



# EU ECOLABEL NEWS ALERT

**SPECIAL EDITION!**

Issue n° 92, December 2013

## In brief in this issue:

### Article

New Facebook and Twitter pages have been created to promote the EU Ecolabel and EMAS

### Interview

Robin Taylor, Chair of the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), presents the achievements of ecolabels worldwide and the challenges ahead

### Article

The GEN International Conference, entitled Challenges to Greening Markets through Ecolabels, took place on 5 November 2013 in Brussels. It provided an opportunity for participants to obtain a perspective on the development of ecolabels in different regions of the world.

### Company profile

Hungarian company Rosmarin Zrt's EU Ecolabelled all purpose cleaners and laundry detergents are manufactured with solar energy

### On the web

Recent updates featured on the EU Ecolabel website, as well as other related news featured on the web

### Product group calendar

New product groups and revisions

### Facts and figures

Overview of the EU Ecolabel licenses per country

### Agenda

17-18 January 2013: [Multinational Knowledge Brokerage Event on "Green ICT for Sustainable Consumption"](#), Vienna, Austria

28 January 2014: [Sustainable Development Research Network Annual Conference](#), London, England

26-29 January 2014: [FRESH and European Sustainable Events Conference 2014](#), Copenhagen, Denmark

29 January 2014: [Green Growth, Green Jobs: Integrating Employment and Environmental Policies Across Europe](#), Brussels, Belgium

## EU Ecolabel launches its Facebook and Twitter pages!



We are happy to announce the official launch of our [EMAS & EU Ecolabel Facebook](#) and [EMAS & EU Ecolabel Twitter](#) pages. The EU Ecolabel has partnered with EMAS in order to attract the widest array of fans and followers. We invite you to view, like, share, follow, and post on both of our social media platforms.

The main goal of these two pages is to serve as informational and interactive tools for social media users and EU Ecolabel fans and followers. The EU Ecolabel Helpdesk will post and tweet regularly on a variety of topics. These topics may include: interesting information about the EU Ecolabel, announcements on events on sustainable production and consumption and Competent Body-hosted events, updates on new criteria publications or product group revisions, mentions on interesting licence holders, or the release of News Alerts and other relevant documents.

We furthermore welcome your posts and tweets on our page and we will always be on the lookout to share relevant posts regarding your product or service's milestones with the EU Ecolabel. Feel free to like and follow our EU Ecolabel pages!

We currently have 488 likes on Facebook, and 324 followers on Twitter; we hope that with your help we can increase both of those numbers, and achieve our goal in creating active and helpful pages for all fans and followers.

You can find links to our Twitter and Facebook pages on the EU Ecolabel home page. Feel free to contact the Helpdesk ([ecolabel@biois.com](mailto:ecolabel@biois.com)) directly for any questions or suggestions.

Please note that you must have Facebook and Twitter accounts to access our pages. If you do not have them, you can always create free accounts.

We are looking forward to interacting with you on Facebook and Twitter!



[EMAS & EU Ecolabel Facebook](#)



[EMAS & EU Ecolabel Twitter](#)

## Interview with Robin Taylor, Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) Chair



*The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) is a non-profit association of third-party, environmental performance recognition, certification and labelling organisations founded in 1994 to improve, promote, and develop the ecolabelling of products and services.*



*Mr. Taylor was elected GEN Chair in 2008*

### **1. Please tell us about your role as GEN Chair. What do you achieve and facilitate in this role?**

The By-Laws of the organisation require me to:

- ◆ Preside at all Board Meetings;
- ◆ Have and exercise general charge and supervision of the affairs of the organisation;
- ◆ Represent the Board by supervising the Secretariat's Operations.

### **2. How does GEN work? How often do you meet? What types of decisions do you take?**

- ◆ GEN is a network of Type 1\* ecolabelling organisations. Members collaborate and interact amongst themselves with the end goal of offering each other advice on each respective ecolabelling organisation.
- ◆ Members may meet with each other whenever they wish, however, our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the event where most members get the chance to get together and discuss issues informally. Furthermore, we usually host formal workshops that cover various issues.

### **3. What were the biggest achievements of GEN since its implementation?**

- ◆ Our success in raising awareness of the value of Type 1 ecolabels while maintaining and enhancing our credibility.
- ◆ GENICES (GEN Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System) is a Peer Review System which assesses each programme's compliance with the principles of ISO 14020 & 24, which are the principles under which we operate. Over 80% of our members have been through the process.
- ◆ The benefits that a country's ecolabelling organisation receives when submitting itself through GENICES is that the particular GEN member becomes part of a multilateral MRA (Mutually Recognised Agreement) and has both internal and external reassurance that they operate a professional and compliant programme.

**\*Type 1 Ecolabels are voluntary, multiple-criteria based programs, assessed by independent third parties. They reward products with an overall environmental performance superior to products of the same category, based on a life cycle analysis.**

### **4. What are the biggest challenges for ecolabels today? How do you foresee these challenges evolving in the future?**

- ◆ In a nutshell, greenwashing. However, I believe that the work being done internationally to encourage Sustainable Public Procurement by UNEP and the OECD will be essential in overcoming these issues.
- ◆ In addition, it is cumbersome for consumers to identify the meaning of ecolabels on the market because of the multiplicity of labels and understanding what they mean. I believe that both Government and Consumer Groups can play a bigger part in finding a solution to this issue.

### **5. What are GEN's next projects?**

- ◆ We are undertaking a major exercise on Common Core Criteria and are also involved in a study which attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of ecolabelling programmes. In addition, our members contribute expertise to a number of projects including UNEP, OECD & GIZ.

### **6. What is your best memory as GEN Chair?**

- ◆ There are a number of good memories, but perhaps from a personal point of view, in 2012 I carried out several GENICES audits in various countries. As a result of visiting these countries, I swam in the Dead Sea, walked on the Great Wall of China and saw the Statue of Christ in Rio. My way of thinking is that if one visits a country, it certainly would be a shame not to take in a little of the culture.

### **7. Anything else to add?**

- ◆ I view our membership as part of a family, and it is clear that we certainly are. We are not in competition with each other; we are part of GEN to help each other.



## From South America to Asia, the ecolabel community is expanding!

On 5 November 2013, The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) International Conference, entitled Challenges to Greening Markets through ecolabels, was the perfect setting to obtain a global and regional perspective on the current state and future trends on ecolabels.



### North American perspective

Canada's EcoLogo and the USA's Green Seal are the two type I ecolabels, certified ISO 14024 by GEN in the North American Region. EcoLogo was founded in 1988 and is now part of UL Environment, the global safety science company. EcoLogo covers thousands of products in the following industries: Building materials/flooring, cleaning products, furniture/furnishing, electronics, toys and office supplies.

Green Seal, on the other hand, was founded in 1989 and covers cleaning products, paper products, personal care products, paints and varnishes, cleaning services, hotels & restaurants, and several other product groups.

**Since the USA Federal government spends over \$350 billion each year on products and services, ecolabels in the region seem to have a bright future.** Three out of four purchasers in the US have a responsible purchasing policy and 75% of the rest foresee that they will adopt one. In addition, sales of environmentally friendly products in the US exceeded \$40 billion in 2012.

### South American perspective

**The ABNT (Brazilian Association of Technical Standards) ecolabel is the only type I ecolabel in South America.** The scheme encompasses 11 product group categories and 243 certified products. ABNT currently works with UNEP on the development of ecolabels in the Southern Cone region of South America. UNEP's project on Sustainable Public Procurement and Ecolabelling (SPPEL) aims to provide capacity building for ecolabelling, it provides technical assistance to public and private sectors on development, and stimulates the demand and supply of sustainable products.

While Brazil currently implements a sustainable procurement platform, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina have similar initiatives. The possibility of building a common type I ecolabel for the region is under assessment; therefore the role of this region in the development of ecolabels is likely to grow in the coming years.



## From South America to Asia, the ecolabel community is expanding! (2)

### European perspective

The EU Ecolabel has been managed by the European Commission since 1992. 32 product groups are currently covered by the scheme. The most EU Ecolabelled products can be found in Italy and France, but collectively there are more than 25 000 EU Ecolabelled products that are marketed in and outside Europe. In addition, there are several national ecolabels that coexist on the European market, such as the Nordic Swan or the Blue Angel, both members of GEN. The EU Ecolabel is committed to cooperate with other national labels to multiply the benefits of ecolabelled products.



### Asian perspective

On September 2005, Korea, China and Japan, decided to harmonise their ecolabelling criteria. These 3 countries first signed a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) on multi-functional devices. MRAs enable ecolabelling organisations to recognise other party's verification process and licences. It furthermore enables them to reduce costs (notably by mutualising audits), remove trade barriers and increase the supply of international eco-friendly products. Multi-functional devices in Japan therefore go through the same ecolabelling process as in China and Korea. The partnership also agreed to introduce common criteria for personal computers and DVDs. Previously, the Korea Eco-label (Korea), the Eco-Mark (Japan) and the environmental labelling (China) functioned independently. The three countries aim to accelerate the development of common criteria, and lead the development of MRA amongst GEN members.



### African Perspective

The African Eco-labelling Mechanism (AEM) project was born after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. A follow-up study was led by UNEP in 2006-2007 to develop an ecolabelling strategy in Africa. This study found that the large number of existing labels in Africa are mostly international and sector specific (MSC: fisheries-focused, FSC: forestry-focused, IFOAM: organic farming focused). Out of these labels, only some are implemented on a regional level, and in general, the level of certifications and products available in Africa is very low. However, there are a significant number of international supporters of African ecolabelling such as: UNEP, BMU, GIZ, and SIDA. The "Eco-Mark Africa" could indeed contribute to the sustainability movement of Africa. The AEM therefore called for support in marketing, networking, data research and management, in order to accelerate its promising future.



## Businesses and the EU Ecolabel

The EU Ecolabel News Alert aims to provide more space to the EU Ecolabel licence holders to present themselves and their experience with the label. This is a great opportunity to share the story behind the EU Ecolabelled products and the impact they have had on the company's identity, their market position and consumers. These company profiles, featured monthly, hopefully inspire other businesses to achieve the EU Ecolabel accreditation and consumers to choose EU Ecolabelled products.

### **Company profile: Rosmarin Zrt's EU Ecolabelled all purpose cleaners and laundry detergents are manufactured with solar energy**

Hungarian all purpose cleaners and laundry detergent producer, Rosmarin Zrt. has been an EU Ecolabel licence holder since March 2012. Based in Mártély, Hungary, this company's initial motivation to apply for the EU Ecolabel was to certify their best selling product, Scrubstone/Cleaning stone. After receiving positive feedback from their partners along with unexpected media coverage on their environmental efforts via the EU Ecolabel, it was clear that their initial benefits could be multiplied.

Upon this realisation, Rosmarin certified two additional all-purpose cleaner products and introduced a liquid laundry detergent into their EU Ecolabel product line. Based on consumer demand, their goal for 2014 is to expand their range of EU Ecolabelled products.

Rosmarin's mission to provide its customers with the best products possible is seen through their noticeably high internal environmental standards. In 2013, to show their ongoing dedication to the environment, they also applied for ISO 9001 and ISO 14001.

Anwendungsbeispiel  
Examples for use  
Exemples de domaines d'application



EU Ecolabel: HU/020/003



Another remarkable environmental effort is their zero CO2 emission goal, achieved in part by the company's photovoltaic system, which compensates for a significant amount of their energy intake. In other words, their EU Ecolabelled products are in large part, produced with renewable energy.

Some of the advantages of using Rosmarin's EU Ecolabelled all purpose cleaners and laundry detergents are: reduced amount of total chemicals, limited substances harmful to the aquatic environment, increased biodegradability, less packaging, and the assurance that the product's functionality performs the same, or better than conventional products.

For their non-EU Ecolabelled products, this company avoids using phosphates, chlorine, or other potent chemicals in an effort to protect consumers' health. To read the full EU Ecolabel criteria for both product groups, click on: [All Purpose Cleaners](#) and [Laundry Detergents](#).

Rosmarin regularly submits itself to audits performed by third-party organisations to ensure that they pass the quality requirements of the International Association for Soaps, Detergents, and Maintenance Products (A.I.S.E) and Sedex, the non-profit member organisation that drives improvements in responsible and ethical business practices in global supply chains. In addition to these quality audits, consumers can turn to the EU Ecolabel as a quality seal, since quality is a main component of all EU Ecolabelled products.

Rosmarin's EU Ecolabelled products can be found throughout Europe (Germany, France, UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Finland, Slovakia), Canada, the USA, Australia and Asia.

Rosmarin encourages other companies to apply for the EU Ecolabel in order to meet today's growing need of environmentally friendly products, and encourages prospective EU Ecolabel licence holders to take advantage of the various forms of assistance available within the EU Ecolabel scheme.

To find out more about Rosmarin's products and environmental mission, visit their [website](#).



## Updates on the EU Ecolabel website & other news on the web

A **Factsheets for producers** for the following new product group were developed and added to the [EU Ecolabel website](#):

\* [Sanitary Tapware](#)

This factsheet concisely summarises the official criteria document and provide a checklist of requirements for a product to qualify for the EU Ecolabel.



On 5 November 2013, the **Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN)** met to discuss the future of ecolabels worldwide. On this occasion, the Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik gave an opening speech on “Why do we need Ecolabels”. You can read his inspiring insight [here](#).



**Commission Regulation No. 782/2013** of 14 August 2013 amended Annex III of the EU Ecolabel Regulation 66/2010 and modified several aspects of the **EU Ecolabel fees structure**. Reduced fees continue to be available for SMEs, micro-enterprises and companies from developing countries. A 30% reduction in the application fee is also foreseen for companies registered under EMAS or by 15% for companies certified under ISO 14001. To learn more about the current fees, check the section “How much does it cost” under [How to apply for the EU Ecolabel/Submitting the application](#) on the EU Ecolabel website.

The **EU Ecolabel** and **EMAS** are now present on social media. Follow their [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.



**Other news on the web:**

A new study published by the European Commission puts forward recommendations for a system of green VAT based on life cycle assessment in order to ensure the environmental impact of products to be reflected in their costs. Learn more about the study [here](#).

## Product group calendar 2013-2015

### New product groups under development

New Product Groups	Scheduled Adoption
Sanitary Tapware	21 May 2013 (Find criteria <a href="#">here</a> )
Toilets and Urinals	7 November 2013 (Find criteria <a href="#">here</a> )
Imaging Equipment	17 December 2013 (Find criteria <a href="#">here</a> )
Converted Paper Products	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2014
Absorbent Hygiene Products	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester 2014

### Planned revisions of existing product groups

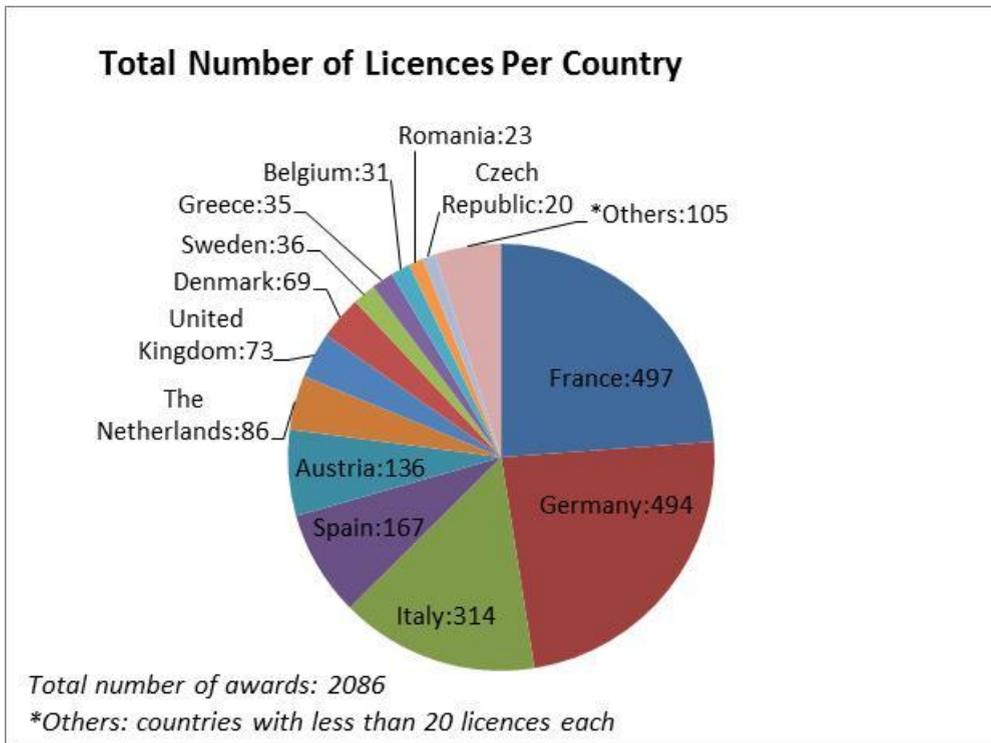
Product Group Revision	Scheduled adoption
Soaps, shampoos, and hair conditioners*	19 December 2013 (Find criteria <a href="#">here</a> )
Bed Mattresses	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2014
Water-Based Heaters	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2014
Textiles	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2014
Paints and Varnishes (indoor & outdoor)	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2014
Light Sources	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester 2014
Footwear	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2015
Televisions	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2015
Portable computers/ personal computers	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2015
Growing Media / Soil Improvers	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2015
Wooden Furniture/ Furniture**	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester 2015

\*“Soaps, shampoos, and hair conditioners” will eventually change to “Rinse off cosmetics”.

\*\* “Wooden Furniture” will eventually change to “Furniture”. Since this product group is still under development, this name change will not be immediate.

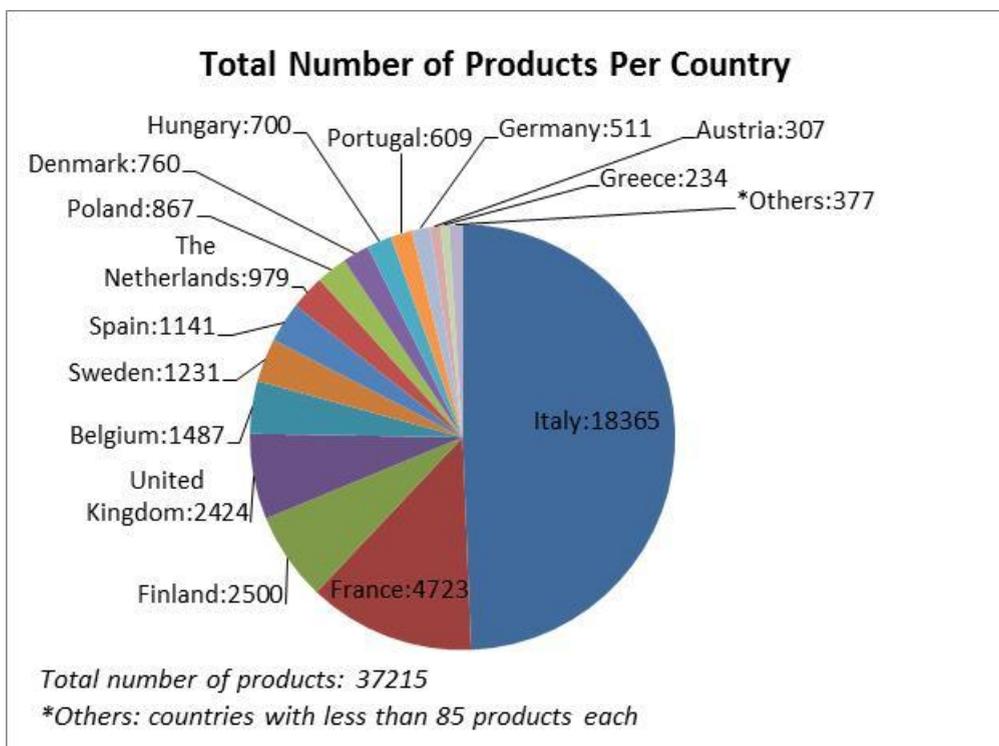
## Facts and Figures: Total number of licences per country

These statistics represent the current number of total valid licences. Licences under application or renewal process are not taken into account. These figures are based off of Competent Bodies' internal data.



## Facts and Figures: Total number of products per country

These statistics represent the current number of total valid products. These figures are based off of Competent Bodies' internal data.



## Agenda of Events

**17-18 January 2013:** [Multinational Knowledge Brokerage Event on “Green ICT for Sustainable Consumption”](#), Vienna, Austria

The event brings together high-level scientists and policy-makers to explore, discuss and address pressing questions on the potentials and challenges of Green ICT for enabling Sustainable Consumption.

**28 January 2014:** [Sustainable Development Research Network Annual Conference](#), London, England

Sign up for this conference to take part in an essential discussion on identifying if the UK's sustainability efforts are currently in line with its commitments for 2020. Further discussion will focus on what tools the UK has to help this country reach its goal for 2020.

**26-29 January 2014:** [FRESH and European Sustainable Events Conference 2014](#), Copenhagen, Denmark

The three-day event will bring together unique professionals who will be presented with innovative solutions to increase their skills and contacts in strategic meeting design and sustainable event planning.

**29 January 2014:** [Green Growth, Green Jobs: Integrating Employment and Environmental Policies Across Europe](#), Brussels, Belgium

This international symposium gives participants the opportunity to examine the future of green growth in Europe by focusing on its economic, social, and financial aspects. Special attention will be paid towards exploring how the green economy can be boosted by investing in green technologies and eco-innovation

## Contact and subscription

Click [HERE](#) to **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** to the EU Ecolabel News Alert.

