

## Webwatch

António A. Martins · Teresa M. Mata

Published online: 10 May 2011  
© Springer-Verlag 2011

### Pollution prevention resource exchange

<http://www.p2rx.org/>

The pollution prevention network exchange (P2Rx) is an association of eight US regional pollution prevention centres that cover all the United States. It was created in 1997 by the US Environmental Protection Agency, and currently is partly funded by it. Its main goal is the implementation and development of a network to facilitate access to information related to pollution prevention and waste reduction throughout the US.

To fulfil their goals, the centres act mainly as information hubs, and promoters of the networking between states, federal agencies, local governments and other stakeholders, such as industry and technical assistance providers. The various centres work with a wide variety of partners, including many governmental or private organizations in various activities including the participation in pollution prevention or waste reduction programs, education activities, amongst others.

The P2Rx site was developed to support the activities of the consortium and the needs of the various stakeholders. It serves more as a hub presenting links to other resources, in particular websites. Yet, from the main page it is possible to go directly to a description of what is P2Rx, what are its main goals and how it operates. Also, a news and events section can also be accessed directly from the initial page, including featured videos on pollution prevention and other relevant information. The site presents on the left a list of

links, that includes the members of P2Rx main websites and other specialized in specific topics, as for example bibliographic resources. For example, in the “infohouse” link, connecting to the site <http://www.p2pays.org/infohouse/>, it is possible to find an extensive database of pollution prevention and waste reduction publications, most of them freely available and many of them old and hard to find. Other available links point to repositories of publications, hosted in other sites, or ongoing projects that deal with specific aspects. The “Topics Hub” area is particularly interesting, as people from different backgrounds and/or industry can find particular information on particular areas of activity. Also available is a networking area, where opportunities can be found in various subjects.

The site could have been better designed, as there is a wide variety of page designs between the different site pages, and many of them can be hard to read. Also, some activities of P2Rx are presented in the secondary pages, as for example the services that the consortium performs. Therefore, the search facility can be very helpful in assisting people looking for what they want. Regardless the limitations and the focus in the US reality, the website is very interesting to people working in pollution prevention and waste reduction with different backgrounds, for example in industry.

### Consortium for research industrial materials

<http://www.corrim.org/>

The Consortium for research industrial materials (CORRIM) is a research association created in the late 1970's to update and expand the findings of a 1976 report of the US National Academy of Sciences regarding the production and utilization of renewable materials in the

---

A. A. Martins (✉) · T. M. Mata  
Faculdade de Engenharia da Universidade do Porto (FEUP),  
Rua Dr. Roberto Frias S/N 4200 465, Porto, Portugal  
e-mail: amartins@fe.up.pt

construction industry. Currently, the consortium includes 15 US members and Canadian research institutions, and some companies, private organizations and governmental institutions.

Although initially mainly focused on the energy questions, the progresses in environmental science, the collection of data and a deeper understanding on the impacts of the construction industry lead in 1998 to a change in CORRIM goals. Nowadays the main goals are the development, implementation and managing of research and educational programs concerning the production, use and disposal of wood and other bio-based materials, in the economy as a whole but focused in the construction industry. The expected main result is the development of a comprehensive and peer-reviewed database containing the environmental impacts of wood-based materials through its entire life cycle, to serve as tool for companies in their strategic planning and investments, in particular when selecting the more adequate materials. Therefore, the research activities focus on life cycle assessment, carbon accounting, integration amongst several activity sectors, wood products and bioenergy basics.

The website, with a simple yet effective design, gives an account of the main activities and results of the CORRIM consortium. From a menu presented in all the webpages it is possible to easily access all areas of the website. Amongst them the “About US” and “Affiliates” present the consortium history, current goals and a comprehensive list of members, advisors and people responsible, with their contacts. Through the “Research” link, it is possible to access the various research areas. Each one has its independent page, where the goals and main results can be found. Links to reports or other relevant information are also included. In the “Publications” and “Presentations” link one can find reports, journal articles, multimedia presentations and other materials developed from the research and educational activities of CORRIM. A search facility is available throughout the website to help people in a hurry in finding what they are looking for.

The site does a pretty good job in presenting CORRIM history, activities and research results. Although focused in wood and other bio-based renewable materials for the construction industry, the information available, in particular the life cycle inventory data, may be relevant to specialists in other fields.

### Centre on sustainable consumption and production

<http://www.scp-centre.org/>

The centre on sustainable consumption and production (CSCP) is a joint research centre of UNEP and the

Wuppertal Institute, created in 2005, and currently based in Germany. The centre is part of a group of research organizations that collaborate with UNEP, especially in the development and implementation of activities related with the Marrakech process (MP), that deals with the promotion of sustainable patterns consumption and production.

Therefore, the centre focuses its scientific activities on supporting UNEP and other organizations in the sustainable consumption and production (SCP) field. In particular, CSCP engages in various projects, mainly with partners from developing countries, enabling them to develop more SCP practices, based on life cycle thinking and considering the regional conditions and resources. Thus, the main goals of the CSCP are to monitor and report trends in SCP, to develop and support the implementation of policies aimed at promoting SCP at a national and regional levels, to increase the awareness of both companies and consumers in their role in reaching SCP patterns throughout the entire value chain, and at a regional levels and to achieve effective cooperation between all the relevant stakeholders.

The website provides support to the CSCP activities mainly by presenting them and by making public most of the results originated from past and ongoing projects. Thus, in the site it is possible to find a description of the history of the centre, its strategic goals and current activities, directly from the entrance page in the “About US” button. Other relevant sections can also be accessed directly from it. For example, through the “Projects” button one can access a list of projects. Each one has its own webpage, with a brief description of the partners, past or ongoing activities, goals, contacts and other relevant information. The “Downloads” area includes a list of all the reports and publications written by members of CSCP based on the results of past or ongoing projects, in a broad variety of themes related to CSP. Most of them are in English and can be freely download through the website. In the “News” section, it is possible to find reports on conferences or meetings in the SCP area, and other information as well.

The site has a simple yet appealing design, and it is easy to navigate. To help people finding what they want a search facility is available in all pages of the site. Even though CSCP is a young institute, the breadth of the projects, activities themes, and other information available in the site make it a worthwhile visit to researchers and policy makers with interests in the SCP area.

### Marrakech process

<http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech/>

The Marrakech process is 10-year international program with the main goal of speed up the transition towards more

sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, promoting simultaneously the social and economic development within the carrying capacity of existing ecosystems and the decoupling between development and environmental degradation. The MP is part of the Johannesburg Plan of implementation, agreed upon the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

The program is currently run and led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), with the participation of a large number of organizations. They include governments, development agencies, national cleaner production centres in developing countries, research centres, environmental organizations and the civil society in general. All activities developed by the MP focus on the complete life cycle of the products and services, to ensure that all the relevant environmental impacts are taken into account. Its main goals are to assist countries in the transition towards more sustainable consumption and production practices, to help corporations in the development and implementation of more environmental friendly business models, and to motivate consumers in adopting more sustainable lifestyles.

Seven task forces were created to tackle currently important problems in specific areas. They are mainly focused in problems afflicting and/or of interest to developing countries, such as: sustainable tourism, development and implementation of national plans on SCP, eco-labelling in Africa, policy and network development to encourage innovation in product development, energy efficiency in the constructed environment, development of tools to support and enhance capacity building for sustainable procurement, and the promotion of education and sustainable life styles. Other projects or research activities may be developed under the umbrella of the MP depending on the interests of the partners and on the local interests. In any case, their activities are coordinated with each other to promote synergies and to ensure that the best results are achieved.

The website serves various purposes within the framework of the Marrakech process. There it is possible to find a full description of the program, how it is planned and how its activities are being developed and implemented in

practice. In specific sections, it is possible to find a description of the various tasks, including the organization or the person/people responsible for them, goals, principal activities and projects, main results and publications, amongst other information. When relevant, links are provided to exterior sites where more detailed information can be found. Other links point to an events area, where descriptions of past and future meetings can be found. Other sections of the site are mainly addressed to specific stakeholders, such as NGOs, Business and Industry, among others. In each section, the more relevant news, publications or meetings are presented directly in the initial page. In the publications section, it is possible to find articles and reports related to the MP. A periodic newsletter is produced by the leaders to keep all the people interested informed about the events and all new developments in the MP. It can be subscribed in the website, and the previous issues are also available.

Note that although the above referred link is to the central site of MP, other information can also be obtained at <http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/>, supported by UN-DESA. It acts mainly as a mirror, but there is some information and links to other sites not found in the main one, and it is also somewhat easier to navigate and has a better presentation. The main site maybe hard to read and some links are outdated and need to be repaired. Although the Marrakech process is focused on the policy and decision at a national and/or regional level, the materials available at the site can be of interest to people in the area of sustainable development, for example educators in various degrees of teaching.

### Final words

We will return on the next issue with a fresh selection of sites. If you know of sites that are worthy of being presented, send us all relevant information to the following E-Mail address: [amartins@fe.up.pt](mailto:amartins@fe.up.pt). Any suggestions will be considered with great attention for possible publication. In that case the contributors names will be acknowledge in this column. Surf well.