



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

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"A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability" **Project**

The International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products (A.I.S.E.), the representative body of this industry in Europe¹, has launched a new laundry sustainability initiative, which aims primarily at reducing chemicals and packaging, improving logistics and providing transparency for consumers (the "A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability" project). This initiative is voluntary and open to all companies operating in the European region², including companies based outside of the region, as well as members and non-members of A.I.S.E.

Background

Since its foundation in 1952, A.I.S.E. and its members have been committed to act responsibly in an end-users oriented way – taking into account the environment. A.I.S.E. has always been proactive in engaging in constructive and continuous dialogue with the EU stakeholders and in the member countries at local Government and NGO level via the network of National Associations to ensure that Industry's voice is heard in the development of technical regulation. In the recent past, A.I.S.E. has extended this dialogue process with key stakeholders into a much broader range of activities concerning Sustainability.

Examples of this A.I.S.E. approach are:

- In the late 1980's A.I.S.E. promoted a novel ingredient labelling approach in partnership with the EU Commission, which resulted in a Commission Recommendation (CEE 89/542).
- In January 1997, A.I.S.E. adopted its "Code of Good Environmental Practice" ("Code") for Household Laundry Detergents in the then EU and EFTA countries. This program was endorsed by the EU Commission in its Recommendation (98/480/EC) of 22 July 1998 concerning good environmental practice for household laundry detergents (OJ L 215/73 of 1.8.1998). The Code was a voluntary initiative designed to promote more sustainable consumption of laundry detergents. A.I.S.E. developed a very strong consumer communication campaign to support "best use practices" when using laundry detergents. The impact of the campaign was increased through the activities of its National Associations. A dedicated www.washright.com website was designed and publicized successfully.
- A.I.S.E. continued its sustainability journey with the HERA project which project was developed in co-operation with CEFIC. Details about this project can be found on the www.heraproject.com website.
- More recently A.I.S.E. has developed another initiative, the "Charter for Sustainable Cleaning" that was introduced officially on December 1, 2004 and is currently in process of being deployed across the whole of the European Economic Area member states (EU 25 + EFTA 3) + Switzerland. Further information about the project can be found in the dedicated website www.sustainable-cleaning.com.

¹ A.I.S.E. unites 36 National Associations in 34 countries, covering more than 900 companies ranging from small and medium-sized enterprises to large multinationals active both in the consumer goods market and the industrial & institutional (I&I) domains.

² I.e. in the European Economic Area, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Switzerland.

Working together for a cleaner Europe

The “A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability” project

A.I.S.E. and its National Associations members have now launched another important initiative in the spirit of concrete action for Sustainability: the “A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability” project.

A.I.S.E. recognised that whilst the “Code” and the associated “Washright[®]” campaign were widely contributed to in the former EEA, there is an opportunity to extend the sustainability benefits of these initiatives across the entire European area. It, therefore, decided that it would be appropriate to reinvigorate a key element of the Code as another move towards a more sustainable future by launching a voluntary initiative open to all companies whether from inside or outside the region or members of A.I.S.E. and its National Associations or not.

The “A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability” project is the latest initiative by A.I.S.E. in the overall sustainability area. It follows the spirit of its previous initiatives and in particular of the “Code”.

The scope of the “A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability” project encompasses all low suds granular heavy-duty detergents used for domestic laundry placed on the market in Europe, but focuses particularly on the so called regular low suds laundry powders (referred to as “automat” in some countries) for automatic washing machines, which still recommend relatively high dosages (e.g. 150 g/wash) of product. These are mainly, but not exclusively, present in the Central and Eastern part of Europe, where most benefit is expected to accrue from compaction. The communication campaign, to encourage consumers to use the correct, lower dosage from compaction, will therefore be concentrated in this area.

The objective of this project is to move to more sustainable consumption patterns for domestic laundry detergents for use in automatic washing machines, as described in the scientific dossier already prepared by A.I.S.E. The project aims to:

- Reduce the environmental impact of the laundry detergent sector across the whole of Europe by promoting and encouraging the reduction of chemicals, packaging and energy used in product making, delivery and use, thus contributing to sustainability targets such as CO₂ emissions.
- Encourage consumers to modify the way they use products, through a harmonised consumer communications campaign. This provides consumers with important information on how to reduce product and energy usage and thus also costs whilst maintaining the cleanliness delivered.
- Strengthen the reputation of the detergent industry represented by A.I.S.E. as a proactive and trusted partner for European Institutions and civil society in the advancement of sustainable development.

The participating companies are allowed to use a distinctive logo and will benefit from a specific consumer advertising campaign. A company using the logo has to compact its low suds laundry detergents and thus reduce the use of chemicals (by reducing the recommended weight per use) and the use of packaging material. Furthermore the participating companies must communicate to consumers how best to achieve sustainability improvements by making correct use of these more concentrated products. The project had an official start on 1st January 2006 and is intended to last for 2 years until the 31st December 2007.

A.I.S.E. has developed a consumer communication package, including harmonised, non-branded advertising, which aims to engage consumers and attempt to persuade them of the benefits of modifying behaviour focusing on correct dosage and other more sustainable habits (e.g., use of lower temperature cycles).

Last but not least, this “A.I.S.E. Laundry Sustainability” initiative is voluntary. It is open to all companies operating in the European region covered by this project: both members and non-members of A.I.S.E. or its National Associations, including companies based outside the region.

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