

Green Dot 2010: Green Economy in Action

5th International PRO EUROPE Congress • Brussels • 7-8 October 2010



PRESS RELEASE

PRO EUROPE Congress brings recycling to the next level

With unprecedented participation by industry, policymakers and academia, the 5th International Congress in Brussels shows that a resource efficient Europe is possible

Brussels, 11 October – The debate on recycling and waste management took a substantial step to a higher level during the Fifth International PRO EUROPE Congress, “Green Dot 2010: Green Economy in Action”, which was held in Brussels on 7 and 8 October and is set to influence the near future of recycling policies in the European Union.

With around 700 participants from 37 countries, 34 panel experts intervening in conferences and roundtables, six dedicated workshops, 450 organisations represented - including multinational corporations and SMEs - the two-day summit was a unique occasion to bring together representatives from the industry, institutions and academia, pooling efforts to tackle the major challenge laying ahead for the industry: achieving a global standard of the producer responsibility principle, 20 years after it was first introduced.

Solutions to outstanding issues in today’s waste management process were discussed and tested throughout the Congress’ intensive programme. From multi-stakeholder platforms to innovative packaging design and environmental education, it is now clear that recycling in the future will hold a role for everyone, from responsible consumers up to nanotechnology engineers and policymakers.

The PRO EUROPE Congress witnessed the participation of high level speakers, including **Janez Potočnik**, European Commissioner for the Environment, **Mrs. Joke Schauvliege**, Chair of the Environmental Council under the Belgian EU Presidency, **Karl Falkenberg**, Director General DG Environment, European Commission, **Michael Braungart**, Co-Founder McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry and **Jef Colruyt**, Chairman Colruyt Group.

Joachim Quoden, Managing Director of PRO EUROPE, said: *“The Fifth PRO EUROPE International Congress has shown that recycling and waste management have now moved to the next level, as an effect of 20 years of successful implementation of the producer responsibility principle. During these two days, we have shared experiences from all of Europe and beyond, thanks to our guests from North America, Australia, Brazil, China and Israel. Our conclusion, which I announce with extreme pleasure, is that a resource efficient Europe is possible”.*

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment, said: *“Eco-industries are at the heart of the transformation we must achieve through Europe 2020. They are the 21st century drivers for growth and jobs, but they are also producing what we call “enabling” technologies and services. The green economy – our eco-tech companies – are the basis for greening the economy as a whole. PRO EUROPE and its members can take some credit for setting up the structures that put recycling firmly on the map.”*

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About PRO EUROPE

PRO EUROPE s.p.r.l. (Packaging Recovery Organisation Europe), founded in 1995, is the umbrella organisation for the packaging and packaging waste recovery schemes which mainly use the "Green Dot" trademark. PRO EUROPE acts as the authoritative voice and common policy platform for its members, representing the interests of all packaging recovery and recycling organisations mainly using the "Green Dot".

Notes to editors

- PRO EUROPE's members span 33 countries: 26 Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom), 2 candidate countries (Turkey, Croatia), Serbia, Norway, Iceland, Ukraine and Canada.
- 33 compliance schemes active in 33 countries in 2010 of which 26 use the Green Dot.
- About 170,000 companies are contributing licensees/members of the PRO EUROPE member systems.
- About 400 million inhabitants have access to separate collection financed by PRO EUROPE member systems.
- About 32,000 tonnes of packaging have been recovered by PRO EUROPE member systems in 2009.
- More than 25 million tones of CO2 equivalent has been saved by the work of PRO EUROPE member systems in 2009.
- About 460 billion packaging items are labeled yearly with the Green Dot, a registered trademark on more than 170 countries.

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- PRO EUROPE is headquartered in Brussels. The President is Henri Meiresonne (Fost Plus, Belgium), the General Manager is Joachim Quoden.