



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT

**Minutes of the second Regular Meeting on the
implementation of the Commission's Communication on
Integrated Product Policy**

Brussels, 20.9.2004

At the invitation of the Commission the second Regular Meeting on the implementation of the Commission's Communication on Integrated Product Policy (IPP) took place in Brussels on 20.9.2004. The meeting was chaired by the Commission. Representatives from seventeen EU Member States (AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FI, IE, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK and the UK) and one European Economic Area State (NO) attended, along with stakeholder representatives from the European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC), EuroCommerce, the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN), the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME), the Union of Industrial and Employers' Federations of Europe (UNICE). A full list of attendees is attached.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

There were no objections to the Agenda and hence it was adopted.

2. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The **COM** explained that following the last meeting it had prepared the minutes and circulated the relevant parts to the members with an invitation to comment. Several sets of comments had been received, and these had been integrated insofar as they were relevant. The revised version had then been circulated with the meeting documents at the end of July.

The minutes were accepted by all members present with an amendment to the **SE** paragraph in section 4, so that it reads, "An internet tool on greening public procurement was ~~also developed for public purchasers and educational campaigns for them~~ will be launched. It also participates in the EU campaign for ~~promotes~~ the EU Eco-label and for the Nordic Swan."

3. PRESENTATION FROM THE COMMISSION ON THE EXERCISE TO IDENTIFY THE PRODUCTS WITH THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

The **COM** (the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies of the Joint Research Centre) presented the activities being conducted in the first stage of this exercise, which is to develop and apply a methodology to identify the products with the greatest environmental impacts from a life-cycle perspective. It explained that the work was being carried out by members of the European Science and Technology Observatory (ESTO) coming from Leiden University (CML) and TNO in the Netherlands, the Technical University of Denmark and the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO) in Belgium.

The project began in January 2004 and is due to end in the first half of 2005. Two workshops had been held with external experts in May and September. In addition, the Commission had consulted stakeholders through the Internet on a working document during June, July and August and had invited those submitting substantial comments to small meetings in September. The stakeholder consultations are due to continue: after the draft final report is produced in December there will be the opportunity to submit written comments and the **COM** will organise a stakeholder meeting in the first quarter of 2005.

The approach taken in the project seeks to make full use of existing studies and to perform a new top-down analysis for the EU25. From looking at the existing studies it became clear that there are considerable differences in scope and methodology. This has included, amongst other things, bottom-up approaches for the EU15 (such as the Study on external environmental effects related to the life-cycle of products and services carried out by BIO Intelligence and O2 France for the Commission) and top-down approaches for individual member states (e.g. “Identifying key products for the federal product and environmental policy” by the Institut Wallon and VITO for the Belgian Federal Government). In each case a systematic review of the key characteristics – i.e. their methodology, completeness, reliability, relevance (in space and time) and results – was undertaken. Following this the results of the studies were compared by defining comparable products, comparing the results by impact indicator and attempting to explain the differences and by comparing the overall results of the studies in terms of their impact categories.

As far as the top-down analysis for the EU25 is concerned it is looking at the environmental input-output model covering the full life-cycle of about 500 products. To do this it adapts a model originally developed for the USA to the European situation. Once completed, it will provide a picture of the life-cycle environmental impacts of products for the different impact categories. This will be subject to a sensitivity analysis and a qualitative analysis of validity and reliability.

Many members then asked questions and made remarks.

EuroCommerce stated that Belgian business was very unhappy with the Belgian study and asked the Commission to be aware of this. The **COM** replied that it had indeed received a copy of a study that criticised the Belgian study and would take this into account. In any case, it added, the expert group was there to provide this type of additional information and criticism.

BE asked why only the draft final report of the Belgian study had been used, when the final report was available. The **COM** replied that it would integrate the final results if **BE** sent it the report, which it agreed to do.

EuroCommerce added that as data are constantly improving and new products developing a new analysis may be needed in five years time. The **COM** agreed that the ongoing study could only be a snapshot of the situation at any particular time, but added that reviewing the study would be easier as much of the methodological grandwork would already have been done by this study.

EuroCommerce remarked that the difference between the “top-down” and “bottom-up” approach was not always clear. The **COM** answered, saying that there were essentially two ways to conduct an analysis of this type. The “bottom-up” approach involved beginning with a process or an individual product and conducting a Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA) of it. These results for this particular product are then assumed to be representative for a wider range of products and so are extrapolated to a much larger group of products. Combined with other LCAs for representative products it is possible to put together a picture of the whole economy. On the other hand the “top-down” approach began with “input-output” tables produced by statistical agencies. While these have different degrees of aggregation (between 30 and 500 sectors), some also contain environmental information (e.g. on emissions and resource use). This methodology can then be used. The level of

aggregation is, however, significant. If, for example, only some ten types of products are distinguished, aggregates are defined very broadly leading to wide categories such as 'food products'. If the ten types of products are further disaggregated to around 50-70 products, it becomes possible to differentiate between, for example, animal or plant-based food. Further disaggregation results in several hundred products and allows more specific products, such as eggs, cheese and milk products to be dealt with.

BE asked how the methodology for choosing the level of aggregation would be decided. **EuroCommerce** added that they wanted to understand how particular products would be allocated to product groupings. The **COM** replied that this was important, because it would obviously influence the results. The exact level of aggregation would be explained in the final report, but it would probably follow the scheme of the United Nations Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP). As to the allocation of products to specific groups, this would need to be transparent.

BE then inquired how packaging and transport were being dealt with in the project. The **COM** replied that packaging was being treated as an input to the life-cycles of other products. Transport also followed a similar approach, except for where it is concerned with final consumption, e.g. the use of cars.

Finally, **BE** also asked whether the goal of the study was to identify the environmental impacts or the environmental improvement potential. The **COM** replied that this study would only look at impacts; a further study would be needed to look at the potential for improvement.

DK began by explaining that the results of a study they had commissioned had been delayed because some data needed rechecking and that it should finally be ready in a month or so. The **COM** said that it would like to take these results into account.

DK then asked why the focus of the study was on final consumption and not on exports. The **COM** replied that it was necessary to place some limitations on the scope but that imports are covered as these are important to look at the impacts. In addition, there are not many products which the EU produces exclusively for export.

CEN asked how the structural differences between the EU and the USA were being taken into account. The **COM** replied that while EU data were being used as much as possible, this became increasingly difficult as the level of disaggregation increased and so US data need to be used, where the differences between the and the EU are not too big. Where there are significant structural differences EU data will be used. The Restricted Additive Schwarz method is used to accommodate data from different sources in a systematic and coherent way.

SE asked how services are considered within the project. The **COM** replied that the study covers both goods and services following classification schemes, such as COICOP.

SE enquired about the environmental parameters used in input-output tables. The **COM** replied that all impact categories used in LCA studies were covered. **DE** asked how the different impact categories would be weighted. The **COM** replied

that it would not do a weighting directly, instead it would provide results by impact categories.

SE also asked whether the final report will be a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. The **COM** replied that it is essentially a top-down approach but that some bottom-up information had been included from existing studies. It is possible to combine top-down and bottom-up approaches, for example using hybrid analysis. **SE** also asked whether the Commission intended to have a Regular Meeting to discuss the study once it was available. The **UK** stated that it was very important to consult stakeholders on this work and its follow-up actions. The **COM** replied that it recognised that the results of the study were likely to be politically controversial but felt that there would be no need for a specific Regular Meeting on the issue, but that a more general stakeholder meeting was planned.

PT asked how it should take into account difficulties to get reasonable data. The **COM** replied that this would be addressed, for example through sensitivity analysis.

IE asked how products being recycled into other products would be taken into account, for example aluminium cans into cars. The **COM** stated that the study will not look at materials as such, instead information is aggregated.

EuroCommerce remarked that it would aid understanding if the same terms were used in the same way in the different Commission initiatives, e.g. IPP and the Resources Strategy. The **COM** accepted that this was important.

The **UK** stated that it felt it would be important that the results of this work were integrated into other parts of IPP, such as greening public procurement and eco-labelling.

4. DISCUSSION AND AGREEMENT ON THE DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR REGULAR MEETINGS

The **COM** began by explaining that following on from the discussions at the last Regular Meeting and the written comments received subsequently from members, it had produced a revised version of the draft rules, which it had circulated with the meeting documents. This document included the comments received and gave the Commission's position on them. The subsequent discussion concerned the points below.

1) Objective

Both the **DK** and the **UK** agreed with the Commission's reasoning and didn't press the point further. It was decided to leave the text as it is.

2) Composition

The **EEB** reiterated its request for the advertising industry to be invited in order to make them aware of the discussions in this area. The **COM** stated that they could be invited as experts, when appropriate. **UNICE** stated that the advertising industry is indirectly a UNICE member.

AT, supported by **DE and the EEB**, argued strongly for Switzerland to be either invited as a member to the meeting or given observer status, not least because of its experience in IPP. **AT** also objected to the Commission's reasoning on this point where it stated that there was a need to respect Community structures. The **COM** replied that while Switzerland had definitely contributed to the development of life-cycle thinking and tools it could be invited as an expert where its experience was relevant. In addition, it stated that the Swiss people had chosen not to join the EU and this should be respected.

In the end it was decided to adopt the revised text proposed by the Commission in the draft.

4) Members

Discussion focused on the new draft proposed by the Commission. **DK** asked how the word "should" should be interpreted. The **COM** replied that while reporting was non-binding in nature, it would ideally be accompanied by written information.

It was agreed to amend the final sentence of the Commission's revised draft to read, "This should ideally be supplemented with written information".

5) Frequency and Duration

DK considered that in order for members to propose items for the agenda it would be necessary to know when the meetings were likely to be held. The **COM** said that it would do its utmost to inform members in advance, but that as the internal confirmation was only given four weeks in advance this could only be provisional.

The final sentence was supplemented to read, "The Commission will inform the members of the likely dates, as far in advance as possible, and in any case eight weeks before the meeting."

8) Expenses

The revised draft from the Commission was accepted.

9) Decision Taking

The **EEB** wanted to follow what it termed a "round table" format, where each member would have to give an opinion on the matter under discussion. The **COM** stated that it felt that this was impractical, given the time this would take and considering that not all members may wish to voice their opinions on every issue. It therefore preferred that members intervene if they have particular points that they feel need to be taken into account.

The revised draft from the Commission was accepted.

10) Invitation of experts

The revised draft from the Commission was accepted.

11) Working Groups

The revised draft from the Commission was accepted.

12) Documents for Discussion

This section was amended following the discussions under point 14.2.

The title was amended to read, “Documents and Issues for discussion”

The first paragraph was left untouched. The remainder reads, “~~Minutes of the meetings must be submitted to the subsequent meeting for possible discussion. The Secretariat may submit the draft minutes for approval to Members of the Regular Meetings by e-mail. Once distributed Members have one calendar month in which to react, otherwise they are considered to have given their tacit approval. Should the draft minutes meet with considerable problems, they should be put on the agenda of the subsequent meeting.~~”

13) Transparency

For reasons discussed with section 14.1 below, this section was supplemented with a sentence at the end which reads, “The Secretariat will also place a summary of the likely future activities and issues to be discussed at the regular meetings on the website insofar as these are foreseeable.”

14.1) Working Plan

DK stated that it would be helpful to have a clear idea of what issues were likely to come up in the future meetings so that they could marshal their resources in good time. The **EEB** agreed with this, stating that it often took them a while to find experts. The **COM** was against a working plan as such, stating that the Communication was a good indication of what was likely to come up; however, it agreed that producing a summary of future activities could be useful. The adopted text will be placed in point 13 of the rules.

14.2) Approving the minutes

The **COM** explained that by waiting for the minutes of the Regular Meetings to be approved by the subsequent meeting an unnecessary feeling of secrecy was given to stakeholders. Instead it proposed a system of tacit approval where members are given one month to react to the draft minutes, which are then accepted. If there are significant problems with these draft minutes they would remain as a draft and could be discussed at the next meeting.

The Commission’s draft text on this point was accepted and placed as a second paragraph in section 12 (see above).

5. DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE CREATION OF WORKING GROUPS

The **COM** explained that following the initial discussions at the last Regular Meeting it had distributed a template for members to fill in with their suggestions. In all it had received eight suggestions and these were outlined in the document circulated with the meeting documents. In this it was suggested to establish one

working group on product information and one on reporting. Ten days before the meeting draft mandates for the groups were circulated.

The discussion initially focussed on the Commission's suggested choice of working groups. **UEAPME** said it respected the Commission's selection, but wanted to know what would happen with the other suggestions. The **COM** answered that it was unlikely that it would establish any new working groups for the next eighteen months or so, but that those not selected this time could be considered again then. The **EEB** said it regretted that its suggestion had not been selected, but felt that some of aspects it could be integrated within the document on product information and other parts could be used a "seed document" for the forthcoming discussion on product design obligations. **EuroCommerce** said it supported the Commission's choice.

It was then agreed that these two working groups would be established and discussion focussed on the draft mandates.

The draft mandate on reporting was accepted without significant comment.

For the draft mandate on product information, **DK** stated that product-chain issues were lacking; the **EEB** agreed. Here the **COM** asked for concrete text suggestions. **SE** wanted to see consideration of barriers and driving forces included. The **NL** too wanted a focus on barriers, including looking at why existing tools don't work. Here again the **COM** asked for concrete text suggestions.. **SE** wanted the working group to last for at least 18 months as 12 was, in their opinion, not long enough. The **COM** replied that it was already committed to taking a decision on Environmental Product Declarations in 2005, so 18 months would not fit within this timeframe. In addition, it added that it was better to begin with a target of 12 months and prolong if necessary, than to allow the working groups to expand indefinitely. **SE** also asked whether the Commission intended to engage a contractor to do some of the background work. The **COM** answered that it appreciated the amount of work it was taking on, and it would perhaps engage consultants, but this would depend on the budgetary resources made available next year. **LV** asked that new member state experts be included too, as their information needs were different. The **COM** replied that it would like to include such experts, but that the onus would have to be on the new member states to propose them.

A revised mandate was then accepted with the following changes compared to the version circulated by the Commission prior to the meeting:

- Under point 3 in the objective section, the words, "and the demand for environmental information about products increased" are added;
- In the indents in the description of likely activities section the second is changed as follows: "~~the use of relevant ISO standards~~ and standardisation activities" in order to recognise that there are more than just international standards to take account of. A new final indent is added, "information flow throughout the product life-cycle" to make the link to information flow explicit.

Following the request for the members to suggest experts circulated with the meeting documents, the **COM** asked members to submit suitable names by October 1st 2004. The **COM** also stated that it would announce the need for experts on its

Internet site. It also said that expected both working groups to begin around the turn of the year.

6. UPDATE BY THE COMMISSION ON THE PILOT PROJECTS EXERCISE

The **COM** stated that the two projects had been launched with a press release in June and that they were now in their first stage. This involves analysing each product's (mobile phone and a teak garden chair) environmental impacts during its life-cycle. The Commission had asked all stakeholders, through its Internet site, to supply the Commission with information on the environmental impacts of the products in question. The deadline for this information was September 15th. In the case of the Nokia project, this will then be used by Nokia to produce a report on the product's environmental impacts. For Carrefour, a consultant has been commissioned to use the information submitted, together with any that they may be able to find, to produce such a report.

At the same time as the Commission asked, again via its website and with the same deadline, for stakeholders interested in taking part to commit themselves and tell the Commission what they could contribute. Altogether 35 stakeholders have expressed an interest, of which 7 were for the teak garden chair project, 16 for the mobile phone project and 12 for both. The Commission will together with Nokia and Carrefour, examine these and invite the best applications to take part.

The **COM** underlined that, to date, only one Member State (**UK**) had volunteered to take part and suggested that others, particularly those with strong industries in this area could usefully consider doing so.

BE stated that it felt that Member States should be involved in this exercise and wanted to know how this should be done. The **COM** replied that it had put a series of "questions and answers" on its website in July and it hoped that these would answer any questions.

7. UPDATE ON STUDIES BEING CARRIED OUT FOR THE COMMISSION

The **COM** reported on two studies where work is currently ongoing.

The study to develop indicators for IPP has now began in June and will last for one year; its budget is around €100,000. It is being conducted by the Institute for Product Development who are scheduled to produce an Interim Report in November, which will then be discussed by stakeholders at the end of January.

The study to make life-cycle information and interpretative tools available is currently being conducted by TNO. An expert workshop was held in June to provide feedback on the consultants' efforts. They are now in the process of drawing up an Interim Report. In principle the study should be finished by the end of November.

8. UPDATE BY THE COMMISSION ON IPP-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES ACTION PLAN (ETAP)

The **COM** gave a brief overview of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan. According to the ETAP the definition of environmental technologies – “all technologies whose use is less environmentally harmful than relevant alternatives” – includes products, as well as processes for managing pollution and processes for managing resources more efficiently. After outlining the broad areas included in ETAP it went on to describe the concept and work on performance targets. It stated that in the ETAP these were described as being ambitious environmental performance targets for key products, services and processes and that they would be based on the best currently available or even beyond. While initially they would be based on voluntary agreements, they may, in the long-term, become legally binding. So far six Member States have identified performance targets as a priority in implementing ETAP. An expert meeting will be held in the last week of September to try to elaborate the concept further so that it can be made operational. In any case it is clear that the obvious synergies with the ongoing IPP work need to be fully developed.

In the ensuing discussion, **DK** and the **EEB** asked how the workshop was being organised. The **COM** replied that this meeting was the initiative of individual experts and that its results would be reported back to the next meeting of the ETAP high-level working group, which was made up of Member States, and which is due to take place around the end of November.

EuroCommerce asked whether there were already examples of performance targets. The **COM** replied that there were already certain examples of this, for example the Renewables and Biofuels directives. They also asked whether these targets would remain voluntary. The **COM** replied that they would not be made mandatory immediately. **FI** asked how these targets differed from setting BATs. The **COM** replied that these were based on the IPPC regulatory approach, while performance targets, as yet, were not based on any regulatory approach.

The **UK** said that it felt, as far as IPP and ETAP were concerned, there was also a need to look at public procurement as well as performance targets. The **EEB** asked how performance targets would take into account product-service systems.

DK asked about how technology platforms in ETAP were funded, to which the **COM** replied that there was no single way they were funded, if at all.

The **COM** concluded the discussions by saying that there were clearly close inter-linkages between IPP and ETAP. While the approach being followed in the ETAP included possible work led by Member States or other stakeholders, the IPP Communication was comparatively centralised. It was therefore important to ensure strong links between these initiatives, both within the Commission and within the Member States. The progress with ETAP issue would be reported on at future meetings.

9. UPDATE BY DELEGATES ON THEIR IPP ACTIVITIES

This section summarises the information provided by the members during or after the meeting, whether oral or written.

AT outlined three areas in which work is ongoing:

- (1) Eco-labelling activities (both national and EU flower). A campaign to market eco-labels to producers had been successful and would now begin to focus on final consumers. The national eco-label criteria for tourist accommodation were in the process of being harmonised with those of the EU label. Co-operation in criteria-setting was also being pursued with the German Blue Angel scheme and there is a first holder of a national label on green financial funds.
- (2) Consumer Awareness-Raising. Sustainable weeks are being organised in cooperation with retailers. There has also been an information campaign on the different types of labels for those who want to buy green.
- (3) Public Procurement. A ministerial order has been drawn up that will develop some guidelines containing obligatory environmental considerations; however it has yet to be adopted.

BE stated that it now had new environment ministers at both the federal and regional levels. A new sustainable development strategy was in the process of being adopted; one part of which deals with IPP and another which is looking at a decoupling strategy, based on the ongoing Commission work on a Resources Strategy. Greening the administration was now starting with a circular and sustainable production and consumption will become a national process. Other activities have included developing a school kit to promote life-cycle thinking in schools by looking at the life-cycle of paper, promoting EU flower week and producing a brochure on paints for industry. The regions were also active, for example through their waste prevention policies and promoting greener school products. On the subject of eco-design the Flemish region has an eco-design project ongoing.

CY said that IPP was basically a new area for them and they were in the process of beginning discussions on how to implement it. Activities in the area of EMAS and the EU Eco-label were ongoing and discussions were ongoing on how GPP could be used.

CZ said IPP was defined as one action in its National Environmental Policy Plan. It had already experience with introducing EMS, voluntary agreements (where it was preparing internal guidance) and on the principles of cleaner production. In addition it was currently running projects on LCA and eco-design. For eco-labelling the Czech competent body was organising training for children between 13 and 18 to promote and explain the benefits of buying eco-labelled products. This will include training the teachers, who will then promote the principles in schools.

DE outlined four activities:

- (1) it was beginning a national process for sustainable production and consumption, with a series of workshops being held starting in June. These

addressed certain target groups, such as local and community approaches to the issue such as a shopping guide for local communities which, maybe, could be expanded to the whole of Germany in the future. Another topic was a workshop with SMEs to look at the potential for them to spread new initiatives;

- (2) two new sets of criteria had been agreed for the Blue Angel: for solar-driven small electric appliances; and for emission-reduced furniture;
- (3) in the context of EMAS it was putting together some guidelines for churches and campsites; and
- (4) the Ministry of Development Co-operation was beginning to promote fair trade products through a “fair feels good” campaign; the Ministry of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs had produced an information sheet on a sustainable shopping basket.

DK said that two studies would be finished soon: on product prioritisation; and on how IPP can be integrated into other EU policy areas. In both cases the report would be circulated to members when finished. The national stakeholder panel on professional green procurement has now adopted an action plan. **DK** was busy preparing “Flower Week”, including producing a brochure entitled, “How eco-labels make it easy to buy green?” In the context of ETAP they have produced a brochure giving examples of green technologies, most of which are products. It is also in the process of conducting a technological foresight exercise on environmentally friendly agriculture and on nanotechnologies.

On the subject of information relevant for product design guidelines, **DK** commented that it had nothing covering the whole life-cycle; however, it did have experience with dealing with certain chemicals in products, such as on industrial greenhouse gases. It said it was generally favourable to banning certain types of substances in products.

From 1999-2003 financial support was also provided for a number of different IPP related projects: how to integrate IPP into the Cardiff Process; the establishment of a Danish EPD scheme; how to include health in the EU flower scheme; synergies between different types of product information; the promotion of SMEs in IPP; intra-company co-operation between the marketing and other departments; how to make product information more visible; and a programme of green technological foresight.

They requested the European Commission to undertake more activities on EPDs and information in general and said that nationally the focus appeared to be moving away from IPP towards environmental technologies. For this reason they think that the links between the two will need to be carefully examined.

EE said that IPP was something new for it and it was in the process of implementing EMAS and the EU Eco-label and beginning ecological tax reform. One NGO, the Estonian Institute for Sustainable Development (SEI-Tallinn), was particularly active and had organised introductory IPP seminars for stakeholders and was planning to distribute a handbook which they were in the process of preparing. In October SEI-Tallinn will begin a project on “Transfer of knowledge in the field

of Eco-design” with the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Portugal. The project will include drafting a handbook and looking at two or three case studies.

FI stated that a programme on sustainable production and consumption was in the process of being developed by a large stakeholder committee, and was likely to finish in May 2005. The follow-up to the research programme on the sustainable information society was still being considered by the government. No progress has been made on ecological tax reform, although a big meeting is planned on the issue in October.

On greening public procurement a guidebook had been produced and the procurement legislation was in the process of being revised; this revision may be an opportunity to raise the profile of greener public procurement. The government was also considering establishing a product panel on furniture as there was interest from producers.

IE said that it had begun work on a national sustainable production and consumption framework. It had also set up a Joint All Ireland (i.e. Ireland and the Northern Irish part of the UK) council on waste issues which, in particular, was trying to increase awareness of cross-border issues. It was also in the process of producing a set of product specifications for office products and was investigating the possibility of getting electricity from greener sources. As far as product design was concerned its best experiences were through the “Cleaner Greener” programme, which provides grant aid for companies to improve their products and services; and the “Environmentally Superior Products Scheme” a grants scheme to help firms implement environmental management systems.

LV said that IPP itself was a new issue for it, but that some organisations and people were well aware of it and some of its parts were already being dealt with (e.g. EU Eco-label). They are currently reviewing the situation to see whether they need a strategy or can rely on existing legislation to implement it. It said that the main task for them was to encourage producers to look at the whole of the product cycle. They have supported some projects, including one where the two companies that saw the project through to the end realised that LCA is worth doing. They are now looking at ways that they can promote this insight. In addition they said that they have their own labelling system for countryside tourism and an eco-label for food, which is currently being revised.

The **NL** highlighted three of the many areas in which it said it was working on IPP.

- 1) Implementation of GPP: research had been undertaken and had shown that 20% of public authorities used environmental criteria. It said this subject would be discussed in more detail at the forthcoming IPP Informal Network meeting in Amsterdam.
- 2) The ministries of Agriculture, Economic Affairs and Environment are currently running a project called “criteria platform” to find out if eco-label criteria can be used as operational sustainability product targets for voluntary actions. This stems from the research finding that big industrial players show very little interest in using eco-labels themselves, but instead used the eco-label criteria to improve their products

- 3) Support to public authorities below the national level is also being given to promote product policy because they often, through their role as licence giver and enforcer have more contact with industry.

The study on IPP implementation in Europe has finished and the NL will distribute a weblink to it shortly.

NO has just completed a review on areas requiring greater IPP activities. This identified environmental technologies and procurement. For greening public procurement legislation exists but doesn't always work, for this reason a panel has been established to suggest practical action. They are currently implementing the Aarhus convention for products and looking to develop indicators for sustainable development.

PL said that activities began in January 2004 when a short report was prepared by the Environment Ministry. This was discussed by the European Committee of the Council of Ministers in May, when it was decided that an IPP implementation strategy needed to be proposed by the end of the year. A team has been created to this chaired by the under-secretary of state and involving many stakeholders.

PT stated that following on from information given at the last meeting, the LIFE project with Greece had been accepted and would begin shortly (ENV/PT/716 04). Another LIFE project, again in cooperation with Greece, is ongoing to demonstrate the potential of green procurement. A communication on "EMAS in the Public Administration" has been produced to stimulate uptake and a seminar to encourage EMAS participation is being organised in November. At the moment there are 20 registered EMAS sites, of which 3 are corporate; this compares to 313 ISO 14001 sites. There are currently 4 EU eco-label holders: 3 for indoor paints and varnishes and 1 for textiles.

SE said that the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had completed a study on risk assessment and LCA. The Swedish Business Development Agency has also put together a handbook on eco-design in Sweden. At the same time the EPA are participating in a project run by UNEP, and Delft and Lund universities to prepare an eco-design handbook that is due to be completed this year. The EPA has also produced some new information for public purchasers and is also in the process of putting together a plan on how to develop information flow along the product chain. An action plan on sustainable consumption is in the process of being developed. The EPA is undertaking a national survey on Johannesburg follow-up.

SI stated that while progress was being made with IPP this was subject to severe resource constraints. An advisory board had been set up to advise the minister on IPP issues. It is made up of stakeholders and has so far met once, with discussions focussing on what type of activities is necessary. On greening public procurement they intend to translate the Commission's handbook and to look at how best to implement it. On EMAS the first registration is expected by the end of October but no EU eco-label registrations are in sight.

SK said that it had been running an eco-label scheme since 1996 and that it now had 76 valid licences spread over 22 product groups. The EU Eco-label scheme had been in operation since December 2002. Greening public procurement activities had started in the environment department by using statutory orders and a greening

public procurement act is currently in the process of being updated. It was planning some activities on Type II labelling, on training and education, and on GPP in all government agencies.

SI stated that activities on IPP began in September 2003. Activities on ISO14001 had been ongoing for 3-4 years and more recently efforts have concentrated on the implementation of the EU Eco-label and EMAS regulations. However, an advisory committee on IPP is currently being established within the Ministry of Environment.

The **UK** concentrated on five areas of activity:

- (1) the expansion of its national “market transformation” programme on products by about €15 million over three years. This will broaden the existing energy efficiency focus to other impacts and resources using the revenues from a landfill tax. It will focus on everyday products used by business, so that businesses can benefit from the tax through savings from more efficient products with lower energy and waste;
- (2) the development of performance specifications for public procurement into mandatory standards. The first set of specifications (for 27 types of product) will be made more demanding and extended to a larger range of products;
- (3) product labelling. The EU energy label has worked very well and there are now plans to use it in two other areas - for the fuel efficiency of new cars and the energy efficiency of housing when it is placed on the market;
- (4) it is now consulting on a new Sustainable Development Strategy, which will emphasise the importance of sustainable consumption, including the most problematic “clusters” or consumption, the importance of better product performance and what government can do to encourage a step change;
- (5) it is now looking at plans to build environmental product information into a government information portal.

BEUC said its chemical cocktail campaign would be re-launched in September. It also continued to participate in the EU Eco-labelling Board.

CEN said that funding had now been assured for the Environmental Helpdesk from a combination of members, the Commission and EFTA. There would also be a 100% increase in staff. In the area of Energy-using Products (EuP) it had decided to accept the mandate to develop both generic and product-specific standards in the area of EuP. They are trying to identify which areas currently have a particular need for standards due to gaps. While the EuP directive has yet to be adopted, the standards can be adopted in the future if necessary.

The **EEB** said that it regretted that its working group proposal on product design had not been chosen by the Commission. Nevertheless it said that it intended to monitor the second reading of the EuP proposal in the EP as it considered that significant opportunities for improvement, not least concerning information requirements, remained. It continues to work on the European Ecolabel and had

recently undertaken an evaluation of its activities within this¹ and was now requesting dedicated funding for their participation within it. As regards Public Procurement, it is working with a social platform to produce an NGO interpretative toolkit of the two Public Procurement directives. This should be launched in parallel to the Commission's Greening Public Procurement event on October 29. It also announced that it would not be participating in the IPP pilot projects.

EuroCommerce said that it had wanted to look at the coherence of IPP tools and hence had commissioned a study on the case of LCA for plastic bags. The study said that an integrated approach had not been followed in this area and said they would circulate the study to the members.

UEAPME said that its Danish member had received financing from the Danish EPA to identify and disseminate tools for SMEs, for example on energy efficiency or a web page on eco-design. It will hold a second EMAS awareness-raising meeting in November with SME contact points. On the EU Eco-label it stressed the importance of services and said it was currently organising a second meeting which will focus on the tourist accommodation criteria and go through them with managers. This will take place in Barcelona.

UNICE said that business is always seeking to continuously improve the environmental impacts of their products.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BE had asked to discuss the European Parliament's opinion on the Commission's IPP Communication; however it was agreed, after a suggestion from the Chair, that the opinions of the different institutions be discussed during the next meeting.

The **EEB** enquired said it would distribute a copy of its position paper on the EuP proposal to members.

EuroCommerce asked how all IPP and the work on sustainable production and consumption fitted together and suggested that this could be discussed at another meeting. The **COM** replied that it may be something for a brief discussion, given that there will be a big international wider-Europe meeting on sustainable production and consumption in Ostend at the end of November; however, it cautioned that while IPP was a policy that was up and running there was no explicit European sustainable production and consumption policy, which might make comparison between the two rather difficult.

AT asked that future meetings should begin at 10 am in order that their representative could make the return trip from Vienna in a day. The **COM** replied that by delaying the start by half an hour it may be that it would inconvenience other members; nevertheless it agreed to look into the matter.

¹ www.eeb.org/activities/product_policy/EEB-Ecolabel-evaluation-What-we-wanted-what-we-got-July2004.pdf

DK asked whether it was necessary for the respective permanent representation to make the official nomination of the delegate. The **COM** replied that this was the ideal situation as that way it could ensure that only one official participant attended the meetings.

The **COM** concluded the meeting by saying that the next two meetings were likely to take place in the around the end of February and mid-September next year.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Ingrid TAMM	Ministry of Environment	Estonia
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