



Media release

23rd International Congress for Battery Recycling ICBR 2018

Birwil, July 12, 2018: The holiday season is coming up and it is now time to make preparations for the months ahead. We hope you have already blocked the time slot from September 26 to 28 in your agenda. At the time battery recycling specialists from all around the world will be getting together for this year's International Congress Battery Recycling ICBR 2018 in Berlin, Germany.

Don't miss this opportunity to exchange news, views and ideas with experts from all areas of the battery recycling sector. Again, this year we have put together an interesting and highly diverse program for our visitors. We are particularly looking forward to our keynote speakers, who will open the congress on September 26. This year we will be welcoming

- Prof. Kerstin Kuchta (Hamburg University of Technology, Germany),
- Didier Marginèdes (Blue Solutions, France),
- Gudula Schwan (Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Germany)

Prof. Kerstin Kuchta will be giving us a summary of the battery market and the circular economy. Before the conference we had an opportunity to talk to Prof. Kerstin Kuchta. She gave us a number of interesting insights, which you can read about in the following interview:

Professor Kuchta, the EU circular economy package was adopted just a few weeks ago. Which impulses do you expect it will provide in the field of battery recycling?

The EU circular economy package has triggered a great deal of debate throughout Europe. The main criticism levelled at the package in Germany is that it is not ambitious or specific enough to bring about the intended transformation of the economy. Impulses have undoubtedly been provided towards the fundamental acknowledgement that even complex products do not become waste after the use phase, but are resources that need to be either made available for reuse or recycled for use in the production sector. As a result, product design and the provision and accessibility of secondary raw materials are also becoming more important for batteries.

Changes in the transportation sector, in energy supply and the trend towards a generally more mobile lifestyle are placing growing emphasis on the production and further development of batteries and thus to the supply of raw materials.

In the view of the EU, the task of the circular economy is to supply industry with raw materials. Which role can battery recycling play in achieving this aim?

Raw materials for making batteries such as lithium, cobalt, nickel and manganese are scarce or critical raw materials and demand for them cannot be met by mines in Europe. Primary extraction largely takes place in a few regions worldwide and in politically unstable situations. The recycling of batteries helps to reduce supply risks. At the same time, recycling minimises

energy intensity in the production chain. The recycling of metals requires up to 80 per cent less energy compared to primary production, thus protecting both the environment and the climate.

Some time ago, Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke out in favour of Europe setting up its own battery cell production capacities with the aim of reducing dependency on imports from Asia. Is that a good idea?

Battery and storage systems support key technologies, strengthening Europe as a production location through sufficient, efficient and innovative availability. The recycling and reuse of batteries and the materials from which they are made as a means of supplying raw materials will impact production technologies and promote the establishing of innovative manufacturing within Europe.

To which extent could battery recyclers benefit from battery manufacturing in Europe?

The creation of a largely closed added value in circular systems not only promotes the mutual appreciation of all stakeholders, but also innovations in the system as a whole. That includes recycling, reuse, processing and, not least, product design. Geographical proximity generally promotes mutual understanding, greater interest and the development of business models. Legal or economic accompanying measures introduced to promote the reuse of materials and the exclusion of hazardous materials, for example, can be implemented in Europe.

Your keynote speech at the ICBR 2018 is titled "Batteries and a Circular Economy". Which points will your speech mainly focus on?

Unlike plastics, organic wastes or construction waste, batteries have a comparatively low mass flow. However, in terms of the quality and value of their components, their complexity and their growing importance, they constitute a significant material flow in a circular economy. The focal points of my speech, i.e. the opportunities and limitations of the circular economy, product design and quality as well as reuse, recycling and cascade utilisation are presented and discussed for both battery materials and their systems.

Do not miss this opportunity to exchange news, views and ideas with experts from all areas of the battery recycling sector. We look forward to welcoming you at this year's industry meeting! For all the details on the program and how to register, go to: <https://www.icm.ch/icbr-2018>.

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