

CLEPA's Materials Regulations and Sustainability Event 2024: A Landmark Gathering of Global Automotive Experts

Brussels, 3 July 2024 – CLEPA, the European association representing the automotive supply industry, successfully concluded the 16th edition of its Materials Regulations and Sustainability event (MRSE), held on 27 & 28 June in Frankfurt. The event marked a significant milestone, attracting over 250 attendees from around the world, to discuss the latest advancements in material compliance and sustainability in the automotive industry.

The two-day event featured keynote speeches from industry leaders, such as BMW and Forvia, and representatives from key initiatives including the Responsible Business Alliance and CSR Europe. In addition, several product manufacturers exhibited cutting-edge innovations, driving discourse on materials compliance and sustainability solutions in the sector.

“Automotive suppliers are driving sustainability and innovation in Europe, investing billions in clean technologies.” said **Benjamin Krieger, CLEPA's Secretary General** during his opening remarks, “But to keep this momentum, we need smart regulations that balance safety and innovation. We are calling on policymakers to focus on practical implementation and recognise that progress often comes step by step. With the right framework, we can innovate, compete globally, and achieve our shared goal of a climate-neutral future.”



PFAS Regulation: A balanced approach needed

The event kicked-off with a critical session on PFAS (Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances), used in various automotive applications. **Daniel Kruff from Continental** highlighted the collaborative efforts of CLEPA and ACEA, the European vehicle manufacturers' association, on a new PFAS restriction proposal.

He emphasised the necessity of identifying and testing alternative materials that meet safety and performance standards without compromising quality. PFAS are still largely indispensable for the green transition, and identifying suitable substitutes requires substantial investment and sufficient lead time. Instead of sweeping bans, CLEPA and ACEA call for smart regulation that balances safety with the potential for innovation.

End-of-Life Vehicles: Paving the way for automotive circularity

During the session titled ‘ELV – The Future of Automotive Circularity,’ **Jaco Huisman from DG Environment** and **Elena Spöri from ZF** discussed the significance of the End-of-Life Vehicles Regulation for the circular economy in the automotive sector. The regulation introduces a new definition of remanufacturing that aims to ensure that parts fit for reuse and remanufacturing are not wasted. However, **Stefan Hillstroem from BMW** cautioned against excessive red tape, suggesting that EU regulations should concentrate on overarching targets like CO2 abatement, supported by a harmonised global carbon accounting framework. The automotive industry remains committed to increasing the use of sustainable materials, while also considering aspects of economic and technical feasibility.



Global perspectives and legislative updates

The first day concluded with insights on legislative developments from speakers across four regions – Japan, North America, India and China. European regulations are significantly impacting businesses worldwide, and CLEPA continues to prioritise bringing together stakeholders from various automotive regions to enhance international dialogue and cooperation and global harmonisation.

To reinforce this effort, CLEPA hosted a meeting of the Suppliers Alliance the day before the MRSE, bringing together CLEPA, [JAPIA](#) and [AIAG](#) to discuss upcoming developments on IMDS and sustainability issues, such as PFAS and Automotive Product Carbon footprint.

Corporate Sustainability and global supply chains

On the second day, **Pedro Grossinho from Joyson Safety Systems** and Chair of CLEPA's Sustainability & CSR sub-expert group, moderated four sessions bringing together representatives from [RSCI](#), [RBA](#) and [CSR Europe](#) to discuss corporate sustainability in the automotive sector.

Ensuring that all materials and components comply with environmental and ethical standards requires complex tracking and documentation processes across global supply chains. Recent files on the Corporate Reporting Sustainability Directive, Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, deforestation and taxonomy were highlighted, underscoring the challenges of identifying and mitigating risks related to environmental violations, human rights abuses, and other issues in the supply chain. Robust auditing mechanisms and, above all, coordination and harmonisation across existing systems are essential to reduce the administrative burden on companies.

This event was kindly sponsored by DXC Technology.

About CLEPA

CLEPA, the European Association of Automotive Suppliers based in Brussels, represents over 3,000 companies, from multi-nationals to SMEs, supplying state-of-the-art components and innovative technology for safe, smart and sustainable mobility, investing over €30 billion yearly in research and development. Automotive suppliers directly employ 1.7 million people in the EU.