



PRESS RELEASE

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Interpal VIII/64th FEFPEB congress progresses international collaboration on ISPM 15

Interpal VIII, which was held alongside the 64th FEFPEB congress, saw the pallet and packaging industry make “significant progress” towards harmonisation of ISPM 15 phytosanitary measures on an international basis.

The event was held in Bordeaux in October and was attended by international industry representatives from Europe, the US, Canada, South Africa, Australia and, for the first time, China.

Discussions at the Global Forum on Wooden Pallets and Packaging, a small group of industry leaders, focused on ISPM 15, with the aim of developing a coordinated approach to working with international regulatory authorities such as FAO and IPPC. Delegates agreed that, in principle, an international committee can be formed to do this.

Gil Covey, outgoing president of FEFPEB, welcomed the results of the meeting. “Collaboration between industry colleagues in the wooden pallet and packaging sector across continents is vital on a number of issues, if we are to achieve the best possible outcomes for the business on an international basis”.

“This is particularly important on ISPM 15. If we can speak with a common voice to the regulators it will help ensure that they can introduce scientifically justified, harmonised and practical measures for the benefit of both the world’s forests and the global timber industry. The positive discussions we had in Bordeaux have laid firm foundations for this.”

The FEFPEB congress takes place annually to review developments in timber packaging and pallets in Europe; it is accompanied by Interpal for members of the international industry every four years, alternating in the USA, Canada and Europe.

Opening the congress, Mr Covey highlighted that FEFPEB has grown significantly in scale and influence since the last European Interpal event in Bordeaux in 2001 and continues to address all major issues affecting the wood packaging and pallets sector on behalf of its members.

He said there have been fundamental changes in regulations and called for all FEFPEB's national associations to be active and represent the interest of the industry with government agencies and NPPOs.

There would also be continued developments of health and safety, food hygiene, packaging waste, phytosanitary and other measures that require constant monitoring and attention – at both the national and European level.

Mr Covey added “The European wood packaging and pallets industry continues to face serious economic and commercial challenges. Our sector has demonstrated its resilience and flexibility to adapt to these pressures, which has allowed it to continue to provide its essential products and services that are absolutely critical in the global supply chain. I am confident it will continue to do so.”

Mr Covey leaves the FEFPEB presidency after eight years in the role, during which time he has driven significant developments within the organisation. He becomes treasurer. Rob van Hoesel of The Netherlands has taken on the position of president, with Michael Modugno of France as vice-president. Other positions on FEFPEB's executive committee were filled by Italy's Roberto Gavardini, Spain's Alberto Palmí, Belgium's Marc Michielsen, Portugal's Paulo Verdasca and Fons Ceelaert secretary general of FEFPEB.

Incoming president Rob van Hoesel said: “During the last eight years, we have seen FEFPEB grow from strength to strength. With Gil Covey as president, we have developed a strong executive team working alongside our secretariat, and firm support from our membership. This has been coupled with increasingly productive ties with international colleagues and organisations representing other forest-based industries. These are essential and solid foundations for FEFPEB as a trade association that really furthers the interests of the business across Europe that belong to it. I am very proud to be taking on the role of president and looking forward to building on this excellent work in the years ahead.”

This year's congress was organised in conjunction with the French pallet industry association Sypal, and also featured educational visits to PGS/Beynel sawmilling facilities, FCBA wood research laboratory, a Smurfit-Kappa packaging factory and the Naudet plant nursery.

There was also a welcome cocktail reception at the Grand Hotel du Bordeaux, a cultural dinner at local Chateau Giscours and a Gala dinner to close the event on Friday evening.

For further information, questions about the campaign, images or logos, please contact:



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Notes to Editors:

- Congress presentations can be accessed here:
<http://www.event.sypal.eu/intervenants-et-communication-3/?lang=en>
- An overview and main points of presentations at FEFPEB's Business Session at the Congress follows:

Mrs Estelle Pelzer of Cohesium:

- An overview of the pallet and packaging industry in six European member states [LIST]
- Highlighted importance of this industry in terms of employment and transport
- Main issues affecting the sector include:
 - Intense competition;
 - Industry restructuring;
 - Capacity for heat treatment and kiln drying
 - Impact on demand for biomass
 - Variability of timber supply
 - Lack of regulation in the pallet trading and repairing industry in some countries

Mr Philip Buisseret, secretary general of CEI-Bois:

- Overview on the of the European woodworking industry and CEI-Bois' role in representing the entire wood industry in Brussels
- Biomass key current issue – CEI-Bois is opposing government subsidies

Dr Cormac O'Carroll and Keikki Vidgren, Pöyry Management Consultants:

- Overview of worldwide timber trends
- Global market for softwood is 290 million cubic metres
- Demand from China is increasing in importance
- Demand in Eastern Europe is rising and will outstrip supply by 2020
- Demand overall will grow by as much as 60-80 million cubic metres by 2020
- Increasing demand for wooden pellets in Europe and increases in demand likely in Japan and South Korea
- European sawmilling industry is challenged by low margins and declining prices in real terms since 2000. However, log prices increased in some locations
- European imports of pellets have increased from 1.8 million in 2009 to 4.3 million in 2012

- Increased supply from North America and South America will come on stream soon
- Heating demand for pellets is also rising, particularly in Germany and Austria
- Overall increasing demand for pellets will lead to more demand than supply in certain markets. This could impact on the price of pallet wood
- Manufacturers should be lobbying government on the subject of biomass subsidies

Brent J McClendon, National Wooden Pallet & Container Association (NWPCA):

- Overview of US wooden pallet and packaging industry
- Annual production 1.23 billion pallets a year – forecast to grow to 2.6 billion by 2017
- US\$10 billion business, which uses 44 per cent of US hardwood and 15 per cent of softwood production
- Biomass and wood pellets are a large factor affecting the business in US. However...
- ...price is the dominant issue
- Complimented FEFPEB on its Packaging from Nature PR campaign and will be linking to it as part of its own initiative in the US

Brian Isard, Canadian Wood & Pallet & Container Association (CWPCA):

- Overview of the Canadian organisation and its activities
- CPC pool in Canada is struggling to survive
- Canadian timber historically exported to the US. China and Japan are becoming more important markets
- Regulatory developments in ISPM 15 becoming very important

Dominic Weaver, RED Communications:

- Update on FEFPEB's Packaging from Nature campaign
- Increasing hits on the campaign's seven language websites continue to grow month by month
- 100 publications across Europe and more than 200 articles on the campaign and its main communications messages
- New fact sheets on industrial and lightweight packaging, and innovation (ISPM 15 treatments) are being added to site
- Call to all national associations to invite their members to include logo and link to their language Packaging from Nature website on their site

Joey Montagut, FCBA technical institute

- Update on research work on wood, which can be used by the pallet and packaging industry
- Update on FCBA's ground-breaking project with Sypal, to test wood strength by acoustics

Mrs Tang Ying, secretary general of Pallet Professional Committee of the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing (CFLP):

- Overview of the Chinese pallet market and industry
- More than 6,000 pallet manufacturers in China, producing approximately 700 million pallets a year
- Few large companies; 4,600 manufacturers produce 100,000 pallets or fewer a year
- Main pallet sizes are 1,200mm x 1,000mm and 1,100 x 1,100
- Drive towards standardisation and these two sizes increased from 20 per cent to 25 per cent of the market
- Pallet pools becoming established – main ones CHEP and Loscam
- 93.6 per cent of flat pallets made from wood
- Palletisation will increase as China develops and pooling should also grow

Marc Michielsen, member of FEFPEB task force on ISPM 15

- Overview of current situation regarding ISPM 15 and likely future developments
- Key actions taken and forthcoming by FEFPEB
- FEFPEB has taken DG Sanco to a major pallet repair operation
- Visit to a new pallet manufacturing factory with extensive heat treatment and kiln drying facilities in the Netherlands will be arranged in the new future
- DG Sanco and FEFPEB fully engaged in dialogue
- Likely to be no further announcement or decision by DG Sanco until 2015, but FEFPEB will be monitoring the situation

Further Notes to Editors

- The European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers (FEFPEB) represents the industries of 14 European countries: Austria; Belgium; Denmark; France; Germany; Italy; Lithuania; the Netherlands; Portugal; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; and the UK
- FEFPEB was founded in 1946 to represent the European wooden packaging industry, including interests in pallets, industrial and light packaging
- Members of FEFPEB include European pallet pools and GROW International; with composite block, timber treatment and kiln drying equipment producers among the associate membership
- Interpalis a congress for representatives from the global wooden pallets and packaging industry; the meeting takes place every four years
- For more information about FEFPEB's Packaging from Nature campaign, visit www.packagingfromnature.com

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