

# PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 13 July 2010  
For Immediate Release

## FINAL REPORT RELEASE "CHAIN APPROACH IN RAW MATERIALS AND WASTE"

*The Resource Efficiency Alliance and the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy welcome the official release of the report: "Chain Approach in Raw Materials and Waste" (available for download at: [www.epe.be](http://www.epe.be)) that concludes a series of workshops supported by the Dutch Ministry of the Environment (VROM).*

### **Background**

The Dutch Ministry of the Environment (VROM) launched a European multi-stakeholder process to develop a chain approach for a sustainable materials management (SMM). For this purpose The Resource Efficiency Alliance (an initiative of European Partners for the Environment) and the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy, with the support of the Public Waste Agency of Flanders (OVAM), the UK Environmental Sustainability Knowledge Transfer Network (ES-KTN) and HOLCIM organized a series of workshops in which stakeholders assessed environmental impacts along the value chain and discussed opportunities for a sustainable materials management. Most public and corporate environmental policies are traditionally segmented and thematic and not oriented along the production chain. Therefore, the project aimed at adapting both policy instruments and business models at EU level to move towards sustainable materials management for which a chain approach is an essential element and not experimented. The partners decided to test the chain approach by addressing two material flows of strategic importance for the building sector:

1. Concrete
2. Construction Wood

The two series of workshops related to the topics above have identified several approaches to improve sustainable materials management to minimize environmental impacts, mobilize capital, promote horizontal collaboration, increase and share knowledge. Commenting on the final report release, Mr. Robbert Droop, Policy Coordinator at VROM said:

*"Chain approaches as part of sustainable materials management prove to be effective to optimally reduce overall environmental pressure. It achieves further reductions than through thematic policies only. The frontrunners among economic actors cooperating within a value chain need to obtain more experience however and develop best practices. That will help policy-makers to design specific interventions and, if necessary, market-based instruments to facilitate and support chain approaches."*

The final report addresses different types of instruments to improve the efficiency of value chain governance: new fora in charge of organizing knowledge transfer between regulators, investors, buyers, standards setters, trust builders and product and/or service suppliers), new role for government, new economic instruments. Several levels for a value chain strategy should be further developed:

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1. Level of the supply chain: focus on effective reduction of overall environmental pressure requires cooperation and commitment along the value chain
2. Cities are a critical level: a cities classification according to their potential leverage has been done by WBCSD
3. ICT will drive collaboration method and Internet-based portals will provide information on material flows and life cycle assessments
4. Co-creation with consumers of products and services and cooperation of all (most relevant) actors in the value chain
5. Green public procurement has also a key role to play through value pricing.
6. The EU and Governments are requested to regulate to secure the internalization of costs (carbon, water, ecosystem services)

The report concludes by proposing a “*European Covenant Sustainable Building*” to which an action plan would be attached. Such a European Covenant would give vision (where we want to be by 2050 regarding sustainable building), focus (what needs to be done), timetable and monitoring mechanism. The Covenant should address together *positive net energy buildings and sustainable material management*, involving *Front Runners Building Professionals, Companies, Financiers, Cities, Owners and Tenants Organisations*.

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Issued on behalf of the partners of the project  
“Chain Approach in Raw Materials and Waste”:

