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European Industry's views for an EU Integrated Product Policy

**UNICE's presentation at the IPP stakeholder
consultation on 8 March by Mr Kleibeuker**

UNICE

The voice of business in Europe

UNICE is

- Composed of 34 industrial and employers federations from 26 European countries.
- 16 million companies with a total turnover of about € 12,500 billion.
- The voice of companies of all sizes (small, medium & large) and in all sectors of activity (manufacturing industries, trade & services) vis-à-vis the EU institutions.
- An active partner in European integration, since 1958.

IPP as a tool in Environmental Policy

General remarks

- The IPP approach can contribute to Sustainable Development (SD) by integrating economic, social and environmental aspects
- UNICE agrees with the overall objective to reduce the environmental impact of products or services throughout their life cycle
- The IPP can contribute to the achievement of long-term goals within a SD-perspective
- Such a framework can help long term business planning, favour innovation and stimulate continuous improvement while increasing industry's competitiveness
- Continuous improvement relates to a whole set of performance criteria for a product

Strategies to implement the IPP approach

- Cooperation of business and industry: UNICE is willing to cooperate with the Commission to develop and implement an effective IPP
- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities for the different stages in the life cycle of a product and throughout product chains resulting in a framework of activities
- Integrated Environmental Management as a key approach to develop, structure and implement the process of continuous improvement within companies
- Effective voluntary environmental initiatives of business and industry should play a key role
- Business and industry are willing to share experiences already gained in different sectors

UNICE's principles for an IPP framework

➤ **Integration**

- of all environmental, social and economic aspects of production, products and services
- of all product characteristics along its life cycle (performance, price, safety, quality, environmental aspects, aesthetics)

➤ **Shared responsibility**

- Appropriate allocation of responsibility to every actor involved in the production, consumption and disposal of a product
- Stimulus for continuous improvement is given to all parts of the chain

➤ **Respect for market forces**

- IPP should work with the market and not against it
- Free choice of well-informed consumers and commercial customers as key objective of IPP

➤ **Consistency**

- IPP should aim at improved consistency of EU-legislation and harmonisation of existing measures

Possible tools for IPP.

- **Environmental Management Systems**
 - are the best approach for achieving continuous improvements along the whole product chain
 - have not only an impact on the production process but also on product design
- **The Life Cycle Approach**
 - gives a holistic view on the environmental impact and supports a balanced consideration of all three pillars of SD
 - Life Cycle Assessment should, however, remain a business tool used by companies for continuous improvement
- **Product Panels**
 - can be an effective tool if all actors of the product chain become involved
- **Other instruments**
 - must follow the principles outlined above