



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Over the last five years, how have opportunities and challenges changed for recycling companies in the Netherlands?

Transition towards a circular economy and acknowledgment of the central role of our recycling industry has been an enormous opportunity.

Not only for our daily work but also as a hook to get our messages across. Our message about the importance of design for and with recycling, and the importance to ensure the quality of the recyclables in the collection stage. We have 2 linked messages:

- we need to design our products with the end-of-life phase in mind, and
- we need to treat our products in the end-of-life phase with the high value recycling of the materials in mind. That's the simple and beautiful essence of the Circular Economy, that apparently has been hard to understand by both policy makers and producers. But by repeating these two linked messages at every table during the last couple of years, it is finally sinking in. Especially the message about the importance of quality of the collected materials and establishing/maintaining markets for the recovered materials. The only reason that we separately collect material streams is to be able to re-use or recycle them. Without high quality recyclables and markets for these recyclables the circular economy is an illusion. Our message is now heard and repeated in the political debate. That is a giant leap forward. Our biggest challenge has become the Waste&Chemicals



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legislation. Not just in the Netherlands but in the whole of Europe. We want to achieve a Circular Economy, but what happens right now is that more and more materials are in danger of being reclassified as a 'substance of very high concern' at ultralow thresholds, which will make recycling impossible. All this based on a theoretical approach. It's Kafkaesque that policy makers with no chemical background and knowledge are making decisions and regulations, based on theoretical calculation models by scientists, who have no interest what so ever in real life use, practice and risks. Only by close cooperation in the material chains and a more intensive communication strategy we will be able to turn the tables. We can't afford to wait and think that in the end policy makers will be rational enough to not let the unthinkable happen.

## If you had a Christmas wish for the recycling industry, what would it be?

Only one wish?!? I have a huge wish list.... But for many years already I carry the following wish for our industry: Recognition of recyclables as the high valuable 'secondary raw material' that it really is instead of 'waste', with the End-of-Waste status granted to all these valuable resources.

And recognition for recycling industry as the centre piece and fundamental pillar for the Circular Economy, and a powerful tool in reducing CO2 emissions and saving energy.

## 2019 is coming to an end, could you name three main priorities EuRIC should tackle in the new year?

In the last couple of years EuRIC has done a tremendous job in establishing a solid position in Brussels with only a very small team, tackling so many issues.

Again for 2020 the challenges are superfluous, and then we do not yet know in what way the European Green Deal may affect our business and in what way we will be able to take an essential role in these plans of the Commission.

But besides that, in my opinion the top 3 priorities are the following 'usual suspects':

1. Advocacy of a Risk based approach for Waste and Chemicals
2. Advocacy of Design for and with Recycling
3. Advocacy of Design for Safety (discarded lithium batteries are an enormous threat for the insurability and continuity of our industry, due to the fire hazard. To reduce this threat the whole chain - including the EEE- and battery producers - needs to take their responsibility and not turn away from the huge problems and threats that these lithium batteries are causing in the recycling industry).

Let me finish by wishing all my colleagues at the national associations, EuRIC's board members and the EuRIC secretariat a wonderful Christmas time! Hope to see you all in good health and a good mood in 2020!

## EURIC ACTIVITIES

### EuRIC speaks at a high-level workshop to promote steel scrap in steelmaking at [COP25 in Madrid](#)

Photo: Jesper Kansbod, Hybrit



Christer Forsgren, Chair of EuRIC Waste & Chemicals Task Force, participated in a high-level side event on fossil-free for steel production using the Hybrit process at the COP25 in Madrid. While the debate focused on fossil-free hydrogen for primary steel production to achieve climate objectives set up by the Paris Agreement, Mr. Forsgren stressed the substantial environmental benefits of using steel scrap to produce steel in Europe. A recent study made by the Fraunhofer IMWS for the BDSV finds out that using steel scrap collected and processed in Europe to produce steel corresponds to the CO2 savings of the emissions from the entire

automobile fleet in France, Great Britain and Belgium combined. Among the distinguished speakers who participated to this high-level debate were the Swedish Minister for Environment & Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister, the Director General, DG CLIMA, European Commission and the CEO of LKAB.

### **EuRIC visits Melosch Recycling / December 2019 / Pinneberg**

EuRIC Policy Officer Julia Blees visited on 11 December 2019 Melosch Recycling in Pinneberg. ERPA Vice-President Andreas Otto showed the various sorting stages for recovered paper and explained the different steps and their use. EuRIC would like to warmly thank Andreas Otto for the time taken!



### **Textiles site visits with the European Commission / December 2019 / Zulte & Haaksbergen**

EuRIC visited together with representatives from the European Commission two textiles sorting facilities in Belgium as well as one textiles recycling facility in the Netherlands. EuRIC would like to thank the European Commission for taking the time to visit those facilities as well as to Recutex, Eurofrip and Frankenhuis for hosting us!



## **EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS ACTIVITIES**



### **Circular Economy / Raw material extraction & employment / 28 November 2019**

The European Commission [has reported](#) that a more circular economy could reduce global levels of raw material extraction by 10% by 2030. It could also drive a slight increase in overall employment levels, but the types of jobs available would change significantly, moving away from low- and medium-skilled work in the manufacturing and mining sectors and opening up more opportunities for medium and high-skilled jobs in the service sector.

### **Plastic Bags / Long-term study / 28 November 2019**

The European Commission [has reported](#) that European scientists have conducted the first ever long-term study into the breakdown of alternative plastic bags compared to conventional plastic bags, across multiple habitats — open air, soil and sea.

### **Green Deal / 11 December 2019**

The European Commission [has presented](#) its Green deal to the European Parliament — a roadmap for making the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities across all policy areas and making the transition just and inclusive for all. EuRIC has [published](#) and [widely communicated the top 5 priorities](#) of the recycling industry for the period 2019-2024. The timeline of the Green Deal with a Circular Economy Action Plan 2.0 expected for March 2020 is available [here](#).

### **G20 / Report on circular economy finance workshop / 18 December 2019**

The full report on the G20 workshop on 'Sustainable Finance for a Circular Economy', co-organised with Japan on 10 October, in Tokyo [is now available](#) on the European Commission website. The workshop raised awareness on the linkages between the circular economy and sustainable finance – two mutually enabling

policies supporting the required global transformation, as envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

### **EU funds / Support for SMEs**

(i) The European Commission [will launch](#) a new funding program called 'Innovation Fund' that will start with its first call for proposals in 2020. The Innovation Fund will focus on highly innovative technologies and big flagship projects with European value added that can bring on significant emission reductions.

(ii) The European Commission and the European Investment Bank [have announced](#) that ECBF Management GmbH has been selected as an investment advisor for the European Circular Bioeconomy Fund. The Fund aims at providing financing for innovative circular bioeconomy companies and projects in the EU and in countries associated with Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation programme.

(iii) The European Investment Bank (EIB) [is investing](#) up to €61 million in Be-Spoke Capital, a new direct lending platform in Spain. This newly established platform will support Spanish SMEs and Mid-cap companies with long-term financing opportunities that complement the offer of traditional lenders.

(iv) The European Investment Fund (EIF) [is investing](#) 100 million euros to support European SMEs through the October Loan platform. This financing, supported by the Investment Plan for Europe, or Juncker plan, will allow October to finance SMEs with new loans ranging from € 30,000 to € 5 million, in all sectors, France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Germany.

### **Mergers / Commission clears acquisition of Cattierite by Umicore**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Cattierite Holdings Coöperatief U.A. ("Cattierite") of the Netherlands by Umicore, S.A./N.V. ("Umicore") of Belgium. Cattierite is a holding company that indirectly owns and controls Freeport Cobalt Oy ("FCO") of Finland. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9379](#).

### **Mergers / Commission clears acquisition of Environment Development Company by Suez Group, Itochu Corporation and Saudi Fransi Bank**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Environment Development Company Limited ("EDCO"), a Saudi-based company, by SUEZ Group SAS ("Suez"), a company based in France, Itochu Corporation ("Itochu"), a company based in Japan, and Saudi Fransi Capital ("SFC"), owned by Saudi Fransi Bank, both based in Saudi Arabia. Further information is available on the Commission's website, in the [public register](#) of business under number [M.9621](#).

### **Mergers / Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Garching Hochbrück by ALFA Rohstoffhandel, Geiger and Durmin**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Garching Hochbrück Vermögensverwaltung GmbH ("Garching Hochbrück") by ALFA Rohstoffhandel München GmbH ("ALFA Rohstoffhandel"), Geiger GmbH & Co. KG ("Geiger") and Durmin Entsorgung und Logistik GmbH ("Durmin"), all of Germany. More information is available on the Commission's website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9399](#).

### **Meeting on Environment / Outcome / 3 December 2019**

The Council of the European Union [has published](#) the outcome of June meeting on Environment, including a debate on REACH authorisation procedures.

### **Mutual evaluations on environmental crime / Final report / 5 December 2019**

The Council of the European Union [has published](#) the final report on 8th round of mutual evaluations on environmental crime. The evaluation has highlighted that it is essential to define relevant priorities and to adopt a multi-agency approach, with the involvement of different national authorities, and to ensure effective coordination of their efforts on the basis of a strategically-oriented policy.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment / Transboundary Context / 12 December 2019**

The Council of the European Union [has published](#) a Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context during the 8th Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment (Geneva, 26–28 November 2019).



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### **Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2000 / 2 December 2019**

The Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2000 laying down a format for reporting of data on food waste and for submission of the quality check report in accordance with Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council [has been published](#) in the Official Journal of the EU.

### **Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2010 / 3 December 2019**

The Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2010 establishing the best available techniques (BAT) conclusions, under Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, for waste incineration [has been published](#) in the Official Journal of the EU.

### **Various Ecodesign Regulations published / 5 December 2019**

Various Ecodesign Regulations, such as Commission Regulation (EU) 2019/2022 laying down ecodesign requirements for household dishwashers, [have been published](#) in the Official Journal of the EU.

### **Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2079 / 6 December 2019**

The Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/2079 determining quantitative limits and allocating quotas for substances controlled under Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on substances that deplete the ozone layer, for the period 1 January to 31 December 2020 [has been published](#) in the Official Journal of the EU.



### **Circular Economy / European Standards / 12 December 2019**

CENELEC [has published](#) an article on European standards contributing to implementation of circular economy. It states that the European Commission has recognised that European Standards are essential complementing tools to EU legislation for a circular economy, supporting, among others, the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Regulations.

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