

ENVIRONMENT AND RAW MATERIAL COMMITTEE



A Circular Economy for the European Gypsum Industry: a Life+ Project

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The European Gypsum Industry, the Gypsum recyclers, demolition companies and universities – in total 16 partners- will start a Life + project in January 2013 for a period of three years ending in December 2015. Plasterboard waste is fully and always recyclable as plaster always keeps its natural properties during use. This project is an incentive to recycle more. The project innovation lies in considering the supply chain (demolishers, recyclers, manufacturers) to create a recycling and resource efficient economy.

The aim of the project is to close the loop effectively and transform the plasterboard demolition waste market to achieve higher recycling rates of plasterboard waste. The major obstacle to close the loop is that buildings are currently demolished and not dismantled in the majority of the Member states. This leads to unsegregated waste going to landfill without having the possibility to recover valuable recyclable materials, among others plasterboard waste. However, the project partners believe that selective deconstruction must be used to make demolition profitable. The partners will analyse current practices in deconstruction (diagnostic of the building-audit of the material to be deconstructed-deconstruction-decontamination-segregation). The incentives to deconstruct are high. Indeed, the recyclability of the material at the end of life highly depends on the way the building is deconstructed and how the material is sorted at the demolition site. This is the case for plasterboard waste but also for other construction materials.

During the project, the quality of the recycled gypsum will be specified with the aim of establishing the end-of-waste according to the criteria of article 6 of the Waste Framework Directive. The manufacturers involved in the project will strive to include 30% recycled gypsum in the plasterboard, also including construction and production waste. Within the project, the European Gypsum Industry will reassess the Green Public Procurement Criteria for wall panels (i.e. plasterboard) developed with the Commission in 2010.

As the President of Eurogypsum, Dott Casalini says “it is a challenging project with high potentials for achieving a recycling and resource efficient economy in a collaborative way including all the actors in the demolition supply chain. The dynamism, professionalism and expertise of the partners will lead to a success for a green growth of the construction industry.”

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