



FEFPEB PRESS RELEASE

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European wooden pallet and packaging industry sets sights on sustainability goals

European manufacturers of wooden pallets and packaging are working towards setting targets for their use of sustainable, certified timber within the next few months, according to the European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers (FEFPEB). The move is one of the next steps in the organisation's initiative to increase usage of certified wood and highlight the sector's sustainable and environmentally friendly credentials.

At FEFPEB's spring meeting, held online at the end of April, Secretary General Fons Ceelaert said following a successful pilot scheme with PEFC in the Netherlands, FEFPEB is now defining a strategy through its working group on sustainability and certification.

The goals will be set with the help of national associations across Europe. They will focus initially on manufacturing (not repair) and will vary according to awareness of sustainability issues and the market dynamics of different countries.

"Working closely with our national member associations, we are looking to ascertain how much certified wood is currently used to manufacture pallets and packaging and together set ambitious but realistic targets. The industry is already well on the way to using mainly certified timber, but we intend to accelerate this trend," said Ceelaert. "Our aim is to ensure we have an increasing trend across our membership so we can demonstrate clearly the environmental credentials of our business, in the same way as the B2C sector is doing already." He added that the next step would be to set concrete European targets.

There followed a presentation on the opportunities and threats to the wooden packaging industry of the New Circular Economy Action Plan (NCEAP), led by Roeland Moens, member of the FEFPEB Executive Committee and Chairman of FEFPEB's pallet pools section. Moens

detailed the main changes in progress under the Sustainable Product Initiative – which aims to ensure the high environmental credentials of all products on the EU market – and the forthcoming legislation under the Packaging Waste Directive in quarter 4 of 2021. He stated that FEFPEB has been proactive in representing the industry in both processes.

Two sessions during the meeting focused on the exceptional and worsening availability and prices in global raw materials markets.

Sampsa Auvinen, President EOS and elected President CEI Bois 2021–2022 highlighted a Russian ban on log exports which will start on January 1, 2022 and is expected to cause ‘aggressive’ competition for other sources of logs, particularly from buyers in China, making an already difficult global wood supply situation worse. This, combined with ongoing factors such as the bark beetle outbreak in central Europe, an imbalance in the movement of shipping containers, and general international pressure on availability, will likely keep prices high for the foreseeable future.

Alessandro Sciamarelli, Director of Market Analysis and Economic Studies at EUROFER, which represents the European steel industry, outlined the continuing availability issues and price rises in this raw material, which is another key input into the wooden pallet and packaging industry.

Brent J McClendon, President and CEO of NWPCA in the US gave a presentation to the meeting on how collaboration across the international wooden packaging sector - including through the Global Wood Packaging Forum - was progressing its common goals on issues such as the environment.

Other presentations during FEFPEB’s three-hour meeting included:

- ISPM15 implementation status in FEFPEB’s member countries, compiled as part of its submission to the EU on the harmonisation of the standard, focusing on pallet repair, re-heat treatment and marking rules.
- Developments in the lightweight packaging market by Olivier de Lagausie, secretary general of SEIL/GROW (France), including environmental and hygiene credentials.
- FEFPEB updates including European statistics, finances and composition of its Executive Committee.

Notes:

- The European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers (Fédération Européenne des Fabricants de Palettes and Emballages en Bois – FEFPEB) represents European national timber packaging associations, including the pallet, lightweight packaging and industrial packaging sectors. It was established in 1946.
- It is a not-for-profit organisation, whose objectives include promotion of timber packaging and representing the interests of the European wooden pallet and packaging industry.
- National professional associations of wooden pallet and packaging manufacturers are full members of FEFPEB.
- Other companies involved in the industry, including suppliers of timber and timber blocks, machines and equipment are associated or individual members.
- The major European pallet pools (including EPAL, CHEP, LPR, IPP Logipal and PRS) are also part of FEFPEB. For more information, please contact: info@fefpeb.eu
- More information, including the FEFPEB pallet price indices, can be found at www.fefpeb.eu
- For more on any of the subjects in this press release, please contact: dominic@twelvecomms.co.uk