



BEUC AND EEB COMMENTS ON VARIOUS PRODUCT
GROUPS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE EUEB MEETING OF
13/14 DECEMBER 2006



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The following are brief comments on key issues of concern relating to the product groups to be discussed at the EUEB meeting on 13/14 December:

Heat pumps

It is unfortunate that this criteria development process has resulted in an alternative proposal from the Commission, however we understand why this alternative proposal was produced. The draft final criteria produced by the lead competent body attempt to address some of the points made in the last AHWG meeting, but miss some of the key points made throughout the process.

In particular, the heat production efficiency (HPE) levels are too low for what can be expected of a product that is to be ecolabelled. The lead competent body's draft suggests HPEs of between 70% and 100% according to heat pump style and type of refrigerant used. Both BEUC's and EEB's experts agreed that the ecolabel should apply to the most efficient products, and suggested efficiency levels of up to 140%. From the BEUC-EEB position paper of 14 September: *If a higher GWP refrigerant is to be used, then the maximum should be 2000, but in this case the SPF must be significantly higher. A report from Nordic Ecolabelling shows that the highest SPF achieved in tests of heat pumps was 3.5, so the ecolabel should specify a value of SPF = 3.3. Discussions with large European heat pump manufacturers confirmed that it is easy to achieve high efficiency heat pumps at no extra cost.*

We strongly prefer that an SPF approach be taken, as this is a more robust and sensitive indication of a heat pump's performance. We understand that CEN has already begun a process of creating a standard for heat pumps and they are taking an SPF approach (although their process will not be completed before the end of 2007). If the ecolabel chose SPF, it would already be more in-line with CEN than if it took a COP approach. However, development of the SPF criterion would take some time, and we would only accept it if a small working group were created that would do the preparatory work for a final AHWG meeting to agree the final criteria. EEB would gladly consider providing expert representation in such a working group. In this way, a more transparent decision-making process would be established, which would include the reasoning behind the final proposed criteria.

If the Commission's approach is to serve as the basis of the final criteria, the following important changes are still needed:

- Criterion 1 (Efficiency in Heating Mode - COP): It would have been the best to label the heat pump according to the seasonal performance. However, as the AHWG process have evolved, the SPF has not been developed into a workable solution, therefore COP is a workable compromise. Future revisions would need to address this. The **target COPs** should be the same or at least a lot closer so that companies are directed to choosing the more efficient technology. The COP level for brine/water and water/water could be higher (4.2 for brine/water systems) if they should resemble the difficulty for air/air and air/water systems. Also, there should also be a threshold value for higher **outlet temperatures** (for heat pumps connected to hydronic heating systems). The largest available market is the retrofit market (i.e. where heat pumps are installed to replace an existing heat supply system, such as an oil burner, and thus are connected to existing heat distribution systems). The current level

is very low, and most importantly, is not used in many of the current heating systems. The current level is therefore very low and thus we suggest an additional outlet temperature of 45 °C. If this is considered to extend the criteria too much, we suggest that only one outlet temperature at 45 °C be used.

- Criterion 2 (Efficiency in Cooling Mode - EER): As above, the **target EERs/COPs** should be the same or at least a lot closer so that companies are directed to choosing the more efficient technology! The targets should vary by climate zone. In **Table 2**, why is this reproduced when it is for air conditioning systems? Also, what does 'packaged' mean in the context of the rest of the criteria?
- Criterion 3 (Refrigerant): Since the **global warming potential (GWP)** of the refrigerant is one of the two main environmental impacts of heat pumps, the criterion addressing refrigerants directly is important. Although we are happy to see that the limit on refrigerant GWP has been reduced to a limit of 2000, the criterion is still not strong enough in encouraging manufacturers to use refrigerants with the lowest GWP. We suggest that companies using natural refrigerants be given a bonus. In our heat pump position paper of 14 September 2006, we wrote:

Therefore, we propose that the GWP of refrigerants should be limited to a maximum of 150. The figure of 150 (which is consistent with the limit in the f-gas directive for car air conditioning) still allows some HFCs, such as R152a, and new fluorocarbon blends from some refrigerant manufacturers, rather than allowing only natural refrigerants.

If a higher GWP refrigerant is to be used, then the maximum should be 2000, but in this case the SPF must be significantly higher. A report from Nordic Ecolabelling shows that the highest SPF achieved in tests of heat pumps was 3.5, so the ecolabel should specify a value of SPF = 3.3. Discussions with large European heat pump manufacturers confirmed that it is easy to achieve high efficiency heat pumps at no extra cost.

We also suggest that the next revision should address the major reduction in GWP of refrigerants by restricting these to natural refrigerants only.

We therefore suggest the criterion be modified to the following: "Where a system uses a refrigerant with a GWP < 150, the target COPs and EERs may be reduced by 20%". 20% is an approximate global warming contribution of the heat pump due to high GWP refrigerant leakage based on average EU emissions data. Also, we suggest that the GWP value >2000 "over a 100 year period" should be "calculated over a 100 year integration period" instead. Finally, in relation to assessment and verification, it is not clear what is to be done about those fluids that are not listed in the EU f-gas regulation, such as hydrocarbons. We suggest that addition of a sentence stating "GWPs for fluids not listed in the regulation should be obtained from the latest IPCC or WMO scientific assessment report."

The following are additional comments:

- Criterion 7 (Qualified installer): Training should be approved by a relevant authority.
- Table 1: What does the asterisk in direct expansion/water relate to?
- In the information fiche it seems to be required for the installer to provide input on the seasonal performance. The method is left to the different installers and organisations to decide. The choice of testing laboratories should be restricted to those that are accredited, regardless of whether they are accredited in the country where the applicant is located. The accreditation guarantees quality.

Tissue Paper

BEUC and EEB support the Commission's suggestion of 100% recycled fibres for the tissue paper product group. Throughout the AHWG process, EEB has called for a strong signal that recycled fibres are preferable to virgin fibres, and the 100% recycled content meets this suggestion very favourably.

As stated most recently in our 23 November 2006 response to the Commission's suggestion for 100% recycled fibres, tissue paper is a single-material, single-use product which cannot be recycled after use. Being a single

material product, the main difficulty in meeting a 100% recycled fibre requirement would be sourcing of enough recycled paper. Given that paper recycling has been happening since the 1970s, there are well-established behavioural habits by consumers in recycling paper in their homes. There are also office-based and printing house-based collections available, that are a source of higher quality (copy) paper. Due to a European regulatory focus on municipal waste recycling collections, most of the non-municipal (industry) sources of paper for recycling has yet to be touched. Therefore, there is much market opportunity to introduce more Europe-sourced recovered fibres into production processes.

Beyond the environmental benefits (energy consumption, sustainable resource use, chemical use, etc.) of using recycled versus virgin fibres, the ecolabel is a market-based tool providing an environmental benchmark. A 100% recycled fibre ecolabel would strongly support wider environmental policy - on waste prevention and recycling, and on sustainable use of natural resources - that aims to create a 'European recycling society'. According to Environment Commissioner Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas: "Waste volume has been disproportionately increasing outpacing even economic growth. Waste generation, disposal and recycling are of concern to all of us: individuals, companies and public authorities. Now is the time to modernise our approach and to promote more and better recycling." The European Commission press release featuring the above Dimas quote also states: "This long-term strategy aims to help Europe become a recycling society that seeks to avoid waste and uses waste as a resource." A tissue paper ecolabel with less than 100% recycled content would not contribute credibly to this aim.

We understand the concern about losing current label-holders by requiring only recycled fibres, but the permanent environmental benefits of requiring 100% recycled content are greater than the temporary loss of label-holders that will, over time, be able to make modifications to their production processes to accept recycled fibres. In any case, green procurement will drive companies to use recycled fibres since recycled content is the main environmental criteria for paper-based products. Therefore, recycled content will in any case become of importance to any tissue paper manufacturers wishing to supply products in procurement contracts as well as to consumers.

Beyond recycled content, we make the following suggestions for changes to the draft final criteria:

- Article 2: The current product scope description states that: "Wet wipes and sanitary products are excluded from the product group as are tissue products laminated with other materials than tissue paper." As toilet paper is considered a "sanitary product" this wording needs to be clarified so as not to create confusion.
- Criterion 1a (Emissions to water and air - COD, P, S and NO_x): In Table 1, the P values for chemical pulp are set higher than for other fibres. Although 0.045 is within the BAT range in the 2000 BREF (page 156), it is at the lower end of the BAT range (0.02-0.05 kg/ADT) and therefore not very ambitious. We suggest a similar P figure as for unbleached chemical pulp: 0.02. Also in the same table, NO_x values for tissue paper have been increased from 0.3 to 0.5 kg/ADT. The BREF of 2000 gives as "typical values" (BAT ranges are not defined) for tissue production from recycled fibre (page 235) 0.3-2.0 kg/ADT. This means that 0.5 is (with data of before 2000) is still on the best performing end of the "typical range", but not most ambitious. That's why we propose to keep 0.3 kg NO_x/ADT.
- Criterion 1c (Emissions to water and air - CO₂) now features the following sentence: "The fuels used for converting of the tissue paper and transports shall not be included in the calculations." We are not pleased with this. Even though the BREF 2000 is not clear whether converting is included or not, the ecolabel should promote higher efficiency levels of the total production line and therefore fuels used in converting should be included.
- Criterion 2 (Energy use): As above, the draft criteria exclude converting from the calculation. We prefer to include the converting process in the calculation, as it is an integral part of the final product production process.
- Criterion 5 (Product safety): Glyoxal should not be found in the final product. In the current criteria the limit value was changed from 1.5 mg/dm² to a range (1-5 mg/dm²). The former value of the current criteria of 1.5 mg/dm² should be reset as the limit value.

Soaps and shampoos

Since the last EUEB meeting in September (where BEUC and EEB proposed a brief delay in finalising the criteria for this ecolabel, to allow reflection on refining the criteria to be more acceptable to NGOs),

meetings and discussions have been held with 3 companies in Belgium, France, and Germany. One of these was Etamine du Lys (France), which responded positively to proposed amendments (by BEUC and EEB) to the final criteria. Another, AlmaWin (Germany), also responded positively by email. During our discussions with two of the companies, it was explained that a very good working collaboration exists between industry federations in five countries: Belgium (Probila), France (Ecocert and Cosmébio), Germany (BDIH - Bundesverband Deutscher Industrie und Handelsunternehmen für Arzneimittel, Reformwaren, Nahrungsergänzungsmittel und Körperpflege), Italy (AIAB - Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica) and the UK (Soil Association). These federations are made up of companies producing ecological/natural/organic products, and represent the majority of 'non-conventional' cleaning product companies. These industry federations would be interested in attending a meeting, to help finalise criteria that would be more acceptable to the 'non-conventional' companies and to NGOs. We should be clear that our aim, as NGOs, is not to create an organic-focused ecolabel, rather that we wish to have productive discussion with ecological companies.

The reasons for organising such a meeting would be:

- **To finalise criteria that better reflect the market profile of producers** - there is an obvious split between the conventional producers (making up over 90% of the market) and the non-conventional producers. Establishing criteria levels that are acceptable to up to 30% of the market will result in some substances being allowed with limit values, rather than being excluded completely. Dilution of environmentally damaging substances does not go far enough for an ecolabel for a product that is used daily by every single person in Europe. The chemicals policy, REACH, has been developing the concept of substitution, thereby eliminating the more toxic substances that end up in our environment. The ecolabel should seek to do the same (not just in soaps and shampoos), in particular when these substances are persistently in wastewater treatment plants which cannot remove all of the substances.
- **To finalise criteria that are more acceptable to interested companies and to NGOs:** This product group has been fought by conventional industry federations, and even the Commission has made decisions that go against fundamental aspects of the ecolabel (human health). The positive working relationships that have developed between BEUC and EEB and individual product producers is such that a formal discussion at an open meeting would more likely result in criteria that are acceptable to NGOs and companies interested in applying for this particular ecolabel. The open meeting would be attended by the Commission and NGOs, and all competent bodies would be invited.
- **To build more company interest in applying for the ecolabel:** As we have already said, discussions with individual companies has shown an interest and willingness to work with the ecolabel. These small- and medium-sized enterprises are more interested in the ecolabel as a means of differentiating themselves from other market players, with the added positive contribution to the ecolabel of their dedication to environmental issues. Working with companies that have already taken the substitution approach will more likely provide positive synergy between the companies and the ecolabel.

The proposed amendments to the current final draft criteria circulated by BEUC/EEB to the 'non-conventional' companies include:

- Lower CDV values (that would be more realistic, in comparison to the CDV values in the all-purpose sanitary cleaners, the hand dishwashing detergents, and the laundry detergents ecolabels)
- Only food grade dyes being accepted (for ensured biodegradability and no need to test therefore)
- Exclusion of untested non-surfactants
- Reduced levels of non-biodegradable ingredients
- Minimum recycled content for cardboard packaging
- Clearer wording in the information appearing on the ecolabel

We propose that the Commission, with the assistance of BEUC and EEB, organise such a meeting to be held early in 2007 so that final criteria can be agreed and voted upon at the April EUEB meeting.

Televisions

The review of the televisions ecolabel has shown more focus on energy efficiency than on other issues. This is unfortunate as other policy areas (namely the Ecodesign in Energy-using-Products Directive) have also been

focusing on a energy efficiency, although from a minimum standard level. This ecolabel review process has not resulted in a comprehensive update on other environmental aspects in televisions - particularly in understanding what substances are used in the manufacture of technologies that have an increasing element of the market, that is, liquid crystal displays and plasma screens. The final report of the 'Methodology Study Ecodesign of Energy-using Products' published in November 2005 already identified classes of substances having an environmental impact for televisions. These include persistent organic pollutants (POPs), VOCs, heavy metals and poly-aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

Despite a small number of companies making up the producers of televisions, it appears that no more detailed data has been requested through this review process. Informal conversations with producers at the last AHWG meeting identified a willingness to provide more detailed information if this were requested of all participating producers and if this data was used and presented anonymously. We very strongly believe that the ecolabel needs to address upcoming issues on the environmental/health policy agenda. Indoor air pollution from product off-gassing is an increasingly important policy issue, and the ecolabel needs to drive improvements in this area on a product level. We therefore call for the lead competent body to request more detailed substance information from product producers, to be able to present ambitious criteria at a future meeting.

The television ecolabel links to another environmental policy area via the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive, which aims to increase the level of recycling of such end-of-life products as televisions. Through coalition work on this Directive, EEB has continued to develop very productive working relationships with product producers who are interested in improving product design requirements at least in this Directive. The ecolabel, as an environmental benchmark policy tool, should at least support such progressive ideas and needs to reflect them more comprehensively (beyond televisions, that is). At the very least, given the EuP and WEEE Directives, the television revision process needs to be seen more as an opportunity to continue to drive forward progressive design. For this reason, at the last AHWG meeting, BEUC and EEB focused much attention on communicating the need for ecodesign criteria. These relate strongly to the need for more information on substances used in the production of the televisions, in order to produce more operable criteria.

Attached are two documents that explain the concept of ecodesign and develop our ideas on it, as a means of more clearly introducing ecodesign into this ecolabel.