



EUROPEAN CHEMICAL  
REGIONS NETWORK

# ECRN Inside News

2009

February Edition

## Dear members and friends of the ECRN,

First of all I thank all of you who participated in our February events in Brussels and Milan for your contribution!

We had a challenging program for the beginning of the year with the fine-tuning of the planning for 2009, the organization of our Parliamentary Evening and our General Assembly.

Our Permanent Working Group meeting in Milan was an excellent start with fruitful discussion of our plans including the strategy to address the new elected European Parliament and the new Commission with a position paper and concrete actions like our planned Parliamentary Evening on the 18<sup>th</sup> November. Our Lombardian partners welcomed us with a remarkable program including a networking dinner with representatives from Federchimica and a highly interesting visit to Mapei industry.

Already our Parliamentary Evening on the 18<sup>th</sup> February was a success: We welcomed about 10 MEPs and representatives from

industry, Commission and our member regions in the excellent location Scotland Europa Conference Center in Brussels. On the 19<sup>th</sup> we continued with our General Assembly in which we took all necessary decisions to lead our network to a successful year. From the Secretariat, we look especially forward to cooperate closely with our new elected Vice-President Massimo Buscemi from Lombardy region.

We thank our host and member region Scotland for the excellent organization, support and hospitality during these two days and highly appreciate this first opportunity to contribute to our network!

Best wishes,

**Michael Hack**

Director of the ECRN Network  
Secretariat



*ECRN Team at the General Assembly meeting*

ECRN

February 2009

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EUROPEAN CHEMICAL  
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## ECRN Inside News

# ECRN Affairs

## Successful Parliamentary Evening in Scotland House in Brussels

The Parliamentary Evening of the European Chemical Regions which was hosted by ECRN member region Scotland on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009 had a very good response: Over 60 participants took the chance to get together with MEPs from the chemical regions and to discuss different issues of relevance in the nice atmosphere of the Scotland House Conference Center in Brussels.

Speeches were given by the head of the Scottish Government in Brussels Donald Henderson, ECRN President Dr. Reiner Haseloff, MEP Fiona Hall, Caroline Strain, Head of Scottish

Enterprise's Chemical Sciences Team and ECRN Vice-President Tony Richmond O.B.E.

In the speeches the importance of the regional perspective also for European decision makers was stressed and the participants therefore encouraged to deepen dialogue and cooperation.

We thank our member region Scotland for hosting this event and all other members who helped to make it a success by spreading the invitations to their MEPs!

The next Parliamentary evening is planned for 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009.



## General Assembly Meeting in Brussels, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009

On the morning after the MEP evening, in the Scotland House in Brussels the ECRN General Assembly Meeting 2009 took place. Over 40 representatives from all ECRN member regions attended the most important internal ECRN meeting of the year in order to review the year 2008 and to decide on activities and budget for the year 2009. Furthermore, several elections were held: Dr. Reiner Haseloff was re-elected ECRN President and after a proposal of Vice-President Karl-Uwe Bütöf to increase the number of Vice-Presidents from two to three which was unanimously ac-

cepted by the Assembly, Mr. Massimo Buscemi from Lombardy was elected third ECRN Vice-President (apart from Mr. Bütöf and Tony Richmond). The detailed minutes from the General Assembly meeting will be provided.

From the Secretariat, we congratulate our President Dr. Haseloff and our new Vice-President Mr. Buscemi to their elections.

The ECRN thanks all members for their participation and input and we are looking forward to another successful year for our organization!



*ECRN MEP evening*



*General Assembly meeting*

## ECRN Affairs

### Successful first PWG meeting of 2009 in Milan

On 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009, the first PWG meeting of the year 2009 took place in Milan, hosted by ECRN member region Lombardy.

After a report of activities given by the Director Michael Hack, the ECRN events planned for the first half of 2009 and especially the agenda of the upcoming General Assembly meeting were discussed and prepared. The participation of Assessore Massimo Buscemi at the meeting was especially appreciated. In the afternoon, a very interesting visit to Milano-founded Mapei industry gave the opportunity to have an in-

sight into this long-established Italian company producing building materials.

On the evening before the PWG meeting, the partners in Milan had organized a networking dinner with several representatives from Federchimica where the participants from the chemical regions had the chance of interesting informal discussions and exchanges of experience with the Italian Federation of the Chemical Industry.

The ECRN thanks our member region Lombardia for the great hospitality and all participants for their input!

### ECRN Secretariat organises informal meeting on "Cooperation for skills development: the social partners, industry and the regions working together" on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009

On the afternoon before the MEP evening, the ECRN Secretariat had invited representatives from the European Social Partners, regions and academia to an informal brain-storming on topics of common relevance which could be pushed forward in the future as cooperation projects. Catherine Beudon from the European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG), Reinhard Reibsch from the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation (EMCEF) as well as representatives from CEFIC and several ECRN member

regions joined the debate. Ideas were raised and discussed and especially two topics were identified which will be followed further in June at the next meeting in Brussels: aging society and the consequences of the financial crisis.

A more detailed report on the meeting will be sent to our members via email. For any questions concerning the meeting and the issues discussed, please feel free to contact the ECRN Secretariat.



**Regione Lombardia**



*PWG meeting participants*

## ECRN Affairs

### Conference update: Delivering the HLG results in the regions: Follow-up Conference to the High Level Group on the competitiveness of the European chemical industry on 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> April

The Follow-up Conference to the HLG which is organized by the ECRN and its member region Ústí under the patronage of the European Commission and the Czech EU Presidency is coming closer. For detailed information

on the agenda, speakers, location and registration for the Conference, a website is being created available under [www.HLGconference09.cz](http://www.HLGconference09.cz)



Delivering the HLG results in the regions:  
Follow-up Conference to the High Level Group  
on the Competitiveness of the European  
Chemical Industry  
April 16 - 17, 2009  
Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic

## Welcome Message

Dear Partners and Associates,

I'm starting this month a new experience as an intern within the ECRN Brussels office that will last until the end of April.

I come from Italy and I'm in Belgium (for the second time in my life) since one year to collect the experience for working in the international environment, more specifically in the external relations and communication fields.

ECRN is offering me the opportunity to improve my skills in the events preparation, domain in which I had some experience with NATO, by organizing and preparing some important appointments such as the MEP evening and the Ústí conference of next April. Moreover, I have

the chance to prepare some articles and to edit the internal news, task that has been since the very beginning extremely interesting for me, and which fits with my university studies.

It is very interesting to see from inside how a European organization works, and to widen my knowledge by operating in a new sector, like the chemical and industrial is for me. I am really satisfied by these first weeks of internship and the future promise to be even more challenging.

I am grateful to the ECRN team for giving me this unique chance and I wish you all a good reading!

Best regards,

Silvia Paparella



*Brussels*



## Press clippings

### European Annual Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW)

The Third edition of Europe's annual conference on sustainable energy took place in Brussels and in other European cities, such as Nuremberg, Milan, and Maastricht, from Monday 9 to Friday 13 February 2009. It was organized by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy and Transport, the European Institutions and major stakeholders concerned with sustainable energy, in the framework of the Sustainable Energy Europe 2005-2008 Campaign (SEE), aimed to raise public awareness and to promote sustainable energy production.

On Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February, the representatives of over 350 cities, including some municipalities from non-EU countries, signed an important commitment at the Hemicycle of the European Parliament, the "Covenant of Mayors". The agreement aims to reduce CO2 emissions in urban areas, which are the main consumers of energy, beyond the 20% (over the 1990 levels) planned by the European Community. The projects will be presented before February 2010 to the European Commission, who will assist the signatory cities also by creating a "financial facility" with the support of the European Investment Bank (EIB), in order to facilitate loans for energy efficiency plans.

Furthermore the Commission is investigating, as mentioned by Karl Kellner, an adviser for new and renewable sources of energy, energy efficiency and innovation at the EU executive,

how to improve the efficiency of existing funds and how to promote private funding for investments in cleaner energies.

The conference also boasted an awards ceremony for the most outstanding projects in the field of sustainable energy from the areas of local governments and authorities, private companies and associations. Prizes has been assigned to PlaNet Finance Group (France), for its project enabling rural communities in Bangladesh and Indonesia to gain access to micro-financing schemes for solar electricity systems, to PE International (Germany), for its fleet of hydrogen-powered buses, to the civic architecture specialist Sonae Sierra (Portugal), seeking to incorporate sustainable energy practices into the development and management of buildings, to Mobiel 21 (Belgium), for its promotional communication, to Consorzio Produttori Agricoli Acque Minerali Umbre s.r.l. (Italy), producing energy using local wood and renewable agricultural biomass, and to Thurrock Energy Partnership, Climate Energy Ltd. (UK) which encourages energy efficiency initiatives at local level.

For further information upon this event, please consult the official EUSEW website (<http://www.eusew.eu/>) and:

<http://euobserver.com>

<http://www.euractiv.com>

<http://ec.europa.eu/news>



*Third edition of EUSEW*



*SEE promotes sustainable energy production*

## Press Clippings

### EU Court of Justice looks at REACH

According to the article published on the website of the Health and Safety Department of the European Trade Union Institute, proceedings in the European Court of Justice opened on 27 January on a point of law referred by UK's High Court concerning certain provisions of REACH.

Four firms - SPCM (based in France), CH Erbslöh KG (Germany), Lake Chemicals and Minerals Limited (United Kingdom) and Hercules (based in the USA) – issued in 2007 proceedings against the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to force a referral by the UK's High Court to the ECJ for preliminary rulings on three questions. The High Court passed its judgment on 11 October 2007, agreeing to refer only one of the three questions, the one related to article 6 (3) of REACH requiring monomers to be registered.

The European Commission originally suggested that polymers, which are chemicals composed of repeating structural units of low molar mass, known as monomers, should be registered, but with certain exemptions. Toxic monomers used in

the chemical industry include vinyl chloride monomer, styrene, acrylamide and butadiene. The registration of polymers was dropped from the final version of REACH through a general exemption, laid down in article 2 (9); but monomers still have to be registered, and the duty applies to all polymers if two conditions are met: the polymer consists of a minimum percentage of monomers, and the total quantity of monomers ending up in the final polymer, either unbound or chemically bound to the polymer, makes up one tonne or more a year.

The applicant firms sustain that applying this requirement to all monomers would be irrational, discriminatory and disproportionate. DEFRA believes that there is actually a direct contradiction between article 2 (9) and article 6 (3) of REACH and stands a reasonable chance of success at the ECJ, but clarifies that "the UK government does not necessarily agree that the claim is valid".

More information available at:  
<http://chemicalwatch.com/1611>

### EU-China agreements on Intellectual Property Rights and illicit imports of chemical substances

Commissioner László Kovács, responsible for Taxation and Customs Union, signed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January an Action Plan with the Chinese Ambassador

Song to strengthen the cooperation on protecting Intellectual Property Rights. (...)

*Turn page please*



*European Court of Justice*



*EU is one of the world's main sources of synthetic drugs*

## Press clippings

*(Continue)*

They also signed an agreement to improve the control on trade and prevent the diversion of drug precursors (chemicals that are essential to produce narcotic drugs).

Commissioner Kovács commented: "China is aligning its customs legislation to the EU rules, but despite this, it remains a main source of fake goods or illicit drug precursors entering the EU. I am convinced that today's cooperation agreements will contribute towards providing better protection for EU citizens".

Drug precursors are inoffensive chemical substances legally used in a wide variety of consumer products. However, they also may be misused for the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs such as cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and methamphetamines. The EU is reported as one of the

world's main sources of synthetic drugs, and China is considered the main source of illicit imports of drug precursors to EU, where they are not legally available.

The project agreed includes creating a working group to study the flow of counterfeit goods, exchange of information and officials, cooperation between key ports and airports, and developing partnerships with the private sector in China in order to better target suspect shipments. The agreement shows EU's willingness to support China's efforts to implement effective legislation to combat counterfeiting and prevent drug precursors from being diverted from legal trade.

For information consult:  
<http://www.eubusiness.com>



*Commissioner László Kovács*

## Agence Europe - Summary

### Birth of the International Renewable Energy Agency

The International and developing include Brazil, China, Renewable Energy economies in adopt- the United States and Agency was finally ing renewable ener- Japan. born in Bonn on the gies, and will promote From more informa- 26<sup>th</sup> of January with promoting transfers tion on this article, the signing of its of technology, techni- please consult the founding treaty by cal assistance and Agence Europe over 75 countries, in fund raising from website: including most of the EU north to south. Not [www.agenceurope.com](http://www.agenceurope.com) member states. IRENA dependent on the UN, will support developed IRENA does not yet



*IRENA embraces  
over 75 countries*

## Agence Europe - Summary

### Amendment to the EU legislation on dangerous chemicals

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, more than six hundred chemical were added to the list of dangerous substances for human health under the EU Directive 67/548/EEC aiming to equalize the national measures of classification. More than 200

new chemicals have been identified as carcinogens, potentially responsible for genetic damage or affecting human reproduction. The technical adjustment to the directive, coherent with the REACH regulation on the assessment

and authorisation of chemicals, has been followed by the entry into force of the EU regulation on the clarification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures.

[www.agenceurope.com](http://www.agenceurope.com)



*600 chemicals listed as dangerous for human health*

### New directive on industrial emissions

The EU Parliament's Environment Committee has adopted a new draft directive on industrial emissions on 27<sup>th</sup> of January, which recast seven existing directives, giving go-ahead to streamlining the legislation and strengthening of its measures to further reduce industrial pollution.

The limit fixing procedure has been amended in accordance with the more stringent emission val-

ues suggested by the European Commission for certain categories of combustion installations and pollutants. The emissions caps will be set by the European Commission, under request of MEPs, through the comitology procedure, which will reduce the wide use of exceptions that is currently responsible for distorting competition.

The best available techniques (BAT) will be used to give

greater flexibility to the authorities issuing permits, which should be adapted in order to suit local circumstances. The MEPs support the Commission's proposal to regulate medium-sized combustion installations (between 20 MW and 50 MW), but want the installations used for less than 500 hours a year to be exempt.

[www.agenceurope.com](http://www.agenceurope.com)



*New EU directive on industrial emissions*

### 4,000 EU industries without permits

Last January the European Commission announced that it had begun procedures against member states that had allowed over 4,000 industrial installations to infringe the European directive on Integrated Pollution

Prevention and Control (IPPC). The directive required the issue of the permits, their review or update, by October 2007, for all industrial installations that were in operation before October 1999. Eight countries

(Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain) received reasoned opinions, the second stage in the procedure before the referral to the Court of Justice. [www.agenceurope.com](http://www.agenceurope.com)



*IPPC infringed by 4,000 industries*



**European  
Chemical Regions  
Network**



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## **ECRN Inside News**

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*ECRN Office in Brussels*

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