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Topics in this issue



Circular economy: getting back on track!

After withdrawing the draft waste legislation package last December the EC has celebrated its return to the Circular Economy agenda with a big kick-off event.

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Placing the spot on CDW

Circularity is not only about waste, but waste and its management play an important role. Being the biggest stream the attention is also on construction & demolition waste (CDW).

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IB²MaC back in Europe

After 12 years and two stages outside Europe, the 16th International Brick and Block Masonry Conference (IB²MaC) returns to Europe in 2016. Abstracts have to be submitted now.

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Voice your opinion!

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Circular economy: getting back on track!



After withdrawing the draft waste legislation package last December and taking the full blast of outrage from the European Parliament as well as from stakeholders and Member States, the European Commission (EC) has been reassuring everyone that its intention was to come back with a more ambitious proposal. Throughout spring this reassurance was all there was to learn about the Commission’s plans. In May the information became more concrete, indicating that the Commission was working towards launching a public consultation by the end of the month, to collect and assess the feedback at the end of the summer, prior to presenting a new legislative proposal in the second half of the year. Meanwhile we know more ...

In parallel to the [public consultation](#) that was launched end of May, on 25 June the European Commission organised a workshop titled “Closing the Loop” as a kind of kick-off event. The workshop was not just well attended, but by far overbooked! Many requests for participation had to be turned down even though the plenary sessions were broadcasted to other conference rooms. This shows how much interest there is and how high the expectations regarding the EC’s new Circular Economy Package are. EMO registered within hours after the announcement of the



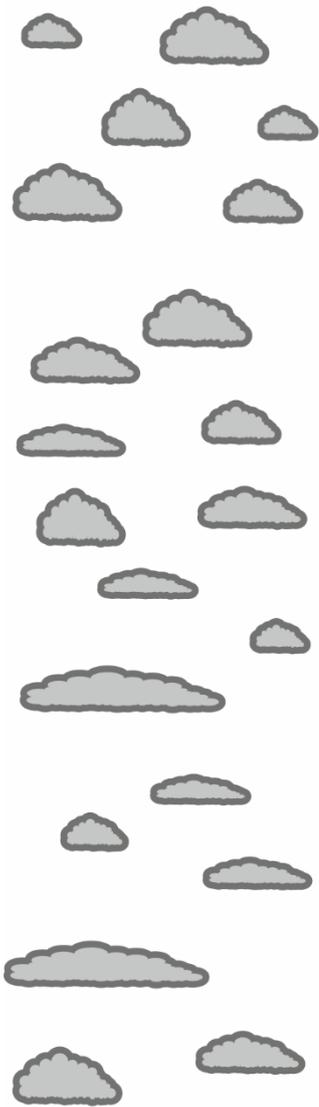
workshop and was therefore among the lucky ones to be invited to take part in this kick-off event.

In his [opening speech](#) First Vice President Frans Timmermans explained that the goal of the workshop and the public consultation was and is collecting input for the new legislative proposal. He once more justified the withdrawal of the draft waste legislation to present a more ambitious proposal by saying that “This is not just about what we do with waste. Waste management is very important. Trash can be turned into cash and it is already happening in many Member States. This is the basis but it is only part of what we need to do. We need a more holistic approach. ... The Commission will take concrete actions in the framework of this holistic view.” He promised that the EC “...will come up with a plan that bites, that has concrete measures, that really looks at the full circle of the Circular Economy.”

Commissioner Karmenu Vella (DG Environment) supported and elaborated in his speech on the political message presented by First Vice President Timmermans. Mr Carsten Bermig (DG Growth), who spoke on behalf of Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska, became a little more concrete on plans and measures. He addressed the importance of integrating and maximising value chains, recognising that value chains are different for each sector. Identifying the construction sector as the sector that “generates most waste in Europe” (1 t of Construction and Demolitions Waste (CDW) per person every year = 500 billion tons of CDW in the EU per year), he used it as a practical example to present two exemplary, yet concrete actions the Commission is planning. In order to “strengthen the market for secondary raw materials” and to “maximise the value chain of the many materials found in a building about to be demolished” the Commission has planned to develop recycling protocols and pre-demolition guidelines. According to DG Growth the role of the Commission in the EU with regards to the Circular Economy is:

1. Creating the conditions in which the Circular Economy business can be developed
2. Giving clear and stable policy signals that foster investment
3. Mobilizing the necessary private investment (e.g. through the 315 billion € strong European Fund for Strategic Investments)
4. Creating market based incentives (e.g. by leveraging public buying power via green public procurement)

The presentations by Ellen MacArthur from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and Martin R. Stuchtey from the McKinsey Center for Business & Environment made references to the report [“Growth Within: A Circular Economy Vision for a Competitive Europe”](#). This report, which had been publically released the very same morning, was drawn up in a partnership between the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Stiftungsfonds für Umweltökonomie und Nachhaltigkeit (a branch of the Deutsche Post Foundation) and the McKinsey Center for Business and Environment, receiving input from more than 200 contributors from industry, science, government, etc. With this report the authors aim to contribute to a fact base to inform the ongoing debate about the Circular Economy and its implications for employment, growth and the environment. Ms MacArthur mostly refrained from quoting figures in favour of giving a passionate speech making among other things comparisons to revolutions in other industries sectors. In doing so she tried to convey the message that it is the right time to move to and implement Circular Economy principles and to convince the audience that is possible. Mr Stuchtey’s role in the shared speech was to cover the audience with figures about potential economic benefits and (private) house hold savings as well as to present some of the report’s conclusions. One of the summarising conclusions of the report according the speakers is that considering all the economic, social and environmental “effects, the Circular Economy is starting to become a



viable option for Europe". In her final statements Ms MacArthur's concluded from a Circular Economy summit that had taken place the previous day in London, that the Circular Economy "is happening anyway", that many business leaders already embrace the Circular Economy models and principals to increase growth and profitability.

After a panel discussion and a lunch break the afternoon continued with three groups of parallel sessions on in total 6 topics. [The conclusions from these so called split-up sessions](#) were summarised as key messages for presentation in the final plenary session. One of the speakers in the closing session was also Ms Sirpa Pietikäinen, MEP, who presented the same messages and arguments for a move towards a Circular Economy as we heard during the workshop in the European Parliament following the presentation of her draft initiative reports in April (see [EMO Newsflash 01/2015](#)). She stressed once more the need for binding regulation and reliable and consistent indicators. Meanwhile, this draft report was amended and the [final report](#) was voted following a [debate on Circular Economy in the European Parliament](#).

The documents and recordings from the "Closing the Loop" kick-off event on 25 June 2015 are available for download/streaming on the ["Moving towards a Circular Economy"](#) website of the Commission. The summarising impression to be taken from this event is that the transition to a Circular Economy is carried and demanded by a large community covering the whole spectrum of stakeholders, across all industries and political parties. Consequently the pressure on the Commission to deliver is high and there is no doubt that actions will follow. The willingness to tackle barriers and obstacles impeding this transition seems high and there is a great enthusiasm for adapting and applying "new" business models and best practice examples in a general way. But in this respect there is once more an evident lack of understanding that concepts that may work well for consumer products do not translate to most construction products, but at best to buildings. Unfortunately this phenomenon shows also in the questionnaire for the ongoing [public consultation](#). The big challenge for the construction product industry in the months to come is therefore once more to try channelling the actions in the right direction and to the appropriate target.

Placing the spot on CDW



In line with hearing from European Commission officials that "waste management is very important" and that the construction sector "generates most waste in Europe" it should not surprise that the European Commission is running two projects related to construction and demolition waste (CDW). It may only surprise that the first one was contracted only days before the famous withdrawal of the waste legislation package...

Said first project is a study on "[Resource Efficient Use of Mixed Waste](#)", which is being conducted by a consortium led by Bio by Deloitte on behalf of the European Commission (DG Environment). The study started in January 2015 and will run until April 2016. The overall objective is to examine obstacles and regulatory failures affecting the functioning of waste markets in the European Union. To this it will inter alia investigate the current CDW management situation in EU Member States, to identify obstacles to recycling and potential deficiencies that could lead to non-compliance with EU waste legislation.

It shall on the other hand identify good practices in terms of creating conditions for increasing CDW recycling and improving the quality of recycling and recovery and shall formulate a set of recommendations to address potential barriers. Last but not



least the study shall also look into statistic figures on CDW and assess their plausibility and make recommendations to ensure that figures match.

The first tangible outcome from the investigation of current national CDW management situations are [draft specific fact sheets for each Member State](#). These draft fact sheets are open for comments until 31st July (targetted contributors are memberstates and cross-sectoral national organisations).

The second project aims at “Developing a Common EU Construction & Demolition Waste Management Protocol” and was launched by the EC (DG Growth) under the framework of the “Construction 2020” Action Plan (part of [“Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises” \(COM \(2012\) 433 final\)](#)). The work will be managed by DG Growth with the support of Ecorys in a tripartite work structure, where industry and national governments are expected to contribute. The reason to launch this project is the perception of quality of processed CDW. According to the industry the lack of confidence in the performance of recycled products limits the demand and slows the development of a secondary CDW market. The objective of this project is therefore to develop a common set of technical, environmental and managerial principals that are applicable in the entire EU and based on the highest common standards that would be recognised in all Member States. Ultimately, the common set of principles should lead to a common C&D Waste Management Protocol, a reference document functioning as “soft legislation” that can be used by construction and demolition professionals, authorities and other industry players. Further information can be found in the [kick-off document](#).

We will follow and report about both projects through our involvement in [Construction Products Europe \(CPE\)](#) and our connections with the [European Demolition Association \(EDA\)](#).

IB²MaC back in Europe



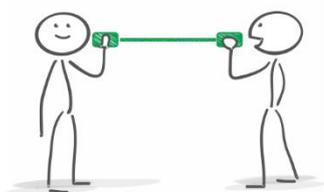
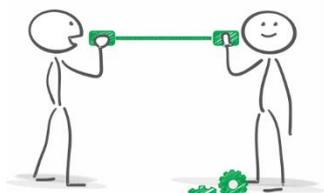
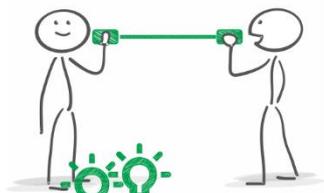
After 12 years and two stages outside Europe, the 16th International Brick and Block Masonry Conference (IB²MaC 2016) returns to Europe. The 16th IB²MaC is organised and hosted by the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering of the University of Padova (Italy) and will take place on 26-30 June 2016. It will be held in the former Monastery of San Gaetano, in the very heart of the ancient city centre.

Almost a year ahead of the event, the organisers have opened the call for paper abstracts. Papers - i.e. for the time being abstracts – may be submitted for topics like:

- Eco-materials and sustainability
- Seismic performance and reliability
- Building physics and durability
- Codes and standards
- ...

The full list of [topics and themes](#) can be found on the [conference website](#), where you will also find the [templates](#) to be used for drafting abstracts in case you consider submitting a paper. **The deadline for submission of abstracts (max. 300 words) is already 31 July 2015**, but we are almost sure the organisers will extend the deadline or accept abstracts submitted by the end of the summer. Submission of abstracts requires registration.

Voice your opinion!



Earlier this year we commented that under president Juncker things “seem to be handled less precipitous” and that at that time there were “notably less announcements of public consultations”, but maybe we counted chickens before they hatched! The Commission has launched or is about to launch a series of consultations and studies - which may include consultations or stakeholder interviews themselves - and has announced further studies/consultation not yet knowing when exactly these will leave the pipeline. In the following please find a (non-exhaustive) collection of the upcoming/announced studies & consultations:

- [“Public consultation on the Circular economy”](#)

Launched: 28 May 2015 Closing: 20 August 2015

This consultation is meant to collect stakeholder views as an input to the Circular Economy legislation package that the European Commission has announced for end of the year. As the legislation package is a general one, so is the questionnaire. The questions in the consultation document are not only not tailored for the construction products, but mostly not applicable. This is why none of the European construction product associations we are in contact with was happy about the questionnaire. However, the general consensus is that we ought to participate as best possible to stay in the information look and take part in the dialogue. We have therefore prepared draft answers to the questionnaire as a starting point for a dialogue with our members to agree upon a common EMO message. To give you an idea what our suggested answers are in comparison to the answers consider by Construction Products Europe (CPE) we have merged both [CPE’s and our own suggested answers](#) into one document which we will discuss in the coming days with our experts and the colleagues officially representing our members. To facilitate an open discussion and agree upon a common EMO answer, our experts and official representative will receive an invitation to participate in a doodle poll to agree upon a date for a conference call.

If you wish to participate in the public consultation for yourself, please visit the [European Commission’s website for this consultation](#).

- [“The functioning of Waste markets in the European Union”](#)

Launched: 12 June 2015 Closing: 4 September 2015

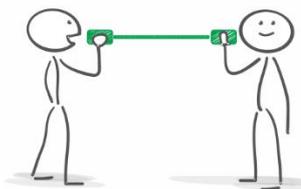
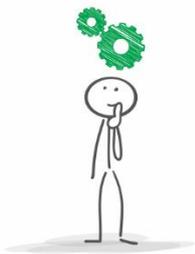
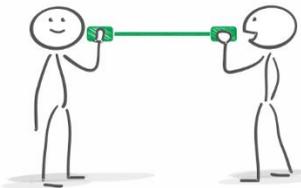
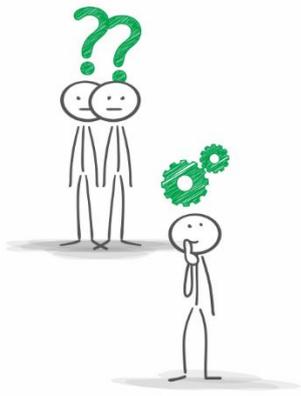
As afore reported, last January the Commission launched a study to examine obstacles and regulatory failures affecting the functioning of waste markets in the EU. In support of this study, the goal of the present consultation is to obtain a better understanding of the nature and the extent of regulatory failures causing undue distortions to EU waste markets for recycling and recovery. The feedback will also be considered when drafting the new proposal for the Circular Economy.

Unlike the broader public consultation on Circular Economy this consultation is targeted at stakeholders and experts on waste management. EMO is therefore not planning to participate in it, but will follow the activities of other associations like the [European Demolition Association \(EDA\)](#).

- [Evaluation of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive](#)

Launched: 30 June 2015 Closing: 31 October 2015

According to article 19 of the [Energy Performance of Buildings Directive \(EPBD\)](#) the Commission has to evaluate the Directive “in the light of the experience



gained and progress made during its application” at the latest by 1 January 2017. To this it is common practice of the Commission to launch public consultations to gather feedback from practical experience. But the assessment of the EPBD has also to be seen against the background of the [Energy Efficiency Communication](#) from July 2014, which indicated that while the 20 % energy efficiency target for 2020 was likely to be achieved, a 30 % target for 2030 should be envisaged to further reduce emissions and to contribute to improving the security of energy supply. The communication referred to the upcoming evaluation and review of the EPBD as an opportunity to consider the appropriate policy elements for this.

The consultation is an open public consultation in which everyone having experience with the practical application and implication of the EPBD is invited to participate. As the experiences are gained at national level and may differ significantly from country to country depending on the definitions and effective implementation, it does not seem sensible to provide a common answer as EMO. But please have a look at the questions in the [consultation document](#) and see for yourself. Even if you agree with us, we are happy to support you in answering to the consultation if you share your ideas and experiences with us.

To participate in the online consultation, please visit the [consultation website of DG Energy](#).

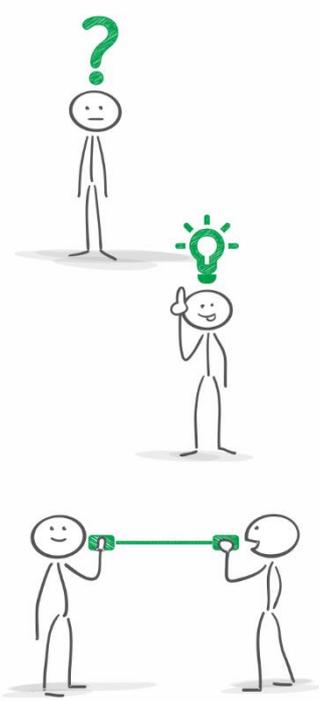
- (First) Supporting Study for the Fitness Check on the Construction Sector

A Fitness Check is a comprehensive evaluation of a policy area that usually addresses how several related legislative acts have contributed to the attainment of policy objectives. The European Commission considers fitness checks particularly well-suited to identify overlaps, inconsistencies synergies and the cumulative impacts of regulation. As part of the European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme (REFIT) the European Commission has scheduled for the end of 2016 a Fitness Check for the Construction Sector, in which support they have contracted a consortium to conduct a study. The study is expected to provide factual evidence regarding the effects, both positive and negative, of EU legislation on the construction sector, with special emphasis on the impacts on competitiveness and sustainability. On 2nd July 2015 the 1st meeting of the mirror group which was installed the DG Growth took place. Antonio Caballero González participate in this first meeting on behalf of Christophe Sykes from Construction Products Europe (CPE), in his role as chairman of the CPR Working Group at CPE.

The study focuses on the “core” construction sector, i.e. construction of buildings and specialized construction activities, including the manufacture of construction products and construction-related professional services (e.g. architects, engineers, or energy auditors). Infrastructure works are excluded. It will consist of a legal analysis and a socio-economic analysis, and a public consultation.

Regarding the interviews with stakeholders, CPE suggested to organise a workshop involving various sub-sector associations, which would simplify the logistics and at the same time ensure a balanced picture of the situation, as views on the effects of EU legislation may differ across associations. This proposal was much appreciated both by Commission officials and the consultants. This workshop is envisaged for September/October 2015. We will keep you informed about the date, as the workshop will also be open to company representatives.

- Additional (Second) Study in Support of the Fitness Check on the Construction Sector



Afore reported study will focus on the effects of EU legislation linked to (only) two policy areas, namely Internal Market and Energy Efficiency. Upon questioning why environment as well as health and safety are not included the Commission officials informed that another, similar Fitness Check study will cover these other two policy areas. However they did not indicate when the study would be launched as at the time it was in the process of being tendered. They only confirmed that there would be an overlap in time, where both studies will be conducted in parallel.

- Study on the Economic Impacts of the CPR

While the a study on the implementation of the CPR is ongoing, in support and preparation of the report the Commission is to present to the European Parliament next year in spring, Commission officials informed that soon a study on the economic impacts of the CPR will be launched. This study will not address the economic impacts (costs) related with the implementation of the CPR and the obligations of the economic operators, as this is part of the ongoing study. Instead the new study would focus on other economic impacts, like those related to the use of standards and Eurocodes. While a starting date was not mentioned, the Commission officials noted that the findings from this study are expected to be available in the Spring/Summer 2016.

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