



BUSINESS MEMO

Newsletter of the Embassy of Belgium
www.diplobel.us



NR. 2/2010

Deepwater Horizon Oil Leak: Belgian Proposals For Assistance

In a letter to the Deepwater Horizon Unified Command, Belgium's Ambassador to the United States expressed his deepest sympathy for the tragic loss of life and the continuing environmental damage to the Gulf of Mexico. Ambassador Matthysen also vowed to help identify and mobilize Belgian technologies that may help alleviate the ecological and social impact of the disaster.

Proposals by global marine and waterway contractors Jan de Nul and DEME are currently being evaluated by the U.S. Coast Guard and other departments within the Deepwater Horizon Response team. The relevant officials in Belgium could deploy, upon request, the state-of-the-art surface oil spill skimming DN 31 ship in the Gulf area. This vessel is normally obligated to remain on standby in the North Sea under charter by the Belgian and Dutch Governments.

The Belgian company operating the DN 31, **Jan De Nul**, has presented to state and local authorities in Louisiana a concept based on bringing sand from offshore borrow areas to construct barrier islands to stop the oil entering into the wetlands, as well as an oil-leak recovery plan using the 39 inch riser of Jan De Nul's vessel Simon Stevin. Another vessel of the company, the 60,000 cubic yard hopper tank-equipped Cristobal Colon, could be deployed within 11 days to support the recovery of underwater oil plumes.

Global marine and waterway contractor Dredging International also visited the Gulf of Mexico area to present its potential contribution in the construction of a sand-berm barrier along the coast of Louisiana to protect it against the oil spill. Dredging International's subsidiary, **DEME Group**, estimates that its groundbreaking dredging, environmental and marine engineering processes could significantly reduce the environmental cleansing and decontamination period in the Gulf area.

Particularly relevant for tourist-beaches cleaning, Tubize-based **Deep Green** company, has a patented "Thermophile in-situ" technology allowing for the decontamination of soil containing hydrocarbons without having to displace the soil itself. This technology, based on the circulation of hot gasses in tubes, ensures complete removal of pollution, contrary to other "in situ" techniques.

BEST Announces Expansion Plans During Ambassador's Visit

On May 27th 2010, BEST officials offered a Belgian Style business luncheon to local Colorado representatives, in honor of the visit of Ambassador and Mrs. Matthysen. CEO Paul Berghmans used the gathering with the company's presentation and announced plans to expand operations in the USA.

BEST (Belgian Electronic Sorting Technology) specializes in manufacturing sorting machinery for the food and non-food industry. With headquarters in Belgium and facilities in Denver, BEST is a world leader in sorting machinery, using the latest and most innovative optical technologies to achieve highest efficiency in the detection and removal of unwanted materials.

In December 2009 BEST started producing the Primus™ Sorter in Englewood, CO. The success of locally producing this small but important machine for the US market showed the benefits of manufacturing in the USA.

BEST would like to produce its entire line of machines for the North American market in its Colorado facilities, and in doing so achieve its plans to double sales to \$ 130 million dollars over the next 5 years.

The expansion of production capabilities will increase employment at the Englewood facilities from 25 to 75 over the next three years. BEST will also provide opportunities for several local subcontractors and supplier for many basic components and parts.

www.bestsorting.com

New 'Invest in Belgium' presentation

An updated version of the *Invest in Belgium* Powerpoint presentation can be consulted and downloaded on our website www.diplobel.us

Contact Us!
Embassy of Belgium (202) 625-5810



Belgium 6th Most Attractive Country for Foreign Investments in 2009

A new study by Ernst & Young, *Barometer of Belgian Attractiveness*, reveals that Belgium has jumped from 8th to 6th place in the annual listing of the most attractive European countries for foreign investment. The number of investment projects increased from 422 to 146, which gives Belgium a market share of 4.4% of all projects in Europe. Overall the number of projects in Europe declined by 11%.

Belgium jumped from 14th to 13th place in terms of job creation through foreign investments. About two thirds of the projects were new projects, compared to only half in 2008. Most of the investments were in sales and marketing, industry and logistics.

The group of foreign investment countries is led by the United States (33 projects), followed by the UK (16), France (14), Germany (13), Japan (12), and the Netherlands (9).

The survey among 800 business leaders indicates that Belgium was chosen mostly for its excellent quality of life, telecom infrastructure, transports and logistics, the quality of the workforce and the stable social relations.

The general Ernst & Young 2010 Survey on European attractiveness "Waking up to the New Economy" was presented at the 8th World Investment Conference in La Baule, France.

In general, the study showed that the big European economies held up relatively well in terms of their ability to attract inward investment in 2009. Larger Western European markets were still seen as safe havens in uncertain times.

www.ey.be

Dow Corning Invests \$13 million in Seneffe

Dow Corning recently announced that it will invest up to \$13 million to expand its European capabilities to innovate with silicon-based materials and technologies in Seneffe.

"This investment will also secure the creation of 75 additional jobs in the region which is fantastic news in the current business environment," commented Jean-Claude Marcourt, Minister for the economy for the Wallonia Region.

Dow Corning's expansion plans include the building of a Solar Energy Exploration and Development Center (SEED), which includes two new buildings that will complement the company's existing Business & Technology Center in Seneffe. Construction is expected to begin later in 2010.

The Walloon region will grant Dow Corning 7.5 million Euros of subsidies to help the company invest in expanded facilities and equipment to support research, development and production of silicon-based materials.

www.dowcorning.com

Belgium Beyond Expectations

Two new films entitled '*Belgium... beyond Expectations*' – have been released to promote Belgium abroad.

The emphasis of the six minute film for the general public is on geographic and cultural diversity, ranging from the country's cultural heritage to contemporary art, architecture and fashion, to the Belgian way of life.

The seven minute film for businesses turns the spotlight on five major assets of Belgium: highly developed R&D, Belgium's strategic location, the know-how available there, its status as the ideal test market and the country's quality of life.

Both films will be shown in the Belgian Pavilion at the World Expo in Shanghai from 1 May 2010 until the end of the exhibition. The two films will also be used at various official occasions and festivities during the six-month Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2010.

www.belgium.be/en/news/2010/news_belgium_beyond_expectations.jsp

Latest Economic Indicators

| | | |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| GDP | + 1.0% | 2010-Q1 |
| Inflation | 2.5% | 2010-05 |
| Unemployment | 8.2% | 2010-04 |
| Euro-dollar | 1.23 | 2010-06.22 |

National Bank of Belgium -06.22.2010



Owens Corning Builds Excellence Center in Zele

Owens Corning, a leading producer of glass fiber reinforcements for composite systems and building materials, announced in April the establishment of an excellence center for technical fabrics in Zele, Flanders.

The new excellence center in Flanders is a 5,500 square-meter facility that focuses on developing, testing and evaluating new fabric technologies before production and use in customer processes. In addition to equipment for weaving, stitching and assembling multi-axial fabrics, the center will have a laboratory for testing new fabric technologies in infusion molding and other closed-mold processes.

Established in 1938, Ohio-based Owens Corning has since grown into an industry leader, with about 160,000 employees in 28 countries worldwide.

By centralizing its fabric development activities in Zele, Owens Corning will have more flexibility in job scheduling, resulting in 24/7 activity if necessary. Furthermore, the expertise at this center will further drive standardization and improve quality at all its manufacturing facilities.

www.owenscorning.com

Flanders Biotech to Collaborate With New Jersey

FlandersBio, the umbrella organization for the life sciences and biotechnology sector in Flanders, Belgium with more than 190 members, has signed an agreement with its peer in New Jersey which will allow Flemish companies easier access to US investors and mature pharma corporations. Biotech companies such as Movetis, Thrombogenics and Ablynx are receiving much attention in US investment and biotech circles.

The agreement also aims for US biotech firms to set up similar activities in Flanders. The New Jersey biotech cluster is the fourth largest in the US and has 116 members.

In a second phase, FlandersBio will target the biotech cluster in New York and larger clusters in Boston and the San Francisco Bay area. Flanders hosts 136 life sciences companies, including 119 dedicated biotech firms that conduct research and development activities.

www.flandersbio.be

FDA Approvals for Belgian Drugs

The **Food and Drug Administration** recently approved a new version of a **Genzyme Corp.** drug designed to treat a rare illness known as Pompe disease. LUMIZYME, which is being made at a company plant in Geel, Belgium, treats children ages 8 and older and adults for late-onset Pompe disease. In Pompe disease, a gene mutation prevents the body from making or making enough of an enzyme called acid alpha-glucosidase, which is necessary for proper muscle functioning. The disease is believed to affect about one in 40,000 to 300,000 people. (www.genzyme.be)

Nomics' product RESPISENS also recently received FDA approval, and is now distributed by Civco in the U.S. RESPISENS is a device for patient motion tracking during radiotherapy. The system consists of a miniaturized transmitter/receiver that measures a distance on the patient body. If placed on the thorax or the abdomen, the Respisens tracks patient breathing. (www.nomics.be)

Belgium European Leader in Clinical Trials

A recent survey by Deloitte shows that Belgium has the highest number of medicines under development per capita and has the largest number of clinical trials per capita in Europe: of all clinical trials conducted in Europe, 9% are performed in Belgium.

The pharmaceutical industry is of crucial importance to the Belgian economy. Over 40% of private investment in R&D is targeted at the pharma sector. Approval times for clinical trials in Belgium are among the shortest in Europe: 15 days for Phase I and 28 days for Phase I-IV. This provides life sciences companies having trial activities in Belgium with a competitive advantage over other European regions. The collaborations between hospitals, universities, research centers and pharmaceutical companies have created an ideal environment for this essential part of developing an innovative therapeutic.

With 'The initiative to promote clinical trials in Belgium', key organizations in the pharmaceutical industry have established a shared Internet platform to cope with sector challenges, such as increased competition from countries like India and China. The goal is to safeguard the leading role Belgium is playing in clinical research.

<http://www.theinitiative.be/>



Studio 100 Makes Breakthrough in U.S.

The Belgian production house Studio 100, located near Antwerp, is going to make *House of Anubis* for the American Nickelodeon US, a remake of the successful Belgian-Dutch children's series *Het Huis Anubis*. This is the first time that the American children's channel has ordered a TV series from a European production house. 97 million American families will be able to watch the series during prime time this autumn.

Het Huis Anubis will soon start its fifth season on Nickelodeon in Belgium and the Netherlands. A remake with German actors is being shown on Nickelodeon in Germany. In Sweden and Mexico dubbed versions are running. Season 1 of *House of Anubis* for Nickelodeon US will be filmed by Studio 100 in Liverpool (United Kingdom). The castings for this new series are in full swing and filming has started this spring.

So far *Het Huis Anubis* has had unprecedented success in Belgium and the Netherlands. The series has won several awards. The first *Het Huis Anubis* board game was proclaimed "Toy of the Year". Over 200,000 of these board games have been sold. The *Het Huis Anubis* novels are a huge success too: so far over 780,000 books have been sold. 1,250,000 visitors have seen the full-length films *Het pad der 7 zonden* (The Path of the 7 Sins) and *De wraak van Arghus* (The Vengeance of Arghus) in movie theaters.

In the context of Studio 100's further internationalization, the partnership with Nickelodeon US signifies a new and important step. The production house has lots of other international activities outside the Dutch language area. In addition to existing co-productions with the BBC (including *Big & Small* and *Kerhwizz*), work is in full swing at their own animation studios, *Flying Bark Productions* in Sydney and *Studio 100 Animation* in Paris, on the remakes of the great classics, *Maya the Bee*, *Wickie the Viking* and *Heidi*.

<http://www.studio100.be>

Can't get enough of Business Memo? Earlier editions are available online, at www.diplobel.us.

The Embassy's website also lists other Investment Office publications, such as

- *Fact Sheets about various aspects of the Belgian economy**
- *Setting Up in Belgium: a pocket guide for the business executive.**
- *Corporate Directory: an overview of the Belgian corporate presence in the US**

Hard copies of all publications are available from Bart Deelen, Business Development Manager, at bart.deelen@diplobel.fed.be

To receive this publication by e-mail, please contact Bart Deelen at bart.deelen@diplobel.fed.be

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Embassy of Belgium
3330 Garfield Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008