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The European Golf Association Golf Course Committee report to the European Golf Association Annual General Meeting 23rd October 2011

Following its first meeting in January 2009, the EGA GCC spent its initial 2 years learning about building relations with European Union bodies. 2011 has seen encouraging results from this preparatory work, with the support of Burson-Marsteller, our Brussels-based consultants. Good contacts have now been made with a number of influential European Commission staff in the Directorate General Environment Water Unit, Biodiversity division and Sports Unit. Strong support for the EGA GCC has been sourced from Members of the European Parliament, including Toine Manders (Netherlands), Santiago Fisas (Spain) and James Elles (UK).

Evidence to suggest that this relationship building is bearing fruit comes from:

- the invitation to address the European Parliament Sport Inter-Group meeting in the European Parliament in January 2011. Our environmental message was well received and we were encouraged to develop material on the contribution golf can make to wider society
- the invitation to make a presentation during the biodiversity session at the 2011 Green Week event in May. Case studies on golf courses providing a sanctuary for wildlife were included and proved to be one of the highlights of the session
- welcome contributions by the EGA GCC to the Tourism sector of the EU Business & Biodiversity Platform, with a case study on Ljunghusen Golf Club, Sweden, included in their benchmark methodology for biodiversity
- the inclusion of an EGA GCC proposed amendment to a draft motion for a European Parliament resolution on the European dimension in sport that points out that where sports take place in the natural environment, a balance must be ensured between their societal benefits and the health of the natural environments in which they take place
- meetings with the EC Directorate Environment, Water Unit to put forward evidence that golf is aware of its responsibilities and is taking action to conserve water. Water will be the theme for Green Week 2012. The EGA GCC wish to thank national federations in southern Europe for helping to provide this information
- support from our MEP friends for an EGA GCC golf exhibition in the European Parliament in May/June 2012.

Federations in EU Member States should still be receiving the quarterly reports on EU environmental activities likely to impact on golf prepared by the Committee's Brussels-based consultants, Burson-Marsteller. All of the information and fact sheets produced by the EGA GCC can be downloaded from 'The Golf Course' area on the EGA website.

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2011 has been a very busy year for the EGA GCC and special mention should be made of the time given to attending meetings and events in Brussels by its EGA representative David Gomez (from the Royal Spanish Golf Federation), Stig Persson (representing the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations) and Achim Reinmuth (representing the European Institute of Golf Course Architects). 2012 looks like being just as busy and, in addition to circulating information to EGA members, we will continue to call on them to support the work of the Committee.

Finally, our thanks to the PGA European Tour and The R&A for their generous financial support of the Committee.

TONY BOZZI

Chairman, EGA Golf Course Committee

September 2011