

UEPG Position on Resource Taxation

UEPG KEY MESSAGES:

- ▶ UEPG supports the Commission's resource efficiency objectives through sustainable and efficient production of aggregates. The Aggregates Industry is committed to optimal use of the land areas of quarries and pits (comprising less than 0.1% of the total land area), through best practice in extracting all the reserves that are permitted. The Industry also minimises water usage through recycling. Both operating and restored quarries and pits are biodiversity havens, contributing to the biodiversity resource. The Industry also seeks to minimise product road transport impacts by campaigning for access to resources close to the markets and through use of rail and water transport alternatives where available.
- ▶ UEPG supports recycling of construction and demolition (C&D) materials to greatest extent that is technically, environmentally and economically viable, thus reducing usage of natural aggregates, while simultaneously minimising the amount of C&D materials going to be landfill. Several countries already recycle all suitable C&D materials, and the resulting recycled aggregates typically comprise 15-25% of those national markets. Other countries are developing recycling strategies, though progress is often hindered through unnecessary permitting bureaucracy and unclear end-of-waste criteria.
- ▶ UEPG supports the [European Parliament Report on an effective raw materials strategy for Europe](#) in its belief 'that a tax on mineral resources is not an adequate fiscal tool for increasing resource efficiency'. Analysing the impact of taxation in selected countries ([European Environment Agency Report 2/2008](#)), there is no clear evidence to show that the objective of reducing environmental externalities had been achieved. UEPG believes that industry-positive policies are more effective.

BACKGROUND

Aggregates are crushed rock, sand and gravel, used to construct Europe's essential infrastructure including homes, roads, railways, schools and hospitals. Extraction of aggregates is a purely physical (crushing and screening) process, with no chemical treatment or hazardous wastes. In Europe, some 3 billion tonnes per year of aggregates are produced by 14,000 companies (the majority of which are SMEs) in 24,000 extraction sites, providing jobs for more than 250,000 direct and indirect employees. UEPG now represents national aggregates associations and producers in 31 European countries, see www.uepg.eu.