



# FOCUS

EUROPEAN PLASTICS CONVERTERS NEWSLETTER

PROVIDES **EuPC** MEMBERS WITH A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF **EuPC** ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

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## Plastic carrier bags proposal

On March 10th 2014, the European Parliament's ENVI Committee voted in favour of the draft Auken Report on a reduction of lightweight plastic carrier bags. This report was in response to the European Commission's proposal of November 4th 2013 to reduce the use of lightweight plastic carrier bags in Europe. **EuPC** has identified four controversial provisions of the Auken report that need to be addressed by the European Parliament at plenary level in April (expected plenary vote April 17th). These four provisions are: i) the option for Member States to ban plastic carrier bags: this option should be removed; ii) erosion of a level playing field for materials: the Auken Report contains de facto exemptions for bio-degradable plastic carrier bags, without any environmental or economic justifications. These exemptions should be removed; iii) thickness of reusable plastic carrier bags: the Auken report defines a reusable plastic carrier bag as starting at 50 microns in thickness. **EuPC** believes this thickness should be reduced to 30 microns in order to be in line with resource efficiency principles; iv) health provisions: the Auken Report goes beyond the scope of the Commission's proposal and contains provisions on endocrine disrupters for all "packaging material", such provisions should be dealt with in separate legislation. **EuPC** is currently advocating for plenary amendments on these four issues and is also raising the issues with EU28 Member States. More info: [padraig.nolan@eupc.org](mailto:padraig.nolan@eupc.org)

## Competitiveness

During the last Annual Meeting of **EuPC** in Bruges last year it was agreed to set up a task force on the competitiveness of the Europe Plastics Industry together with PlasticsEurope. The task force is composed of CEOs and senior industry representatives from both associations. The Task force has met 2 times and is currently drafting a Policy paper to position the Plastics Industry in Europe as a significant employer and important industrial sector. The findings of this Policy paper will be presented during the next **EuPC** Annual Meeting on 5-6 June 2014 in Brussels at The Hotel. Topics which have been addressed during the meetings are energy, labour costs, image, innovation and access to raw materials. The objective is to position the plastics industry in Europe as a key contributor to the reindustrialization of the European Union and to meet with the new EU Commissioners in the next months. More info: [alexandre.dangis@eupc.org](mailto:alexandre.dangis@eupc.org)

## Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

During the week beginning March 10th 2014 the fourth round of trade negotiations between the EU and US trade representatives, on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) took place. This fourth round of negotiations took place in Brussels, following a high-level meeting in Washington (Feb. 17th-18th 2014), between European Trade Commissioner, Mr. Karl De Gucht, and the US Trade Representative Mr. Michael Froman. As a result of an inequitable trade package offered by the US, in terms of tariff reductions, tariffs were not discussed during this fourth round of talks. **EuPC** would not support an inequitable and unbalanced agreement in terms of tariffs. US negotiators are now working on coming up with a more reasonable package on tariffs. During an EU-US Summit on March 26th in Brussels, US President Barack Obama highlighted the potential for economic growth that the TTIP possesses. More info: [padraig.nolan@eupc.org](mailto:padraig.nolan@eupc.org)

## PCE launch

**EuPC** has launched the development of its services company to cope with the growing need for appropriate information and regulatory advice to companies in Europe. Small and larger plastics converting companies need further advice on how to cope with the impact of EU legislation in the environment and they need proper advice from our best EU experts. For this **EuPC** decided to develop a pool of EU plastics experts network under its service company that will be renamed Polymer Comply Europe CVBA based in Brussels. Polymer Comply Europe CVBA will have 3 Divisions: EU Regulatory Compliance, Association Management and Project & Studies. More info: [ruth.colado@eupc.org](mailto:ruth.colado@eupc.org)



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## REACH UPDATE

The REACH process is now heading for the "final" deadline of 31 May 2018 when all remaining substances will have to be registered; so is its "sister" Regulation CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging) as all Mixtures will have to be classified according to the new rules in 2015 - this concerns our members as Recyclers, Compounders and Masterbatcher. Seven more substances were added to the REACH Candidate List in December 2013 (now 151). The Authorization List Annex XIV stands at 22 substances and 5 more substances are being "recommended" for inclusion in 2014. Amongst them are ADCA and DMF. For Azodicarbonamide **EuPC** took the lead in setting up a Consortium for an ADCA Plastics Users Voluntary Commitment as an alternative solution to an Authorisation. Authorisation and Recycling: before the mid-2013 deadline three PVC Recyclers applied for Authorisation to use recycled PVC containing DEHP after the "Sunset Date" on 21.2.2015. After the prescribed "Consultation Period", the Risk Assessment- and the Socio-Economic Assessment Committees of the EU Chemicals Agency (ECHA) now started the examination of the dossier with a "Triologue" meeting between both the examining Committees and the Applicants. More info: [walter.claes@eupc.org](mailto:walter.claes@eupc.org)

## WFO & Marine Litter

WFO has presented its strategic paper for the period 2014-2016. After 3 years of pilot actions in several countries time has come to gear up our common efforts. This WFO strategic plan intends to pave the way to more structured efforts of acting together and identify for clean-up several hotspots in the EU. Our efforts are there to be multiplied in all the countries in the world that have marine litter challenges. The commitment of WFO for the period 2014-2016 is to identify together with NGOs, scientific community, legislators and all other stakeholders yearly 20 environmental marine litter hotspots and to contribute to the cleaning up of these with positive impact for the environment. WFO will also assist in developing regional solutions to local issues on marine litter. WFO calls to all interested stakeholders to join the foundation in order to work together for the restoration of the purity of the oceans.

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## EU Projects

[FP7 SLIPSAFE](#) has started in February 2014, it is a 3-year R&D project which has brought top-level R&D institutes together with value chain partners of the flooring industry. The FP7 SLIPSAFE project will be coordinated by **EuPC** and has found its roots in the common interest of flooring manufacturers to address slip behaviour of conventional resilient flooring under wet conditions. SLIPSAFE may yield process and product innovation, ultimately resulting in flooring that has good hygienic properties but at the same time can avoid slip accidents, for instance in hospitals, supermarkets and residential environments.

[FP7 PLAST4FUTURE](#) is one of the ongoing R&D projects under the NMP scheme of the 7th framework programme, with a strong consortium focussing on realising technology transfer of the cleanroom to injection moulding. This project is aiming at progress in mould manufacturing to use techniques such as nano-imprint lithography to obtain high-level structure definition. One of the main advantages of surface definition is the fact that properties can be achieved (f.e. superhydrophobicity) independent from the use of additives.

[FP7 NANOONSPECT](#) will now go in its final year; NanoOnSpect has resulted in new compounding technology able to use advanced process control based on in-line measurements to better control the resulting properties of polymer nano-composite compounds. **EuPC** is now liaising the NanoOnSpect innovation partners with ETHIC. More info: [wouter.geurts@eupc.org](mailto:wouter.geurts@eupc.org)

## EuPC Annual Meeting 2014

On **5th and 6th June 2014** **EuPC** is going to celebrate its Annual Meeting in Brussels. On the 5th June several market division sessions with high level speakers will be held. The **EuPC** conference on the 6th June will focus on Revitalising Europe and how will plastics contribute. The topic of the afternoon session will be plastics waste management, a potential growth or a challenge for the industry. High level speakers have already confirmed their participation for the conference on the 6th. Networking opportunities with more than 100 participants from the plastics industry will make the event very interesting to attend. SABIC is the official sponsor of the event this year. For more information about registration details please contact [ruta.tamosiunaite@eupc.org](mailto:ruta.tamosiunaite@eupc.org)

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## European Parliament elections 2014

In advance of the upcoming European elections in May, the latest European elections polls indicate that: – The S&D and EPP parties are now neck-and-neck, on 214; – The leftist party S&D are expected to gain approx. 30 seats to become the largest party (184 seats in current Parliamentary mandate, 214 expected after 2014 elections); – The centre right party 'EPP', who are currently the largest party, are expected to lose approx. 52 seats (265 seats in current Parliamentary mandate, 213 expected after 2014 elections); – The centrist ALDE party is expected to lose approx. 18 seats (84 seats in current Parliamentary mandate, 66 expected after 2014 elections); – The Green party is expected to lose approx. 17 seats (55 seats in current Parliamentary mandate, 38 expected after 2014 elections); Finally, in competition between the two leading candidates for the Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker (EPP) is leading Martin Schulz (S&D).

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## EuPC Calendar Events & Meetings

04-06-2014	EuPC Steering Committee	Brussels - Belgium
05-06-2014	EuPC Annual Meeting Market Divisions	Brussels - Belgium
06-06-2014	EuPC Annual Meeting - GA	Brussels - Belgium
16-09-2014	EuPC Packaging Excom EuPC B&C Excom	Brussels - Belgium
17-09-2014	EuPC Steering Committee	Brussels - Belgium
10-10-2014	EuPC B&C Technical Committee	Brussels - Belgium
15-10-2014	EuPC MEF	Sofia - Bulgaria
16-10-2014	EuPC MEF/PE	Sofia - Bulgaria
25-11-2014	EuPC Packaging Excom	Brussels - Belgium