

## The European Green Deal and the role of concrete pavements in the new smart mobility

Brussels, January 2020

1. **EUPAVE, the European Concrete Paving Association, has read with attention** the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions ***The European Green Deal*** COM(2019) 644 - final, dated 11 December 2019.
2. As indicated in the Communication, becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050 is the greatest challenge and opportunity of our times. The European Green Deal is the most ambitious package of measures that should enable European citizens and businesses to benefit from sustainable green transition.
3. Road transport represents a key pillar of the new growth strategy aiming at transforming the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy seeking no emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 (carbon neutrality). Being 100% circular, concrete pavements make roads more sustainable by providing higher resilience to climate change, good solutions for water management and less global warming.
4. As a response to a generation's defining task, thus to tackle climate and environmental-related challenges, the European Green Deal calls for the full mobilisation of the industry and requests that all sectors play their part in the upcoming new Climate Law whose draft is expected by March 2020. That is why EUPAVE would like to be fully engaged in the preparation of this and other new key policies and measures.
5. We consider that concrete pavements, thanks to their durability and genuine characteristics - ahead of the new paradigm of mobility with autonomous, electric and interconnected vehicles- can contribute to accelerate the shift to sustainable and smart mobility considered as an important element of the European Green Deal. It is not by chance that **EUPAVE has welcomed the European Green Deal by organizing, the same day of its official announcement, a fruitful debate at the European Parliament on decarbonisation of the road transport by 2050.**

### **New circular economy action plan**

6. Concrete structures are safe, durable and sustainable. They make efficient use of natural resources and respect the environment during their entire life cycle. **EUPAVE is fully committed with the mobilisation of the industry for a clean and circular economy, thus we appreciate that construction will be one of the resource-intensive sectors that will take part in the new circular economy action plan.**
7. Concrete pavements are of special relevance since concrete is an inert material that can be 100% recycled and, when removed, concrete rubble can be used for other means while at the same time offers a long service life.

### ***TEN-T, cohesion policy and long-life cycle***

8. **We, in EUPAVE, strongly advocate that long-life cycle criteria should definitively guide public authorities in dealing with public tenders for roads.** The introduction of the criteria of ‘most economic advantageous tender (MEAT)’ in the EU public procurement Directives is a good development but it is not enough to eliminate the traditional risk aversion of national authorities who still rely only in the price described in the tender.
9. Firstly, **EUPAVE agrees with the Commission that new measures on their own will not be enough to achieve the European Green Deal’s objectives and fully endorse the need of stepping up the EU’s efforts to ensure that current legislation and policies relevant to the Green Deal are enforced and effectively implemented.** That why we urge the Commission to apply this commitment to EU public procurement Directives whose effectiveness is losing momentum in the last years. EUPAVE remains available to collaborate in this task with the EU institutions, particularly the Commission, by means of providing technical information and data to improve the current status.
10. Besides, **EUPAVE also agrees with the urgent need of reliable, comparable and verifiable information to enable buyers (public authorities) to make more sustainable decisions and reduce the risk of ‘greenwashing’.** Regarding sustainability, EUPAVE strongly advocates for genuine and true data and is ready to contribute, if necessary, in the new legislation and guidance announced by the Commission on green public purchasing.
11. But on the other side, **EUPAVE shares the European Commission’s view that, to deliver the European Green Deal, there is a need to rethink policies for transport and large-scale infrastructure.** In order to ensure consistency with the climate neutrality objective, we think that the European Commission has now a great opportunity to offer clear guidance on this by making obligatory the criteria of the long-life cycle analysis in its own programs like TEN-T or in the new cohesion policy 2021-2027, which will be established by the new Multiannual Financial Framework.

12. Overall, concrete pavements are not only compatible but very well fitted to achieve the goals and synergies of the European Green Deal. **EUPAVE therefore calls the road infrastructure to occupy its place in any debate about the new smart mobility**, a debate often limited to car and fuels. **EUPAVE is definitively engaged to participate actively in the definition of new EU policy and measures of the Green Deal in order to provide a more sustainable future to European citizens.**