



“The Voice of SMEs in Europe”

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 years Eco-Label: UEAPME satisfied with system says improvements still needed

Brussels, December 03rd, 2002. On the occasion of the celebration of the ten years of Eco-Label, UEAPME, Europe’s SMEs employers association, praised the advantages of the Eco-Label system but also highlighted the improvements that have yet to be made.

UEAPME, as the only SMEs representative organisation participating in the event, said it considers the Eco-Label as an instrument with great potential for SMEs as it allows them to have an official tool to produce a “green” image. From UEAPME’s point of view, the development of the eco-label system in the last years has been a very positive one as demonstrated by the participation rate of SMEs in the system -about 80% of enterprises which have the Eco-label are SMEs.

UEAPME also expressed its support for the further development of the Eco-label system as it considers that the system will become more and more important in the European environment policy. Currently, several European environmental policy instruments foresee the use of the Eco-label (Ex. Draft framework directive on Eco-design of End Use Equipment, Communication on public procurement and the environment).

Nonetheless, according to the organisation, despite the positive progress there are still improvements to be made in order to increase the participation of SMEs in the Eco-label system. Among the aspects to be improved UEAPME stressed the need for awareness-raising actions about Life Cycle Analysis to be undertaken for SMEs as a pre condition for greater participation of small enterprises in the system. UEAPME also pointed out that the Eco label granting process for the next range of products must be more focused on SME manufactured products.

UEAPME also argued that the Eco-label conformity test costs for SME products should be reduced. According to the organisation, at the next regulation revision it would be important to establish programs on national and European level to help SMEs face the costs of tests.

Finally, UEAPME also pleaded for an increase of the marketing effort for the Eco-label. The Eco-label must be more disseminated and better known by consumers. This would allow a return of investment for enterprises.

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