Club du Bois
21st October 2015
EU Parliament Brussels

The European Panel Federation (EPF), the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS) and the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), supported by the European Federation of the Parquet Industry (FEP), organised the 2nd Club du Bois meeting under the chairwomanship of Mrs Maria Noichl, MEP, on 21st October 2015 at the European Parliament in Brussels.

In Strasbourg earlier in the year, the forum had asked itself the questions: How can we meet our Climate Goals? How can we meet our Renewable Energy Goals? How can we meet our Industrial & Employment Goals? Quite simply the answer lay in one statement:

Build More With Wood

This was again the dominant theme for the Club du Bois, which this time enjoyed three presentations from experts in their fields, namely

1. Wood in planning and public procurement linked to the bio-economy in practice
2. Wooden buildings in terms of architecture and reduction of CO_2
3. Recycled wood in the Circular Economy

These topics were analysed in the context of the Circular Economy & Resource Efficiency, Renewable Energy & Climate targets and the Re-Industrialisation of Europe.

Following members of the EU Parliament attended the event:

- Mrs Maria Noichl, DE – Chairwoman
- Mr Paul Brannen, UK
- Mr David Borelli, IT
- Mr Brando Benifei, IT
- Mrs Sirpa Pietikainen, FI, represented by Aino Fant
- Mrs Anneli Jäätteenmäki, FI, represented by Panu Litmanen

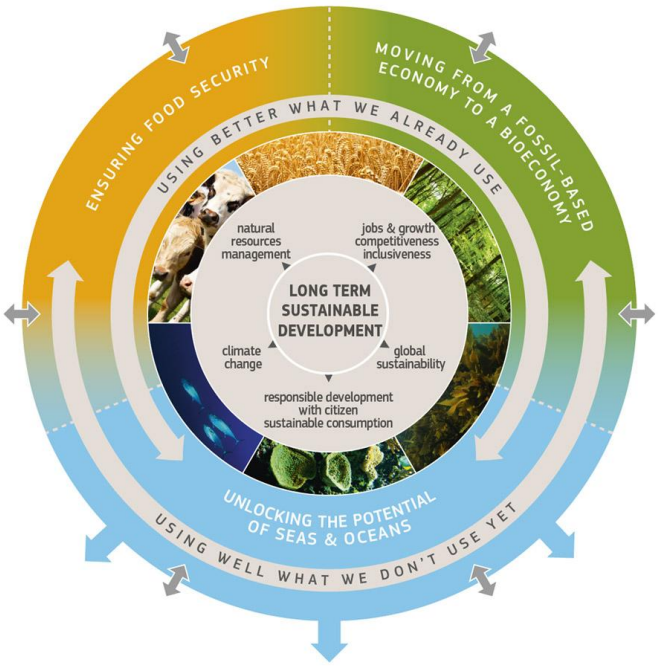
Mr Clive Pinnington (EPF Managing Director), MEP Paul Brannen, Mr Patrizio Antonicoli (CEI-Bois Secretary General), Mr Stefan Rubner and MEP Maria Noichl

Opening, by Mrs Maria Noichl, MEP

Mrs Noichl opened the meeting and expressed her pleasure to be hosting the 2nd meeting of the Club du Bois under her chairmanship. She looked forward to an active and stimulating meeting. She then gave the floor to the experts of the woodworking industries to illustrate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

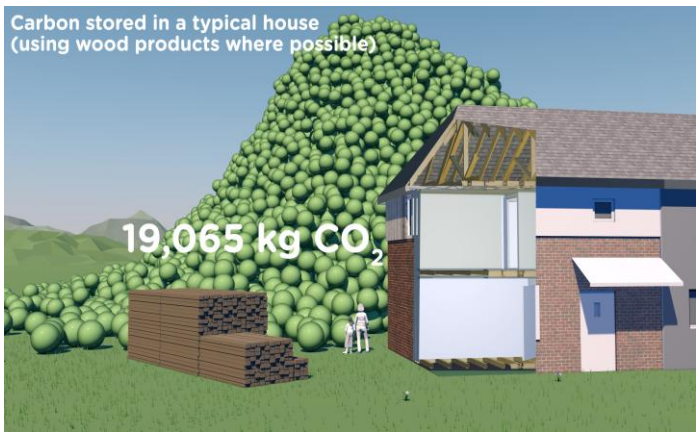
The Bio-economy in practice: Public procurement and planning policies to develop a low-carbon, bio-based economy, by Mr David Hopkins, Timber Trade Federation, Executive Director, Wood for Good

Mr Hopkins started his presentation by explaining that the bio-economy comprises the part of the economy that is using renewable biological resources to produce food, materials, energy, etc. It is thus an essential alternative to the dangers of fossil-based economy, providing major opportunities for innovation, jobs, growth.



The EC's Bio-economy Strategy should focus on 3 aspects:

- Developing new technologies & processes
- Developing new markets & competitiveness
- Pushing policy makers to work more closely together



Regarding construction, and in order to tackle climate change, the use of wood should be increased:

- A 10% increase in timber frame housing in EU = 25% of total reductions prescribed by Kyoto
- Up to 31% of total global emissions could be avoided by switching to timber construction (Yale University 2013)

IckBurgh, SEN School, Hackney

In his presentation, Mr Hopkins demonstrated that amongst others the towns of Vaxjo in Sweden and Hackney in the UK have clearly choosen wood as a construction material. He highlighted the concentration and diversity of timber buildings in Hackney saying that they should be considered a great success and a showcase for the world.

To choose wood for construction is to make the best environmentally friendly choice. Mr Hopkins called that:

- Timber and wood products must be part of the EU bio economy stategy
- Measures for promoting building with wood should be included in the European bio-economy plans - there is no building we cannot make from timber
- Rather than a Renewable Energy Strategy, a Renewable Material Strategy should be launched by the EU Institutions
- Resource efficiency starts from recyclability: recyclable product should always be the first option in Green Public Procurement

Mr Hopkins ended his speech with a quote of the well-known architect Michael Green:

'Wood is the most advanced material that we can build with. The Earth grows our food. The Earth can grow our homes. It's an ethical change we have to go through.'

Mr David Hopkins

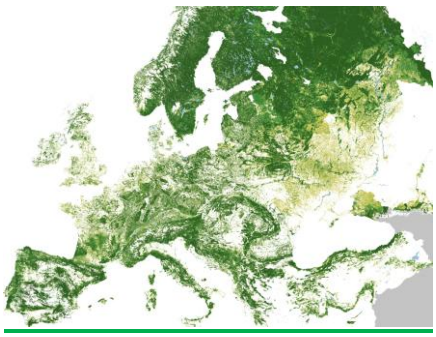
What wood can do? Examples of the most significant wood buildings in terms of architecture and reduction of CO_2 - Mr Stefan Rubner, Winner of the world environmental prize Solar Decathlon 2014

Mr Stefan Rubner

With Rhome for DenCity, the energy-efficient house, Mr Rubner won the Solar Decathlon 2014 and as such Italy became world champion in Sustainable Architecture. The winning card was the mix of technologies and practices that have led geo-coded specific consumption and energy production at optimum levels.

Mr Rubner emphasised that increasing the use of wood in buildings would significantly reduce the climate change impact. Building with wood not only stores CO_2, but also significantly reduces the construction time.

Mr Rubner began with a reminder that 42% of the EU is covered with forest. 60% of these are privately owned. Significantly, only 2/3 of the current annual growth of forests is harvested, meaning that we are neglecting 1/3 of the valuable resource. Ways must be found to put wood to better use..... such as construction!

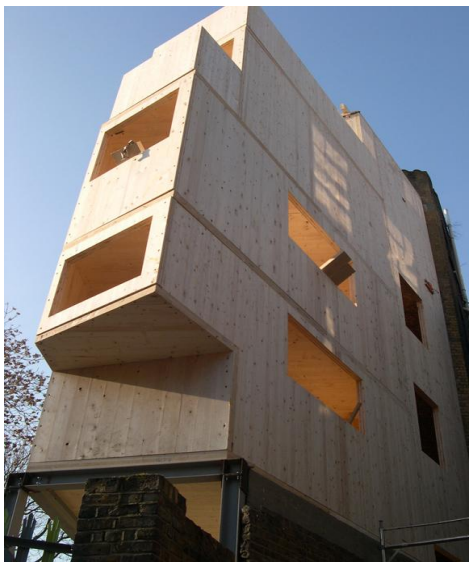


During his presentation, Mr Rubner showcased some extra-ordinary buildings throughout Europe in terms of architecture and reduction of CO_2.

Social Housing, Vienna, Austria
Wooden 7 multi-storey building
Carbon storage: ca. 2,400 tonnes

Paris, France
Wooden 7 multi-storey building
Carbon storage: ca. 1,200 tonnes
Construction time 4 months

Trieste, Italy
Wooden 6 multi-storey building
Carbon storage: 1,000 tonnes



London, UK
Wooden multi-storey building
Carbon storage: 38 tonnes

Recycled Wood in the Circular Economy - Mr Stefano Saviola, Gruppo Mauro Saviola, the leading transformer of wood waste in the world and Board Member EPF

In his presentation, Mr Saviola stressed the advantages of recycling wood for the particle board sector. Over the past 50 years, the European panel industry has always represented worldwide excellence in terms of production, quality, technical standards and respect of environmental issues. Its ability to evolve and remain competitive is the best guarantee of continuity for the downstream furniture sector.

However, this is very hard in Italy, a country that is structurally and chronically deficient in wood. This is the Italian anomaly: a country in great shortage of wood resources is also the World's 3rd largest furniture manufacturer! That is why 80% of furniture in Italy is made of particleboards produced with only waste……

The national capacity for recycling wood from urban and industrial collection is ca. 4 million T/year, whereas actual consumption is estimated at ca. 3 million T/year. The chronic shortage of forest wood in the 80's forced Italy to find a technological solution to use wood waste as the raw material. Wood waste is the new forest source, the new "urban forest", as we like to call it.

In Europe unfortunately, waste wood is still considered in the incentive systems for the production of energy from biomass. This is creating market distortions, which, if not corrected in the short term, are likely to affect the evolution of our European industry towards a more sustainable economy.

WASTE IS NOT BIOMASS!

Recycling of wood has lots of advantages:

1. Social advantage: to recycle a ton of wood waste takes 54 manpower hours, whereas burning one ton uses 2 manpower hours only.
2. Economic advantage: recycling gives a 10-fold added value to combustion. In 2012, the Italian State spent €390 million to support the alternative energy production burning wood.
3. Environmental advantage: the environmental footprint is only half compared to combustion.

Gruppo Saviola, Gruppo Frati and SAIB, Italy's largest particleboard manufacturers, commissioned a study that takes into account the environmental impact that a ton of wood has if used in the production of wood panels or in the production of energy: it clearly demonstrates that wood panel production has a 50% inferior impact compared to combustion.

At present, Europe's main particleboard manufacturers are gearing up to recycle wood following the Italian experience.

That is why the European regulatory framework must take into account and correct the destruction of resources unintentionally created by the incentives poured towards "non-smart" combustion.

It should be stated that all participants were *delighted* and enchanted by the cartoon movie developed by Gruppo Saviola for schools. It clearly demonstrates what trees do for mankind and what can be done with recycled wood: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hb89O8Ni5s8.

Mr Stefano Saviola & MEP David Borelli

Future Direction for the Woodworking industries – Mr Patrizio Antonicoli, Secretary-General CEI-Bois

In his speech, Mr Antonicoli highlighted the 3 main forces drive the woodworking industries, namely

1. **Wood availability**
2. **Sustainability**
3. **Competitiveness**

He also stressed that the woodworking industry needs to be responsible, reacting instantly to the challenges it is faced with: it fully understands the strong signals coming from the markets, the EU institutions and the public opinion; and it acknowledges both its uncommon assets and limits.

The woodworking industries continuously emphasise that wood should be the material for buildings and cities in a low carbon society and from a climate mitigation perspective the enhanced use of wood should be fully supported by EU decision makers. 'Moreover, timber offers great potential for renovating and modernising existing, older buildings. There are significant CO_2 savings to be made by using timber in the construction of houses and other buildings, both in terms of embodied energy and in-use energy efficiency. Its natural thermal insulation makes it the best material to be used both in cold and hot climates (energy efficiency) and hence contributes positively to the climate.'

Conclusion

Throughout the day there were very active question and answer sessions. The engagement of the participants, especially the MEPs, was a great encouragement to the sector.

The clear conclusion of the day was that Parliament, the EU policymakers and the Wood-Working Industries should work together to support:

1. **Greater use of wood in construction ("Wood First")**
2. **Intelligent use of post-consumer wood according to waste hierarchy principles ("Urban Forest")**
3. **Wood as a valuable resource for Industry, Employment, and the prevention of Climate Change ("Responsible Industry")**

Mrs Noichl closed the session with thanks to all involved and looked forward to the next meeting (tentatively fixed for 19th/20th April, 2016)

The Club du Bois is an initiative of the European Panel Federation (EPF) and the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS), and is supported by the European Confederation of the Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois) and the European Federation of the Parquet Industry (FEP).