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**INTRODUCTION BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Dear reader,

Welcome to a new edition of the EXPRA newsletter.

Last week, EXPRA organised the 21st annual Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum together with Informa in Brussels. Participants at the well-attended conference saw informative interventions on a wide range of topics – from EU policy developments on packaging and waste to best practices in the field of material sustainability and ways to address packaging waste across the globe. The broad spread of participants from across the packaging value chain, the EU institutions and NGO community, engaging presentations and debates all contributed to making the event a great success.

The forum contributed with views on the importance of waste in the context of resource efficiency and confirmed that packaging and recycling can make important contributions to building a European circular economy.

The forum was indeed also very timely, with a range of important EU policy initiatives in the policy pipeline covering the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive – notably the Waste Target Review and the Review of EU Waste Management Targets as well as the ongoing work to develop EPR guidelines at EU level. EXPRA is closely following and providing input to these files as progress.

Many EXPRA members were represented at the forum and gave updates *inter alia* on how to ensure the future success of EPR in Europe. Many interesting facts and figures about all of our EXPRA members can be found in the recently finalised **EXPRA members’ brochure**. The brochure also provides an introduction to EXPRA, its beliefs and its different committees and working groups.

I warmly welcome you to read the brochure, and also hope that you will find the content of this newsletter of interest.

With best regards,

Joachim Quoden

Managing Director of EXPRA
EXPRA news

EXPRA co-organises successful Packaging Waste & Sustainability Forum

The 2014 edition of the Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum, organised by EXPRA and Informa, gathered close to 100 participants from throughout the packaging and packaging waste value chain. A variety of themes ranging from EU packaging waste legislation to ways to combating packaging waste across the globe were discussed during the two day Brussels conference.

Chaired by Franki Grilli, Environmental Corporate Director at Ferrero, the themes of the first conference day included the latest developments on EU Policy on Packaging Waste. DG ENVI Policy Officer Marianne Muller gave an update on the EU Waste Target Review and Waste Fitness Check and EUROPEN's Virginia Janssens provided the packaging supply chain’s perspective on reviewing the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive.

Various EXPRA representatives of EXPRA were also among the high level speakers. EXPRA President William Vermeir moderated a session on ways to harmonise the PPWD, WFD and the LD. Ecoembes' CEO Oscar Martin provided EXPRA’s view on how to ensure future success of EPR in Europe, stressing the benefits of EPR schemes being run at a not-for-profit basis. The discussions continued on ways to reduce packaging waste in and beyond EU Member States which included a presentation by Meegan Armstrong from the Ministry of British Columbia, Canada, on packaging waste developments in the region.

EXPRA’s Managing Director, Joachim Quoden moderated the second day of the forum. High level speakers from industry and the EU Commission debated issues such as the importance of waste in the context of resource efficiency. Michele Galatola, Product Team Leader in DG Environment explained how the work is progressing in the field of environmental footprint methodologies, and representatives from IKEA, Marks and Spencer and Nature Works were among those sharing their experiences in fields such as innovative product design and how packaging fits into broader waste, environment and efficiency strategies.

Ways to tackle food waste was another of the conference themes, and Piotr Barczak from the European Environment Agency addressed consumer attitudes to food and packaging waste. The conference ended with an engaging panel debate on ways to improve sustainability credentials. Erika Mink, President of ACE, Anders Linde, Secretary General of MEP and Stefan Jaenecke, President of FEVE, were among those presenting their experiences in sustainability of materials.
Speakers and participants at the Packaging Waste and sustainability forum
**EXTRA BROCHURE**

EXTRA has published a new brochure. It contains an overview of EXTRA, its beliefs, its different committees and working groups, as well as the fact sheets providing information about each member of EXTRA and their activities.

Please find it [here](#) on the EXTRA homepage.

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**“LET’S BAG IT” SEMINAR, BRUSSELS**

On 19 February, the Greens-EFA group in the European Parliament (EP) organised the conference ‘Let’s Bag It!’. It was organised in the context of the Commission’s proposal on plastic bags and hosted by EP ENVI rapporteur Margrete Auken (Greens, DK).

The conference was divided into two panel sessions. The first panel focused on ‘Identifying the problem: Plastic litter in the environment and oceans,’ whereas the second concentrated on ‘Responding with solutions: Best ways to address issue of plastic bags.’

Among the speakers taking part was Karl Foerster, Executive Director of Plastics Europe, considered that a ban on lightweight plastic bags is not the solution. Member States should rather enforce a charge on lightweight plastic bags in order to increase collection and change behaviour. Increasing recycling targets could also contribute to the reduction of such bags being littered.

MEP Margrete Auken (Greens, DK) emphasised that the waste hierarchy should always apply, also with regard to reducing lightweight plastic bags. She praised the Impact Assessment that the Commission performed prior to issuing its proposal and wondered why the proposal does not follow its conclusions.

Karl Falkenberg, Director General of DG Environment in the Commission, stressed the need to think in terms of a ‘circular economy’. However, rather than introducing bans, we should focus on collection and recycling. He reiterated that the proposal invites Member States to take measures towards reducing plastic bags, and that different national realities require different solutions. The Commission will verify the solutions practiced by Member States and, if results are insufficient, return to EU-level debate on legislation.

EXTRA has published a position paper on its website in response to the Commission proposal on plastic bags. EXTRA is of the view that initiatives to reduce cooperation involving the business in cooperation with local authorities and the business sector can be more effective than restrictive measures to reduce lightweight plastic bags. When combined with awareness raising and educational campaigns, as well as the promotion of reusable bags, this would focus on consumer behaviour and address the problem of consumption, which is actual problem in this case.

In addition, EXTRA argues that leaving the competence to take measures with the Member States could lead to negative effects on the internal market and cross-border trade.

See [here](#) for more information on the conference and the additional speakers. See [here](#) for EXTRA’s position paper.

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**EPR CLUB EVENT ON ‘COMMUNICATION AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY’**

On 26 February 2014, Municipal Waste Europe (MWE) and the ACR+ EPR Club organised a seminar on “Communication and Resource Efficiency,” which was attended by EXTRA. The seminar focused on communication towards citizens and the quality of cooperation between EPR schemes and local authorities.

Joachim Quoden, Managing Director of EXTRA, took active part in the discussions and welcomed the majority of the findings of the seminar. He highlighted the work of the EXTRA Communications Working Group on the identification
of best practices in communication to inhabitants. Mr Quoden also invited MWE and ACR+ to collaborate further on this matter.

Weine Wiqvist, President of Municipal Waste Europe and Managing Director of Avfall Sverige, highlighted *inter alia* the good cooperation with the Swedish WEEE system.

Piet Coopman, Expert on EPR at Interafval, Belgium, highlighted the very good relation that municipalities have with EPR systems and explained the institutionalized approach, which delivers very good results.

Vanya Veras, Secretary General of Municipal Waste Europe (MWE), explained that only recently the EPR system for packaging (SPV) has started to cooperate with municipalities on the communication towards inhabitants, interestingly at the same time when the government announced to license probably a second system.

In the discussion, MWE highlighted the need for a good cooperation between municipalities and EPR schemes with a fair distribution of costs.

See [here](#) for additional information on the event.

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**ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT METHODOLOGIES FOR PRODUCTS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

The European Commission’s (EC) DG Environment has been working together with the EC’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) to develop methodologies for the assessment of Product Environmental Footprints (PEFs) and for Organisation Environmental Footprints (OEFs) in goods or services providing sectors.

In April 2013, the [methodological guides](#) were published (See Annex II for the Product Environmental Footprint Guide and Annex III for the Organisation Environmental Footprint Guide). The guides are highly interlinked and have various common elements. They provide guidance on how to calculate product / organisation environmental footprints, which constitute ‘multi-criteria measures’ of the environmental performance of a good/service on the one hand and a goods/services providing organisation on the other from a life cycle perspective.

**Current status and next steps**

On 3 October 2014, the Commission published 14 product categories and 3 organisational sectors for pilot projects, selected from a total of approximately 90 applications (see [here](#) for a short analysis of the applications). Additional information can be found [here](#) on the Commission’s website.

During a period of three years the methodologies will be applied to different product categories and sectors in order to establish and validate the process of setting up Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCRs) and Organisation Environmental Footprint Sector Rules (OEFSRs), which aim to become the standard product / sector rules to be used by all stakeholders that measure product / sector performance based on PEF and OEF. Stakeholder meetings will be organised in Brussels for individual product categories and sectors (see [here](#) for the dates of upcoming PEF meetings and [here](#) for OEF meetings).

A guidance document is available explaining how to register for the meetings, as well as how to keep track of the process on specifically designed wiki pages (see [here](#)). In addition, these pages will be populated with content during the work on the PEFCRs and OEFSRs.

Currently, there is an open call for volunteers for feed, food, drink and related products. This also covers fertilisers, packaging of food and drinks, and catering services. Stakeholders can volunteer to lead the process (for information on how to apply for the pilot phase see [here](#) for PEFCRs and [here](#) for OEFSRs).

EXPRA’s Prevention Working Group is working on this issue in close collaboration with EUROPEN.
EUROPEN PUBLISHES ANALYSIS OF EU PACKAGING WASTE RATES EVOLUTION

On 18 February, EUROPEN published an in-depth analysis on the evolution of EU packaging waste rates in the period 1998-2011. According to the report, the EU has witnessed a continuous increase of recovery rates and a steady decline of packaging waste going to landfills. However, it finds that closing the gaps between old and new Member States remains a challenge.

The organisation stresses the importance of maintaining the current separate regulatory approach for packaging under the Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive. In addition, they call for binding minimum requirements for extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging waste.

The press release can be found [here](#).

HELCOM DECIDES ON STEPS FOR REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER IN 2015

On 6 March 2015, HELCOM (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission – Helsinki Commission) held its 35th Annual Meeting. At the meeting steps were decided on in order to establish a Regional Action Plan on marine litter in the Baltic Sea by 2015.

The goal is for the plan to include concrete measures aimed at reducing marine litter in the Baltic Sea. Inspiration for the format of the plan is taken from experiences in preparing the Regional Action Plan for the North-East Atlantic in OSPAR.

See [here](#) for the press release

JANEZ POTOČNIK EXPLAINS COMMISSION’S PLANS TO IMPROVE PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT

In an article published on theparliament.com, EU Commissioner for Environment Janez Potočnik explained the Commission’s plans for plastic waste.

After referring to the Commission’s proposal for reducing lightweight plastic bags, the Commissioner set out various other initiatives the Commission is taking in the context of transforming the EU to a more circular economy. He mentioned in particular the review of targets in the packaging and packaging waste directive, the landfill directive, and the waste framework directive.

Please see [here](#) for the article

PRESENTATION OF THE 7TH ENVIRONMENT ACTION PROGRAMME (EAP) BY EU COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENT JANEZ POTOČNIK

On 6 March 2014, Commissioner Janez Potočnik presented the 7th EAP called “Living well, within the limits of our planet” which entered into force in January this year.

In his address, the Commissioner sketched the main objectives and priorities of the programme and discussed the motivations behind them. He emphasised the need for collaboration across sectors between governments, business, civil society and ordinary citizens.

See here for the [text](#) of the speech

OPENING ADDRESS BY EU COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENT JANEZ POTOČNIK AT HOPE CONFERENCE
On 3 March 2014, Commissioner for Environment Janez Potočnik made the opening address at the ‘HOPE’ (Healthy Oceans – Productive Ecosystems) marine conference.

The Commissioner stressed that Europe's seas are not in good condition and called for urgent action. He referred to combating marine litter by tackling the problem at the source. This entails ensuring that materials do not become waste but feed back into the economy as raw materials.

The Commissioner announced that the waste package to be proposed in spring will include a target for marine litter reduction.

You can find the text of the speech here.

**COMMISSION PUBLISHES REPORT ON STATE OF THE EUROPEAN SEAS**

On 20 February the Commission published a report on *The first phase of implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive*. The report is based on the assessment by Member States of the state of their marine waters and set targets.

In the report, the problem of marine litter is addressed. Whereas Member States acknowledge that the European marine waters are not in "good environmental status", the report names four main reasons for this. It states that "(m)arine litter, mostly plastic, is a growing issue globally and in the EU." Furthermore, it states that "(t)he impacts of this increasing problem are manifold and their magnitude not yet fully known."

Please find here the Commission’s report and here the accompanying press release.

**NEW MOBILE PHONE APP LAUNCHED TO HELP TRACK MARINE LITTER**

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has announced the launch Marine Litter Watch, which is a mobile application for people to report marine litter found on beaches.

The data is intended to enhance the Commission’s understanding of the marine litter problem and to feed into the policy response as announced in the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

Please see here for the press release by EEA.

**CEPI CAMPAIGN PROMOTING EUROPEAN INDUSTRIES**

The Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) has created a platform and campaign in support and open to industries in Europe called Basta! Get Back on Track! The overall campaign goal is to make Europe a better place for manufacturing and it has four overarching goals:

- ‘Free us from red tape’
- ‘Rethink our energy policy’
- ‘Help us win the global race’
- ‘Focus on existing policies’

The campaign was launched on 27 January and summarised in a video.

**COMMISSION AUTHORISES INVESTMENT AID FOR “ENERGY FROM WASTE” GASIFICATION PLANT IN LAHTI, FINLAND**

Recently, the European Commission ended its investigation into the financial aid plans of the Finnish government for a gasification plant. The Commission approved the planned grant of €14.725 million to Lahti Energia, stating that it is in line with EU State aid rules.

Please find the press release here.
News from EXPRA members

ECOEMBES

NEW APPROACH TO LICENSEES

In 2013 Ecoembes developed a new approach to its clients with two main objectives:

1. To improve Ecoembes’ knowledge and appraisal of Ecoembes’ licensees (12,000).
2. To become an even more added value partner for its customers.

In order to fulfill the first objective, Ecoembes developed an active program of activities aimed to clients to make Ecoembes much more visible and easier to understand. This includes visiting sorting plants and recyclers with licensees, supporting them on the implementation of sorting collection of household packaging in their facilities, workshops etc.

In order to fulfil the second objective, Ecoembes also extended and customized the range of added value services provided. Currently Ecoembes supports its licensees on ecodesign (in-house packaging diagnosis, ad-hoc training on ecodesign, design for recycling tool and assessment), providing know-how on recycling and clean production (minimizing the amount of packaging waste, simplifying management and maximizing material value) and developing cooperation projects on CSR aligned with the strategy of the licensees.

Furthermore, Ecoembes has set up Key Account Managers in order to implement a close cooperation with our clients which will help us to achieve the above mentioned targets.

90 % OF THE COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH DE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS WERE RENEWED IN 2013

The year 2013 was a renewal year in Spain for the agreements between Ecoembes and the Public Administrations which will last for five years.

So far, 114 Cooperation Agreements have been signed, which cover the selective collection of nearly 99.5 % of the Spanish population.

In Spain, the municipalities are responsible for packaging waste collective and sorting. As a result, Ecoembes should formalize with them a document establishing the economic and operational conditions which must be covered.

The negotiation of those agreements is a delicate process because of the high number of administrations involved, the need for homogeneous conditions and the lack of liquidity which most of them currently suffer.

The new agreements are still committed to achieve greater efficiency in the services; the payment formulas are overturned in the optimization in all processes (collection, sorting, etc.).

Thanks to this, during the last ten years, the recovery cost of one ton of lightweight packaging (yellow bin), has been reduced by 23% by incorporating lower cost collecting systems, due to the automation of the sorting plants, and because of the increase in citizen participation.

New arrangements allow us to further reduce the unitary costs by 10 % - 15 %.

To continue advancing in this line, Ecoembes invests more than €1 million a year in R&D and innovation, jointly developed with universities, administrations, research institutes and companies.
GREEN DOT CYPRUS RECYCLING APPLICATION FOR MOBILE PHONES AND TABLETS

The way the public communicates and receives information is transformed with the developments in technology. At Green Dot Cyprus we try to keep pace with these developments and provide friendly solutions and easy access to recycling info for people or visitors in Cyprus.

To that end, Green Dot Cyprus has developed a mobile application for phones and tablets which provides direct access via GPS or GSM to the collection days and the recycling bins per area, anytime and from any location. The application also provides information for the two Collective Systems managed by Green Dot Cyprus for batteries and WEEE. The mobile application is called «Green Dot Cyprus» and is compatible with IOS (Apple) and Android devices. It is available to download for free from the Apple Store and the Google Play Store.

Green Dot Cyprus actively promotes this new application with an aim to have it on every phone and tablet. We want to make the information readily and easily available to the citizens, so that there is no knowledge and information barrier for recycling. We expect soon to upgrade the application for windows phones as well and further develop it by adding the battery recycling bins on the GIS maps.

«Green Dot Cyprus» mobile application

VALORLUX LAUNCHES TROPHÉCO, THE AWARD FOR ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING

In partnership with the Environment administration and the clc, VALORLUX organizes the first edition of Trophéco, the award for eco-friendly packaging. Realized in the context of prevention on packaging and packaging waste, Trophéco awards the most eco-friendly packaging.

The principle of Trophéco is to put forward, via an experts’ jury, several household and/or assimilated household packaging put on the Luxembourg market which reduce the environmental footprint of the packaging throughout its life cycle. This award has the goal, on one hand, to be a source of inspiration and innovation for all the sectors using packaging and, on the other hand, to inform the general public about the efforts made by the industry and/or the commerce.
The jury is made up of representatives of consumers as well as of the public, private and scientific sectors. The selection criteria are as follows: the feature of the packaging, the optimization of the transport and the logistics, the communication towards the consumers, the optimization of the process of productivity/manufacturing/filling, the innovation and the global approach of the company.

The Trophéco Awards Ceremony will take place on April 1st 2014. After this event, a specific communication will target the general public.

See here for more information

CNR AND CONAI TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS ON RECYCLING OF PACKAGING WASTE

CONAI - National Packaging Consortium - and CNR, the National Research Council have signed a three year framework agreement aiming to develop research programs that can contribute to the improvement of recycling processes.

To enhance and sustain processes that can make packaging more environmentally friendly, CONAI is strengthening its engagement in scientific research and technological innovation, enabling collaboration with universities, research institutes and study centers on projects for the development of prevention technologies, recycling or recovery of packaging waste. This should be the direction of the total investment of approximately € 800,000 of the Consortium for the next two years.

Two major projects will kick off in the context of the agreement. They will enhance the residual components of the selection process of packaging waste, increasing at the same time the quantities send for recycling.

The first project on the recycling of waste and heterogeneous "multi-material" post-consumer packaging aims to use waste as a source for new composites, fully recycled. The materials that may be looked at in this context are the scraps of cartons polylaminate arising from the pulping process in the paper mill (pulping) of flexible laminated plastic / aluminum post-consumer and polyolefin mixtures.

The second project involves the development of mixed fractions of polyolefin including other post-consumer plastics and the evaluation of the decay of their properties as a result of their repeated use and recycling. The purpose of the project is to develop a recycling process for mechanical heterogeneous mixtures of plastics that make different polymers compatible in order to achieve new materials as an alternative to energy recovery.

In addition to the collaboration with the CNR, CONAI is developing other research projects with universities and other study centers. The goal is improving the recyclability and yields in the recycling of plastic, glass and steel.