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## **Integrated Product Policy (IPP) in Switzerland**

### **Status report**

### **Substances, Soil and Biotechnology Division<sup>\*)</sup>**

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#### **1. Starting position**

The beginning of the 1990s saw the start of efforts, originating in The Netherlands, towards the formulation of a product-related environmental policy. Since then, representatives of environmental ministries who have responsibilities for products have met five times to develop and establish such a policy, at first informally but from 1997 within the OECD framework. The fourth of these Meetings took place in 1997 in Switzerland (OECD/Green Goods IV: International Conference on Greener Public Purchasing). In that year the European Commission (DG III and DG XI) took the initiative of officially establishing an Integrated Product Policy (IPP) as a new policy area. From the outset, SAEFL has been involved in specific aspects of this work. In the spring of 1999 an informal meeting of EU environmental ministers was held to discuss IPP.

#### **2. Objectives of an IPP<sup>\*\*)</sup>**

- Product policy should have a holistic foundation, i.e. the impacts of products on the environment are considered over its whole life-cycle: the stages preceding manufacture, manufacture itself, transport, consumption and disposal.
- Environmental policy on products should be integrated into other policies (on trade, the economy, purchasing, development etc.).
- Resource consumption of the economy as a whole, and specifically of products over their whole life-cycle, should be 4 to 10 times less than it is today (in terms of materials and energy).

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<sup>\*)</sup> Author: Christoph Rentsch, Head of the Environmentally Hazardous Products Section.

<sup>\*\*)</sup> "Products" are taken to mean both goods and services.

### **3. Strategy for achieving these goals**

Our efforts towards an IPP are aided by two main instruments:

- **The Life-Cycle Approach (Life Cycle Assessment, LCA)**

Reasons for choosing this instrument: the Life-Cycle Approach has fundamental significance both for the environment as a whole and for a long-term, socially sound economy. It permits the optimum positioning of financial resources, social improvements and efforts towards environmental protection.

- **Public purchasing**

Reasons for choosing this instrument: public purchasing connects a wide variety of different sectors of the administration, e.g. the treasury, construction and logistics, foreign trade, domestic trade, the environment; it also connects their major actors, e.g. Federal Department of Finance (DF), Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC), Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports (DDPS). A substantial amount of money is also at stake. These conditions are excellent for bringing the environmental sector into contact with others, and to exert real influence on the markets, in terms of the political objectives formulated by the Federal Council.

#### **3.1. The Life-Cycle Approach**

The methodology and the application of an ecological life-cycle approach are promoted in the administration and in business (both supply and demand) through

- improvement in the quality of existing methods and the promotion of new procedures adapted to the problem: ecodesign (planning stage), Life Cycle Assessment (in particular, evaluation of the "Actual" situation), eco-label (marketing instrument);
- involvement in implementing it in the federal administration and the private sector (material balances, evaluation aids).

#### **3.2 Public purchasing <sup>\*\*\*)</sup>**

- Public sector purchasing decisions should be made on the basis of a long-term, economic and ecological life-cycle approach.
- The purchasing power of the Confederation, cantons and communes should be used as an incentive to develop sustainability.
- The public administration must recognise its function as a role model.

### **4. International developments**

A practical application of the LCA method contributes to anchoring Life-Cycle-Thinking (moving from sectorial towards holistic thinking) in environmental circles (e.g. environmental ministries and agencies) and in the economy (e.g. WBCSD, WTO). The significance of public purchasing for the credibility of government policy is increasingly being recognised. Together with international organisations, the following activities are significant for SAEFL in the area of IPP:

#### **OECD**

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<sup>\*\*\*)</sup> The Confederation, cantons and communes spend each approx. 12 billion Swiss francs annually on purchasing goods and services, including buildings. This is approx. 10% of the GDP.

Programmes within the Environment Policy Committee EPOC and the Working Party on Pollution Prevention and Control WPPPC (from 2001 Working Party on National Environmental Policy WPNEP):

- Improving the Environmental Performance of Government.
- Sustainable Production and Consumption.
- Greener Public Purchasing.

## **EU**

- Starting in 1997, an IPP was formulated under the aegis of Directorates General III (Industry) and XI (Environment):
- Report and Workshop on IPP, Brussels 1998.
- Informal ministerial meeting, Weimar 1999.
- Workshop on Policy Integration, Bonn 1999.
- EU Green Paper on IPP, 2001

## **WTO**

From 1999: talks on the further development of the WTO Agreement on Public Purchasing.

## **UNO**

Agenda 21 already contains the principle of IPP in its approach. Important aspects are primarily laid down in Chapters 4 (Changing Consumption Patterns) and 39 (International Legal Instruments). The programme "Changing Consumption and Production Patterns" is in progress within the Commission on Sustainable Development CSD.

## **5. SAEFL's contributions**

This chapter focuses on the overall product-oriented approach in environmental policy, as pursued by the Environmentally Hazardous Products Section. Many of SAEFL's activities touch on aspects of IPP; these are not listed here.

### **5.1 Life Cycle Assessments**

(For references cf. Appendix)

- Historic, pioneering role of the Life Cycle Inventories of Packagings, since 1984 (Waste Management Division).
- Concentration on methodology and on the assessment stage; close collaboration with Swiss experts.
- Specific points: practice-oriented application in particular areas of SAEFL's interest.
- Internal LCA coordinating group within SAEFL since 1991 (head: G. Karlaganis, Substances, Soil and Biotechnology Division).
- Member of the Federal coordinating group for energy and LCAs (KOEBI); collaborated in establishing OGIP (planning instrument for economic and ecological building).
- Establishing an LCA information exchange on the Internet: who is doing what in Switzerland?

- Participation in establishment of a database in the ETH sector throughout Switzerland (Ecoinvent 2000; head: P. Gilgen, EMPA St Gallen): harmonisation and quality assurance of environmental data used in LCAs.
- Involvement in an experience-exchange group at the ETH Zurich's Institute of Industrial Engineering and Management (BWI): practice-oriented application of EMS, LCA and other instruments in industry.
- Since 1992, running an ad hoc working party on eco-labels: working party of Swiss institutions interested in eco-labels; periodical publication of a Status Report.
- In the framework of IDARio Interdepartemental Committee Rio (governments strategy towards sustainable development) : Elaboration and Publication of the report "Recognition and promotion of eco-social Labels"

## Prospects

Continuation of current activities, in particular:

- Establishment of Ecoinvent 2000 (setting up a stakeholder group, making the database operational)
- Closing significant gaps in basic inventories (including metal working and engineering industry).

## 5.2 Public purchasing

Previous important stages in connection with the themes of environmental public purchasing:

- Member of the Conference of the Federal Construction Organisms and of their subgroup Sustainable Buildings; Member of the Coordination group Ecological Buildings (cantons and communities); since 1988
- Member of the Interest Group for ecological public purchasing (mainly cantons and communities); since 1994
- Member of the Federal Purchasing Commission (BKB) since 1999 (C. Rentsch)
- One of the initiators of the OECD project "Greener Public Purchasing" 1995.
- Setting up the Ecological Purchasing Service within the Environmentally Hazardous Products Section in 1996 (head: E. Venanzoni).
- Training of buyers in environmental questions relevant to purchasing within the BKB's training courses.
- Hosting two OECD events on this subject in Biel in 1997 and 1998.
- Involvement in specific aspects within the EU 1998/99.
- Development of principles for development towards sustainability in the public purchasing sector.

## Prospects

Continuation of current activities, in particular:

- Strengthening cooperation with the BKB (including education of purchasers).
- Continuation of involvement in OECD Steering Group "Greener Public Purchasing" with these goals: workshop on fiscal and budget mechanisms that serve public purchasing; recommendation to ministers on public purchasing to improve the government's environmental performance.
- Support of the federal purchasing units as part of the RUMBA programme (EMS in the federal administration).

## **6. Appendix**

### **References**

#### Chapter 4, International developments:

Information on OECD activities; <http://www.oecd.org/env/>

Information on EU activities: <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/>

- OECD Council Recommendation C(96)39/Final "Improving the Environmental Performance of Government"
- 24-26 February 1997 Green Goods IV: International Conference on Greener Public Purchasing: Issues, Paper on Greener Public Purchasing; Papers presented at the Plenary Session; Papers presented at the Workshop Sessions
- 2-4 February 1998 OECD Workshop on Developing Green Purchasing: Institutional, Policy and Practical Issues; ENV/EPOC/PPC(98)4/REV1
- OECD publication: Greener Public Purchasing - Issues and practical solutions, 2000 , [www.electrade.gfi.fr/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront](http://www.electrade.gfi.fr/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront)
- Ernst & Young and Science Policy Research Unit, European Commission DGXI Integrated Product Policy, March 1998
- European Commission, Workshop on Integrated Product Policy, 8 December 1998, Final report
- Public Procurement as Driving Force for the Implementation of an Integrated Product Policy, Report by C. Rentsch, SAEFL, at the EC Workshop on IPP, 1998; see separate pdf-file
- "European Integrated Product Policy", leading article of the EU commissioner Mrs. M. Wallström, EnviroReport, january 2000 [www.environ.se/enviroreport](http://www.environ.se/enviroreport)
- EU Green Paper on IPP, january 2000 [www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ipp/](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ipp/)

#### Chapter 5, SAEFL's contributions

SAEFLs publications can be ordered at <http://www.buwal.ch/publikat/d/index.htm> or by [docu@buwal.admin.ch](mailto:docu@buwal.admin.ch)

#### 5.1.

- Ökobilanz von Packstoffen: SRU 24, SAEFL, 1984 (in German); SRU 132, 1991 (in German) and Life cycle inventories for packagings SRU 250-E, 1996
- Evaluation of life cycle inventories for packagings, SRU 300-E, 1998
- Bewertung in Ökobilanzen mit der Methode der ökologischen Knappheit, SRU 297, 1998 (in German or French)
- Ökologische Bewertung mit Hilfe der Grauen Energie, SRU 307, 1999 (in German)
- Comparative ecological evaluation of paint substances in the building industry SRU 186-E, 1992
- Information exchange for Life Cycle Assessments; Who's doing what in Switzerland? <http://www.oekobilanz.ch>
- Die Einführung eines Umweltlabels in der Schweiz, Status report December 1997; SAEFL, carried out by Atag, Ernst & Young

- Recognition and Promotion of Eco-social Labels, IDARio Interdepartmental committee Rio, Berne, 2000; order nr: 319.360e [verkauf.zivil@edmz.admin.ch](mailto:verkauf.zivil@edmz.admin.ch)

## 5.2

- References on international aspects, see references to chap. 4
- Ressourcen- und Umweltmanagement in der Bundesverwaltung (RUMBA); BRB of 15.3.1999 press release <http://www.admin.ch/bfe/presse/1999/9903151d.htm>
- Umweltorientierte öffentliche Beschaffung in der Schweiz, UM 65, SAEFL, 1997 (in German or French)
- Umweltfreundliche Beschaffung, VGL-Information 2/98 (in German) <http://www.umweltschutz.ch>
- Principles for moving towards Sustainability in the Field of Public Procurement, BUWAL, 1999 see separate pdf-file