



## European Minerals Day 2015: Because Minerals Matter!

Help us raise awareness about the importance of raw materials both to sustain the needs of today's society and to move towards a low-carbon, circular economy. Join the Open Day where production plants will welcome and interact with the public about their activity on 25-27 September 2015!

**European Minerals Day**

**We Care about...**

- Biodiversity
- Resource Efficiency
- Innovation
- Regional Development
- Safety

**Discover minerals!**

Find out more about a sector that affects every area of your life and is at the heart of a sustainable society. Take part in the pan-European quarry and plant open days!

**An initiative by the European minerals sector**  
With the support of the European Commission

[www.mineralsday.eu](http://www.mineralsday.eu)

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## Priority Issues

### Biocidal Products Regulation

#### Ownership of ReachCentrum & Consortium

As communicated on 21<sup>st</sup> of April to all interested parties, the ownership of ReachCentrum – a consultancy created by the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) to help companies with the implementation of both REACH and the Biocides (BPR) regulations and the administrative management of consortia – has recently changed from CEFIC to ERM. Subsequently, ARCHE Consulting – providing technical expertise for authorisation procedures for both REACH and the BPR – put an end to its collaboration with ReachCentrum.

It ensues from this that ARCHE Consulting will take care of the entire consortium management – both administrative and technical – for the registration of salt under art. 95 of the BPR by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

#### National Competent Authorities' Meeting

At their last meeting, Member States Competent Authorities (CA) did not reach a decision on the proposal by the European Commission to enact a transitional status

(‘period of grace’) until 2018 for precursors such as salt.

At the meeting of 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> May 2015, Member State Competent Authorities discussed the guidance documents that were published by the Commission earlier in February\*. The next CA meeting is scheduled for September 2015 (precise date to be announced).

\*The guidance documents include concern [SMEs](#), the [Letter of Access](#), [Data Sharing](#), and [Consortia](#).

#### EuSalt Action

EuSalt has carried out actions towards Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in order to raise awareness about the unlevelled playing field emerging from the implementation of the BPR and, more specifically, the threats bearing on SMEs due to incidental market restrictions. Likewise, actions were carried out towards different Member States Competent Authorities so as to draw attention on competitive disadvantages and have the latter effectively addressed in CA meetings.

### Reform of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme

#### Carbon Market Stability Reserve

The European Parliament and the Council of the EU have reached an [agreement](#) on the Market Stability Reserve (MSR). The MSR is to operate as a bank for carbon emission allowances, withdrawing from or releasing allowances on the carbon market so as to maintain a high carbon price. This will directly affect companies that are required to buy

emission allowances and do not benefit from free emission rights. One of the core points of discussion concerned the starting date of the reserve. Against the Commission proposal for a start in 2021, the two institutions reached a compromise for an earlier start on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

The compromise agreement was endorsed by the Council COREPER (Member States’

ambassadors) on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Likewise, it was adopted by the European Parliament's plenary on 8<sup>th</sup> July. The Council is now to formerly adopt the text before its entry into force.

### Reform of the EU ETS

The MSR constitutes only one element of the EU ETS reform. On 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015, the European Commission has published the proposal for a directive ([COM\(2015\)337](#)) to enhance cost-effective emission reductions and low-carbon investments. In this proposal, the European Commission stated its commitment to the objectives set out in the 2030 Climate and Energy Framework, i.e. to achieve a "forward-looking climate policy" that would reach the target of 40% emission reduction in 2030 compared with 1990 levels. The consistent objective is to support a high carbon price to play as the main incentive for innovation, technology investments, carbon capture and storage and renewable energy sources developments.

The text proposes amendments to the previous Directive (2003/87/EC) in many respects, including:

- A **reduction of the allowances** placed on the market (consistent with the MSR dispositions): however, since the share of auctioned allowances will remain identical to that of the 2013-2020 period, the reduction will mostly affect emission allowances allocated for free (i.e. carbon leakage sectors).
- Less **carbon leakage**: The proposal intends for a limited list of sectors at risk of carbon leakage (around 50, according to the Commission's estimates). The list is supposed to "reflect industries'

technological capacities and progress over time". In order to determine the sectors that will be deemed at risk of carbon leakage, the Commission will differentiate between those at "high risk" and those at "low risk". While the former will be entitled to receive free allocations, the latter group will be considered able to pass the cost induced by the ETS system onto their product prices.

- **Compensation for indirect costs**: the proposal establishes that "Member States should partially compensate certain installations in sectors or sub-sectors exposed to a risk of carbon leakage and in line with the State Aid rules" due indirect carbon costs passed on in electricity prices, "while maintaining the incentive to save energy". However, the State Aid rules only list a restricted list of sectors entitled to such compensation.
- **Social aspect of the EU ETS**: the trading system is put back into the broader perspective of a "low-carbon economy". For the first time, it openly recognises the social costs of the technological and economic transition by promoting adaptation measures, whereby companies need to promote "skills formation and reallocation of labour affected" by the move towards a "decarbonised economy".

#### Next steps:

- The European Parliament is expected to start discussing the text after summer recess,
- Ministers of the Environment Council will discuss on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

### CEN TC/337 WG1 on De-Icing Standards

Working Group 1 of the CEN TC/337 on De-icing agents and spreading techniques endorsed the draft standard for de-icing agents: sodium chloride on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The standard still recognises a minimum purity requirement of 90% NaCl on dry matter and 3% sulphate content. The German/DIN proposal to introduce a benchmark of de-icing salt above and below 97% purity was rejected by the task force.

Countries willing to establish stricter criteria may do so in a national annex to the standard. WG1 will now send the formal recommendation to the CEN TC/337 for the latter to initiate the plenary vote within the subsequent three months. The CEN TC/337 will then have six months to adopt the standard.

## Environment

### Circular Economy & Resource efficiency

After withdrawing its first proposal for a communication on a circular economy (published in mid-2014), the European Commission (EC) has certified that a “new, more ambitious” proposal will be released by the end of the year. In that view, an [online public consultation](#) was launched on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015 in order to gather stakeholders’ views on a circular economy (Deadline for contributions: **20<sup>th</sup> August 2015**).

The issues of circular economy and resource efficiency – two distinct policy documents – remain high on the EU agenda. Both pursue the objective of decoupling growth and the use of resources. Previous resource efficiency communication (including the [Roadmap to a resource efficient Europe](#)) have supported the shift of taxation from labour to resources in order to foster a more sustainable economy. In this respect discussions have focused on sets of indicators that would allow to measure the evolution of resource use and efficiency. In addition, the circular economy package aims to support the reduction of waste and the

increase of recycling’s contribution to the economy.

### Circular economy debate

In a [debate](#) with Dutch MEP Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Director-General Karl Falkenberg (DG Environment) emphasised the Commission’s will to focus not only on “producing legislation”, but on its implementation. The EC advocated for quality recycling instead of quantitative targets for it is imperative to take into account and comply with safety considerations. The potential presence of pollutants and others substances that might present a risk to health and the environment is a serious issue and imposes a responsible approach to recycling. Therefore, the Commission will champion high quality recycling targets, rather than quantity targets.

In addition, the EC is willing to put more focus on reducing waste production, in the first place, in comparison with recycling.

### **Report of the European Parliament (ENVI Committee)**

Meanwhile, the European Parliament has adopted its [Resolution](#) on the matter at the plenary of 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015. Although recognising the need for competitive business to the proper functioning of a circular economy, the document requires a reduction in the extraction and use of primary resources and an “absolute decoupling” of resource and growth and set ambitious recycling targets.

“Sustainable sourcing” of raw materials is understood as a reduction of resource consumption in numbers, with the concern that raw material overall in Europe might deplete and in order to maintain resource deposits available in Europe. To that aim, the European Parliament is further calling upon the European Commission to establish by the end of 2015 a dashboard of indicators, including a lead indicator, that will allow to measure resource efficiency at extraction point, as well as throughout the value chain of products. Such indicators should be advocated for at international level, as well.

In addition, the EP Resolution promotes support to secondary raw materials via ensuring a market for the latter. Obtaining quality materials from recycling, whether it may concern nutrients, metals, paper, or else.

### **Position of the Resource Efficiency Alliance**

In light of the debate, participants to the Non-Energy Extractive Industry Platform (NEEIP) – including EuSalt – along with other industrial sectors have joined forces. In a [joint letter](#) addressed to vice-presidents and commissioners of the European Commission, we drew attention to concerns and limitations of the circularity model. Different representatives of the alliance – including EuSalt – met with DG Growth and DG Environment to discuss said position on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Furthermore, the alliance introduced amendments to MEP Pietikäinen’s report, raising awareness about the relevance of raw materials production – besides recycling – to a sustainable economy. Those amendments were unfortunately not taken into account.

## Food & Health

### **Priorities of DG SANTE**

The European Commission’s DG SANTE presented its priorities for 2015. The working programme will focus on two pillars: health and food safety.

1. Health: The EC intends to focus on chronic diseases and their prevention for inaction is associated with economic costs. In this respect, particular attention will go to alcohol, tobacco, and fighting obesity.
2. Food safety: The Commission primary concern lies with the need to prevent food crisis and the recent legislative proposal on GMOs. In particular the case of bacteria *Xylella fastidiosa*, currently is damaging olive trees across Italy and threatening to expand to other countries and other tree plants (citrus, coffee, wine, and so forth), stands as a priority.

DG SANTE further indicated it does not expect to come up with new legislation for this year, and that currently open issues – including

### Organic Production and Labelling

On 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) of the Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) Committee discussed rapporteur Martin Haüsling's [draft report](#) on the Commission's proposal for a regulation on organic production and labelling ([COM\(2014\)180](#)).

The main point of interest for the salt industry concerns whether sea salt is included in the scope of the Regulation – as suggested in the Commission's proposal and supported by a few MEPs – or should be removed from the scope – as suggested by the rapporteur. Another option, as proposed by other MEPs and the

### Mandatory Country of Origin Labelling

The European Commission (DG SANTE) published the [report](#) evaluating the feasibility of extending mandatory country of origin labelling to unprocessed foods, single ingredients and ingredients representing more than 50% of a food on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

The report to SMEs risking being 'adversely hit by additional administrative costs of mandatory origin labelling'. It is based on the [FCEC study](#) (Food Chain Evaluation Consortium) carried out in 2014 and an SME test performed by DG GROW. The Commission's report and stakeholder consultation revealed that food sectors seldom used voluntary origin labelling (mostly solely for high value segments of the production). In addition, it appears that the consumer's interest in origin labelling is moderate and outshone by the influence of price, taste, use

mandatory country of origin labelling of foods – was not priority topic at the moment.

compromise reach by the Council of the EU, would be to include "salt" as a whole.

However, parliamentary debates did not address this issue. Discussions focused on the establishment or not of threshold value for pesticide residues, the status of mixed holdings, GMOs, and the case of seeds.

The vote of the AGRI committee on the text was initially planned to take place in September 2015. However, judging from the diverging opinions on a numerous issues and the 1322 amendments tabled, it is likely that new discussions will take place after the summer recess.

by dates, and appearance on consumption behaviours. Among consumers interested in COOL, information on the country of production prevails. The rationale behind that lies in the ability to 'favour national or local production over other food origins' for a majority of respondents.

Four scenarios were tested:

1. Voluntary origin labelling depending on the consumer's demand (which would have no impact on food prices);
2. Mandatory origin labelling (EU/non-EU) would only be satisfying to the extent that it guarantees 'safer or better quality food' compared to non-EU countries (which is uncertain);
3. Mandatory country of origin labelling is deemed the most satisfying (from a consumer perspective), but also costly;

4. Geographic entities (such as regions) are not preferable to consumers.

According to the Commission's report, scenario 3 is not judged suitable, although it would most correspond to consumers' demand, due to the costs of adaptation measures it would require from businesses (sourcing practices, traceability, production processes, packaging and marketing). That would result in higher production costs and, therefore, higher prices, as well as favour a

preference for national products. On the other hand, although less disruptive to production practices, scenario 2 was deemed of little value and cost-effectiveness. Particular attention was paid to the impact of such scenarios on SMEs, which is a main concern to the Commission.

The report is to be discussed at the Council (next Agriculture and Fisheries Council: 16<sup>th</sup> June) and the European Parliament .

## News

### Salt and the European Parliament

MEPs rose a few questions about salt over the past months:

#### **Risks of extracting salt from the Waddenzee**

Dutch MEP, Anja Hazkamp, raised the issue of threats to the protected site of Waddenzee – recognised Natura 2000 and World Heritage site, host to a variety of protected species and migrant birds. The reason for that lies in a license granted to a company to extract salt beneath the body of water, which would result in subsidence and severe damages to the site.

The issue was raised to the European Commission (EC) enquiring whether there had been any infringement of the Natura 2000 framework and the Environmental Liability Directive on the part of the Dutch ministry for granted said authorisation. Likewise, questions aim to identify the liability of the two stakeholders mentioned.

#### **Environmental and health concerns at the abandoned Vallone mine in Caltanissetta**

Italian MEP, Ignazio Corrao, raised health and environmental concerns with regard to the site once used to extract sulphur, and later on salt. A surge in health issues in the inhabitants of neighbouring villages led to question the state of the abandoned production site. Reported large quantities of asbestos and hazardous waste left in the open are worrying.

In response, the European Commission requested information from the Italian competent authorities on measures taken to prevent damage to human health and the environment.

#### **Iodised salt and fraud**

Quoting a report from the University of Cadiz, Spanish MEP, Francisco Sosa Wagner, denounced the low iodine content of imported salt. Said report hints that much of the salt

imported in Spain does not meet the minimum iodine concentrations for iodised food salt.

In its response to Mr. Sosa Wagner, the EC mentioned the existence of Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006 on vitamins and minerals that may

be added to foods. It further stipulated that Member States are to enforce the Regulation properly and carry out the necessary controls. On its side, the Commission has recently allocated additional resources to the enforcement of food-related legislation.

### Better Regulation and Law

As the European Commission is committed to cutting red tape and already withdrew some legislative proposals – including the circular economy package that was published last June 2014 – the European Court of Justice is challenging this “right to withdraw legislation”.

The Court put forward conditions that shall be satisfied for that:

- Transparency: The Commission must inform the other legislative institutions about the motivations of any withdrawal,

- Those motivations shall be supported by cogent evidence,
- When withdrawal follows on the intention of the Council and the European Parliament to amend the proposal, the Commission needs to prove it duly considered the concerns of both institutions.

The legal opinion addresses issues of perceived excessive authority from the Commission in its legislative prerogatives. This puts some limits to cutting red tape.

### EU Consultations

#### EU Nature Legislation

The European Commission (DG Environment) is carrying out a [consultation](#) on the current EU nature conservation legislation and its implementation. This ‘fitness check’ aims to assess whether the legislation is ‘proportionate and fit for purpose’, without considering possible future changes to the legislation.

Two directives are in the focus:

- The Birds Directive, the objective of which is to protect all wild bird species and maintain their population in the EU, and
- The Habitats Directive, introducing similar measures to maintain and restore natural habitats (around 230 types) and species.

Deadline for comments was **24<sup>th</sup> July 2015**.

#### Consultation on a Circular Economy

The European Commission (DG Environment) has launched a [consultation on the Circular Economy](#). This consultation precedes the Commission’s deliverable on a “new, more ambitious circular economy strategy” whose aim it is to transform the European Union into a “competitive, resource-efficient”, low-carbon economy, where waste is properly dealt with and minimised.

Stakeholders are invited to provide their view on how such an objective can be achieved while promoting jobs and growth at the same time.

EuSalt will provide its views on the issue following internal consultation.

Deadline for comments: **20<sup>th</sup> August 2015**.

## Publications

- [EU Employment and Social situation Report](#), Quarterly Review, March 2015,
- Cohen-Shacham E. et al. (2015), ‘Using the ecosystem services concept to analyse stakeholder involvement in wetland management’, *Wetland Ecology and Management*, vol. 23(2), pp. 241-256 ([link](#)),
- Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council regarding the mandatory indication of the country of origin or place of provenance for unprocessed foods, single ingredients, and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food ([link](#)),
- [Joint letter](#) of the extractive industry on a circular economy, addressed to EU Commissioners and Vice-Presidents of the European Commission, April 2015,
- IMA-Europe Annual Report 2014 ([link](#)),
- [McKinsey report](#) on “Productivity in mining operations: Reversing the downward trend”, May 2015,
- New Latvian regulation laying down new requirements for the safety, quality, classification and labelling of food grade salt (link to the European Commission’s [notification database](#)), and
- The programme *Saving Lives at Birth: A Grand Challenge for Development* announced four seed grant nominees, among which the project of the University of Toronto entitled: “Development of quadruple fortified salt for the simultaneous delivery of iron, folic acid, vitamin B12 and iodine” (see the [press release](#)).

## Upcoming Events

<b>31 Aug.-2 Sept.</b>	International Water Association Resource Recovery Conference (Ghent, Belgium)	<b>15 Oct.</b>	Climate and Energy Outlook, Friends of Europe
<b>1 Sept.</b>	European Minerals Day Steering Committee Meeting	<b>19 Oct.</b>	European Environmental Bureau Conference
<b>3 Sept.</b>	<b>EuSalt Board Working Group on EuSalt’s Priorities</b>	<b>20-21 Oct.</b>	EFLA Council & Conference
<b>23 Sept.</b>	<b>EuSalt Safety WG Conference Call</b>	<b>18 Nov.</b>	NEEIP Forum (Thon Hotel, Brussels)
<b>25-27 Sept.</b>	European Minerals Day 2015 – Open Days	<b>19-20 Nov.</b>	VKS Herbstagung
<b>Sept.</b>	NEEIP Meeting (tba)	<b>7-11 Dec.</b>	European Minerals Day Exhibition at the European Parliament (tbc)

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