



PRESS RELEASE

Effective recycling policies advance Europe's Green Economy

*"Green Dot 2010: Green Economy in Action" - 5th International PRO EUROPE Congress
7-8 October 2010, Brussels*

Brussels, 7 October - Some 700 industry leaders, environmental experts and politicians from across Europe gather in Brussels to assess 20 years of the 'producer responsibility principle' and to discuss what it will take to 'green' the economy.

Effective recycling policies based on producer responsibility are the key talking point at the 5th International PRO EUROPE Congress. Producer responsibility is now a key plank of EU environment policy and PRO EUROPE is pleased to welcome **Janez Potočnik**, European Commissioner for Environment, as patron of this year's Congress.

Commissioner Potočnik said:

"Waste management and producer responsibility systems have an important part to play in putting Europe on the path to resource efficient and low-carbon growth. Resource efficiency is a central theme of my mandate and therefore the work of PRO EUROPE is of particular interest to me. PRO EUROPE has succeeded in making the "Green Dot" a widespread concept, and this is exactly what we mean by achieving tangible results in the context of EU policies and frameworks. It is essential that industry continues its efforts to implement effectively EU packaging legislation as well as the producer responsibility principle."

Henri Meiresonne, Chair of PRO EUROPE commented:

"Twenty years after the implementation of the first producer responsibility principle for packaging waste in Europe, we are now heading towards a Green Economy. Today we can proudly say that PRO EUROPE is the point of reference for recycling in the EU: through PRO EUROPE systems, about 400 million people today have access to separate collection, which is where the whole recycling process starts. The basis of the success is certainly, that the Extended Producer responsibility systems are run by the industry, for the industry, on a not-for-profit basis. Only such organisations can ensure that at the operational level, the collection, sorting and recycling is done in the most efficient way, economically and environmentally."

Packaging recycling is leading the process towards a green economy today, when there is an urgent need for alternatives to our highly energy-consuming practices. However, there is still a need to bring all countries across Europe up to speed, by committing to high standards and building up efficient systems, in collaboration with local authorities.

This year's Congress welcomes guests from all over the world, from North America to Brazil and Israel. PRO EUROPE is ready to lead the way and promote best practices in the direction of extended producer responsibility. This will involve raising regulatory compliance issues in view of achieving environmental improvements, encouraging sustainable consumption and production amongst industry, society, and policy, and promoting environmental education and citizenship.

Other key Speakers at the Congress will also include **Mrs. Joke Schauvliege**, Chair of the Environmental Council under the Belgian EU Presidency, **Karl Falkenberg**, Director

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General DG Environment, European Commission, **Michael Braungart**, Co-Founder McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry and **Jef Colruyt**, Chairman Colruyt Group.

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