

Recycling, a basis of EU's sustainability: BIR

Participants of the Bureau of International Recycling's World Convention and Exhibition in Amsterdam agreed that more and more countries have begun to look at securing recycled raw material.

Aluminum and alloys

Speaking at the event Dhawal Shah of India-based Metco Ventures and BIR's Non-Ferrous Metals Division president focused on a draft standard in India covering domestic and imported aluminum and aluminum alloy scrap. This establishes six grades and identifies their individual purity/impurity thresholds, while also laying out potential sampling procedures. Industry representatives and the government are still discussing possibilities to modify the

document. Shah nevertheless anticipated implementation some time in 2023.

According to Jean-Marc Moulin, head of Sustainability at Hydro Extrusions, recycling is at the core of EU sustainability initiatives. Specific environmental goals at his own company included the development of a recycling value chain from sourcing to products and customers, and doubling post-consumer aluminum scrap use by 2025.

Lead and zinc

In an overview of the global lead and zinc industry Jianbin Meng, Director of Economics and Environment at the International Lead and Zinc Study Group/International Nickel Study Group, reported that secondary refined lead production accounted for 92pc of the total refined metal production in the Americas and 83pc in Europe, as compared to a figure of 55pc for Asia. This illustrates a huge potential for growth.

Meng added that in the 62 years to 2022, cumulative refined lead usage reached 422.1mn mt, of which 47pc of the used metal was attributable to the recycling industry.

Secondary zinc production comprises a smaller share of total metal production but a growth trend has been observed in recent years, Meng noted. In 2022, the share of secondary metal production reached 12.5pc of the total against 6pc in 2012.

In a subsequent panel discussion moderated by Natalia Zholud of Poland's TRM Group, and Alejandro Jaramillo of Glore SC, Mexico, Meng confirmed that lead-acid batteries currently accounted for nearly 86pc of lead usage but that economics and policy would dictate the speed and extent to which demand for such batteries would decline. Notably, the cost of lithium batteries was falling and could even reach parity with lead-acid, Meng said.

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