Detergents

2002/0216(COD) - 10/06/2002 - Document attached to the procedure

This document comprises of the report from the Commission on the results reached for the period 1996-2000 by the implementation of Commission Recommendation 98/480/EC of 22 July 1998 concerning good environmental practice for household laundry detergents. As regards the implementation of Commission Recommendation 98/480/EC of 22 July 1998 concerning good environmental protection, the Recommendation recommends for the first time at Community level "Environmental Agreements" as a tool for industry to implement the actions envisaged in the Recommendation. AISE (the official body that represents the soap, detergents and maintenance products industry within Europe) committed itself to undertake initiatives in order to achieve these targets. For this purpose AISE developed a Code of Good Environmental Practice for the Household Laundry Detergents for implementation in eighteen countries : the fifteen EU Member States plus Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. Implementation of the Code started in Denmark and Sweden in autumn 1997 as a pilot project. Following the positive results obtained in this pilot project, and the endorsement by the European Commission in the form of a Recommendation in July 1998, implementation in the other participating countries started in mid-1998/early 1999 and has continued since. Commitments and targets in the AISE Code are based on risk assessment and life cycle analysis. Under the Code, manufacturers agree to provide consumers with relevant usage instructions to guide them on how to do their laundry in an environmentally responsible manner. It should be noted that Member States agreed to contribute to the implementation of this Commission Recommendation and that all stakeholders showed interest in the achievement of the targets set in the above Recommendation, and particularly: - the use of lower washing temperatures to decrease energy consumption and thus decrease CO2 emissions; - a decrease of the consumption of detergents and their packaging to lower the general environmental impact of detergents; - a decrease of the poorly biodegradable ingredients in detergents (PBO's), to reduce the effects of detergents on the environment. As stipulated in Article 7 of the Recommendation, AISE has provided for an independent organisation to collect and process statistics. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) was selected to monitor progress towards targets for consumption, packaging and PBOs every two years, and in addition to report on the energy consumption in the final report in 2002. The 1996-1998 figures for the three targets mentioned above, at both European and National levels, were presented in a first intermediate report by PwC with a summary of the main trends from 1996 to 1998. PwC has now prepared a second report covering the period 1999-2000. The main conclusions of these Organisations for the reporting period 1996-1998 were that for the four targets which were to be considered in the intermediate evaluation, two of them were fully achieved: the reduction of the PBOs and the information to consumers, but that the 1996-1998 data suggested that much remained to be done to reduce consumption of detergents and of packaging. PwC report that for the period 1999-2000 the number of companies committed to the code has increased from 154 to 179,despite a number of mergers in the industry. Data on the consumption of detergents, packaging and PBOs is presented and compared with the data for the period 1996-1998.