



## PRESS RELEASE

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COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE    COMUNICATO STAMPA

### **The EQAR Congress 2011 „Recycling of Building Materials in Europe“ held in Brussels shows that there is need for action**

On May 26/27, 2011 the European Quality Association (EQAR) held a congress on the subject „Recycling of Building Materials in Europe“. In the presence of numerous participants from many EU member states Manfred Wierichs, President of EQAR, demanded to make intensified efforts for reaching more efficiency of resources in the field of mineral building materials.

Jo Leinen, Chairman of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament underlined that climate protection, efficiency of resources and recycling range among the priority targets of the European Union. Reuse and recycling are the key to efficiency of resources. In view of the quantities of waste Leinen pointed to the importance of recycling of building materials to reach the EU targets.

Also the representatives of the EU Commission underlined the importance of recycling of building materials to avoid waste, to protect the resources and to preserve natural and landscape areas in Europe in the end. The EU Commission estimates that so far only 50 % of the 300 to 700 million tons of mineral construction and demolition waste produced throughout Europe a year are recycled. It is the target of the EU to achieve a recycling rate of at least 70 % for building and demolition waste.

In the view of the EU Commission market incentive systems such as e.g. a dumping tax could be useful to promote recycling of building materials and to increase the recycling rate. In addition, the EU Commission thinks public clients to be under obligation to use preferably recycled building materials if they are technologically suited and ecologically compatible.

As the presentations given by various EU member states show the level of mineral recycling is extremely different in the individual member states. However, altogether still essential efforts will have to be made to reach the target set by the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) and to recycle at least 70 % of the mineral wastes. Thus, according to the knowledge of the EU Commission the recycling rate of construction and demolition waste is still below 20 % in some of the EU member states. Up to the year 2014 the EU Commission would like to evaluate to which extent the Waste Framework Directive will have been implemented.

Furthermore, the competition between recycled building materials and primary building materials was discussed. In this connection the demand for market incentives for recycling of building materials was raised. In Great Britain it was e. g. possible to essentially increase the recycling rate by adopting a special dumping fee.

Further presentations examined the state of European standardization for recycled building materials and the responsibility of the building product industry. The EU Commission created a framework for uniform product standards defining the technological properties of primary as well as of recycled building materials. Apart from that EU standards for considering ecologically relevant materials of content are being prepared.

*The complete congress materials will be soon available on the EQAR homepage under [www.eqar.info](http://www.eqar.info).*