



Committed to action: insights from EUROSAC Congress 2021

Paris/Stockholm, 24 June 2021: More than 150 participants joined EUROSAC's virtual Congress 2021 on 28 May 2021. Under the theme "Show commitment – take action!", the delegates discussed recent developments in the paper sack and sack kraft paper industry and on EU level, megatrends in plastic films and different aspects and activities of how to adapt a business to societal and climate change. A special focus was put on the role of sustainable packaging. The industry's latest innovations were presented during the EUROSAC Grand Prix Award ceremony. Gold winner was Mondi with EcoWicketBag. dy-pack received the Silver trophy and Novidon Bronze.

"In response to a rapidly changing world and very ambitious climate goals, our industry can only grow sustainably by showing a strong commitment and taking action," stated EUROSAC president Olivier Tassel as he opened the Congress which was streamed live from Düsseldorf, Germany. "As we have done in the past, we will continue developing and providing solutions that



Impressions from the EUROSAC Congress 2021.
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meet our customers' needs, are in line with current legislations and function perfectly without compromising the quality of life of future generations." The industry's strong commitment has borne fruit in its figures: despite the pandemic, the European paper sack industry recorded a solid plus of 2.8% paper sack deliveries in 2020. An upward trend (+0.2%) continued in the first quarter of 2021 with more potential in sight according to the outlook into the coming months.

From linear to circular economy

Climate, circular economy and packaging reductions – the Congress started with an overview on the topics that are the heart of EU policies and legislations setting out to transform all areas of the economy for a sustainable future. It was discussed how these will affect the sack kraft paper and paper sack industry and which initiatives, research and communication activities the industry has started in order to reach the EU's and its own ambitious targets. The transition to circularity was taken up in more detail with regard to plastic films as they are part of some paper sack constructions for adding special barrier functions. The audience received an update on recent megatrends in plastic films – from the possibilities of recovery of packaging materials with a focus on chemical and mechanical recycling to the rising market of bioplastics.



Inspirations for a better world

A keynote speech from Emmanuel Druon, CEO of French-based envelope producer Pochecho, on “ecolonomy” provided inspiration of how to conduct a successful business with respect to the environment and its biodiversity. Ecolonomy is based on three principles: protecting human health, saving the planet, and being financially less expensive or more productive. With many examples from his own and other companies, he demonstrated to the audience that even small changes can have a big impact. Another company which has already made impressive progress on its way to a net zero ambition is Coca-Cola. The company identified that packaging plays a critical role for achieving this target by 2040. Maria Bescós, Head of Sustainable Packaging of Coca-Cola’s office in Iberia, described the actions the company is taking to make all their packaging more sustainable by removing unnecessary plastic and reducing virgin plastic. “Companies that don’t act sustainably will be left behind,” Bescós is convinced. “We keep exploring how to best answer our customers’ and consumers’ needs by leveraging existing propositions and developing new offers. Innovating for the present is our investment in a sustainable future.”

EUROSAC Grand Prix Award 2021

The concept of constantly improving and innovating products, materials and processes also has a long tradition within the paper sack industry. Every year during the EUROSAC Congress, the industry honours the innovations that bring the most added value to their users with the prestigious EUROSAC Grand Prix Award. “Once again, this year’s entries showed us how much potential and innovative strength our industry has – not only for today but also for the future,” said jury president Matthias Becker-Gröning when opening the award ceremony. “With eight exciting submissions, the decision was not easy for me and my jury colleagues.” As a “real game changer that increases the use of paper,” the jury selected the EcoWicketBag by Mondi for the Gold Award. “This development can be implemented very quickly and responds to our industry’s objectives to produce more environmentally friendly bags,” explained Becker-Gröning about the jury’s choice.



Jury president Matthias Becker-Gröning (right) presents the EUROSAC Grand Prix Gold Award for the EcoWicketBag to Fabio Barbieri from Mondi (centre) with moderator Corinna Egerer. Copyright: EUROSAC



More information about the award winners and entries here:

The **Gold Award** was presented to **Mondi** for **EcoWicketBag**. It is a paper-based alternative to the plastic wicket bags for daily hygiene articles such as nappies, toilet paper and kitchen tissues. Made from durable kraft paper in various sizes, EcoWicketBag keeps the products inside protected, while being recyclable in paper waste streams. This innovative product opens the door to paper-based packaging in the hygiene industry and it will be further developed.

The **Silver Award** went to **dy-pack** for **gardyan**, a brand-new paper sack for potting soil. It manages the challenge to pack soil with a moisture content of more than 50% and to protect it from the development of mould, sprouting of seeds and drying out, while at the same time guaranteeing a long shelf life. This 100% plastic-free sack is made from fibres from sustainable forestry, recyclable in paper waste streams and home-compostable. "Squaring the circle is possible," Becker-Gröning commented. "A well-thought-out solution that will open new markets for the industry."

Novidon received the **Bronze Award** for its sustainable paper sack adhesive **Novinexx CPB Premium**. The jury honoured the product for having "a carbon footprint that is more than 50% lower than traditional starch adhesives". Novinexx CPB Premium is made from side-stream potato starch. This makes it highly sustainable and also readily biodegradable according to the OECD 301 norm. Developed for the latest technologies, it can be used on roller and nozzle applicators, and decreases the splash behaviour and drying time. Other benefits of the product are less cleaning time, no paper penetration, high bonding strength and shorter setting time compared to conventional starch glues.

For the first time in 2021, EUROSAC introduced the **Industry Special Award** for inventions which benefit the whole industry. It was given to **Haver & Boecker** for the **Seal Calculator**. The jury chose it because it "relates to a very large proportion of the European paper sack market using ultrasonic valve-sealing technology and touches the value chain from different angles". It is an interactive tool with which all influencing factors for improving the usage of seal technology are reported. This gives orientation for individual adjustments and decisions.

The audiences' most favourite invention of the year, also known as the **Public Choice Award**, went to **MoistShield®** by **Fiorini**. MoistShield® is a special patented waterproof treatment which can be applied to any Fiorini sack to give it hydrophobic properties. MoistShield® is a plastic-free sack and, thanks to an environmentally friendly coating, the sack remains an ecological and recyclable product. The water is not retained by the paper but slips away due to the high surface tension. MoistShield® provides sacks with a longer shelf life and allows for high-quality printing.

Moreover, ERO Gluing Systems entered the Grand Prix Award with an efficient non-contact gluing solution for paper sacks that enables saving more than 50% of glue. Gascoigne Sacs introduced GascoGreen PROTECT, a paper sack for the pet food market offering a long shelf



life and recyclability all over Europe. Brazil-based Klabin presented ECO Layer, a repulpable and recyclable barrier solution.

For more insights from the Congress, please contact Catherine Plitzko-Kerninon: +33 (0)147 237 558, email: info@eurosac.org.

Further information: www.eurosac.org

***EUROSAC** is the European Federation of Multiwall Paper Sack Manufacturers. The federation represents over 75% of European paper sack manufacturers. Its members operate in 20 different countries. They produce more than 5 billion paper sacks per year, representing 650,000 tonnes of paper converted in 60 plants. Sack manufacturers from all continents and bag manufacturers also contribute to the federation as corresponding members, and more than 20 suppliers (paper, film, machine or glue manufacturers) are registered as associate members. www.eurosac.org*

***CEPI Eurokraft** is the European Association for Producers of Sack Kraft Paper for the Paper Sack Industry and Kraft Paper for the Packaging Industry. It has eleven member companies representing a volume of 3.0 million tonnes of paper produced in twelve countries. www.cepi-eurokraft.org*

