CEN's adoption of a new technical specification which will be followed by the introduction of standards that “will improve the reliability of the supply chain”.

The potential for the EU to produce end-of-waste criteria for tyre-derived granulate was assessed by guest speaker Kees Wielenga of the Ffact consultancy in Belgium. He estimated that, even if work were to begin immediately, this process would take “at least three years”. While the European Commission is unlikely to prioritise this relatively small material stream, there is no

reason, he said, why industry itself cannot seize the initiative by: indicating which industry standards would apply, or developing such standards; checking if these would meet Waste Framework Directive criteria; and trying to win support from legislators for the “package” it devises. If industry chooses to follow this route, he added, it is essential to involve the influential tyre manufacturing sector and to keep legislators informed.

Development of end-of-waste criteria would help remove “ambiguities” for authorities, Mr Wielenga argued.

ends