

WORLD COPPER DEMAND GROWTH NOW 2.5 %, CORNERSTONE FOR A PRICE INCREASE IN 2016

Innovating remains on the to-do list for Spanish companies if they want to compete in a globalized world.

Atlantic Copper a headliner at the Metallic Mining Hall.

This week saw the debut of the Metallic Mining Hall, an international trade show bringing together all the main mining firms and ancillary companies, where Huelva-based Atlantic Copper, a copper ore-processing company, really held the limelight.

After the event was officially opened by José Sánchez Maldonado, head of the regional Department of Labour, Business and Trade, the keynote address was delivered by Javier Targhetta, CEO of Atlantic Copper and a recognized international industry expert.

In his speech, Javier Targhetta highlighted the need to hone the competitiveness of Spanish and European companies through innovation and new technologies by applying talent to improve what we already have and investing in R&D. Right now, he added, Spain is number 33 on the world list of competitive countries, a position “far lower than it ought to hold”.

He also called for a change in business attitudes in a world defined by lightning changes and globalization. The traditional attitude of reacting to change has got to be transformed into a proactive attitude, so that companies can anticipate events and seize business opportunities.

On this point, Targhetta referred to the growing consumption of ore by China, which accounts for 50 % of the world demand, and other countries, like India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, Cambodia and Malaysia. “Spain defines its preferred markets as Morocco, Europe and Latin America, but it forgets that we’re the leading market for other countries, and we’d better be ready”, warned Atlantic Copper’s CEO.

He also urged the Andalusia Council to act diligently to promote the granting of mining permits and to continue encouraging mining, because that will benefit Andalusia and Spain.

On the second day, Antonio de la Vega, corporate social responsibility manager at Atlantic Copper, spoke and moderated the round table on CSR in mining and related industries. Other participants at the round table were MATSA, Cobre Las Cruces and Iberpotash.



Antonio talked about how “CSR in twenty-first-century companies generally and Atlantic Copper in particular is not a fad. It’s a strategic objective that means being aware of the stakeholder expectations, needs and impact we create in everything we do. By definition and by conviction, sustainable development is based on three pillars, the economic, the environmental and the social. That’s where the modern company must get busy nowadays”.

He also said that the work companies in the industry are putting into corporate social responsibility is on the rise. In the case of Atlantic Copper, the increase began in 2009 with the creation of the Atlantic Copper Foundation, an organization that engages in “social, athletic, cultural, solidarity, educational and training actions as well as cooperation, research, promotion and preservation of the natural, artistic and historic heritage of Huelva”.

Antonio underlined the fact that Atlantic Copper is the industry’s first company to earn AENOR IQNet SR10 certification. Only 50 entities in the whole world hold this certification, which attests to best international practices and recommendations in matters of corporate responsibility, good governance, sustainability and commitment to stakeholders.

Miguel Palacios, general manager for metallurgy at Atlantic Copper, contributed to the technical sessions on the third day of the event, when he spoke on energy management in copper metallurgy. He explained the importance of implementing an efficient energy management system in mining companies, not only for environmental reasons, but also to reduce economic impact

Energy management at the company Miguel Palacios helms not only is “a necessary factor for contributing to the reduction of CO₂ emissions, but also forms part of our survival, since energy costs account for 35 % of our production costs, and we’ve been working hard for many years now to bring them down, through innovation projects that pursue this target and by mainstreaming energy management into our operations”. The general manager noted that with these practices in the last five years his company has slashed its energy consumption per unit by 20 % to 614 Wh/t per year.

He also said that having certified the energy management system has served to “make sure there are no blind spots, ensure that our actions and results will be continued and followed up in future, and make it easier to raise awareness in people; and people, as always, are the key”.

Atlantic Copper put in a good show at the Metallic Mining Hall. The company’s executive and technical team attended the scientific sessions and explored the exhibit space, where they met representatives of other companies in the industry.