



Association Internationale de la Savonnerie, de la Détergence et des Produits d'Entretien
International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products

A.I.S.E. launches Charter for Sustainable Cleaning

Brussels 1 December 2004 – In line with calls by the current Dutch Presidency of the EU for industry to prioritise 'clean, clever and competitive' eco-innovation, the European detergents industry today launches its Charter for Sustainable Cleaning.

"This Charter is a significant new Europe-wide initiative to improve the detergent industry's sustainability profile," said Charles Laroche, President of the soaps, detergents and maintenance products association, the A.I.S.E., speaking at the association's first annual Information Day in Brussels. "It is part of this industry's ongoing commitment to turn sustainable development into action, and we believe it is programmes such as these that can help to reconcile the Johannesburg environmental and social goals with the Lisbon competitiveness agenda."

Addressing the Information Day, Catherine Day, Director-General of DG Environment, welcomed the industry's initiative: "I'm pleased to see that industry is taking a proactive role in promoting sustainable development. I believe that private sector initiatives such as the Charter are necessary in the process towards sustainable development. We can only shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns if we have the engagement of all stakeholders and especially business."

The Charter for Sustainable Cleaning provides a single framework that guides all companies in the industry to implement the measures necessary to improve the industry's sustainability profile over the whole lifecycle of products, from the sourcing of raw materials through manufacturing and distribution to consumer use and disposal.

To enhance transparency and credibility, the Charter includes key performance indicators, which will be collected and independently verified, to track improvements in the industry's sustainability profile over time. The first full-year set of results will be published in 2006 for performance in 2005.

The Charter is the latest in a progression of voluntary initiatives undertaken by the A.I.S.E. and its network of national industry associations and member companies. It follows on from the Code of Good Environmental Practice and the Washright campaign, launched in 1998, and the HERA targeted risk assessment initiative, run jointly with the European chemicals industry.

Specifically, the Charter was triggered by the Green Paper on Integrated Product Policy, and the industry's efforts to see how it could address key issues of eco-efficient innovation in the detergents industry.

Also addressing the Information Day today were Patrick Hennessy, DG Enterprise, Anders Wijkman MEP, Chris Davies MEP, Simon Smits, representing the Dutch Presidency and Chairman of the Council ad-hoc Working Group on REACH, Bas de Leeuw, Head of the Strategy Unit of the Production and Consumption branch at the United Nations Environment Programme, and Stefan Scheuer, Policy Director at the European Environment Bureau.

Working together for a cleaner Europe



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Notes to Editors:

The A.I.S.E. is a network of 35 national associations in 31 countries. It represents more than 900 companies active in the consumer goods and / or industrial and institutional markets, which have an estimated market value of some 35 billion euros total.

The website of the Charter for Sustainable Cleaning will be active shortly, at www.sustainable-cleaning.com

The Code of Good Environmental Practice, which ran from 1996-2001, was formally adopted in 1998 with a European Commission Recommendation (98/480/EC). COGEP was a voluntary industry initiative run by the A.I.S.E. in order to reduce the environmental impact of household laundry washing. The Code had two main objectives: 1) to continue environmental progress in the design and marketing of products and packages for household laundry detergents; and 2) to encourage consumers to be more closely involved in reducing environmental impacts. Specific reduction targets were set – and progress tracked – in four areas to achieve the first objective. To meet the second objective, a communications campaign called Washright was developed and funded by the industry. For further information, please visit: www.aise-net.org or www.washright.com

HERA – Human and Environmental Risk Assessment – is a European voluntary initiative, which was launched in 1999, by A.I.S.E. and CEFIC, the European chemicals industry association. HERA provides a common risk assessment framework for the household cleaning products industry. For further information, please visit: www.heraproject.com

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