

## **Manual of European Environmental Policy**

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The Manual was published by Earthscan/Routledge from 2010 to 2012. It was designed as an on-line interactive reference work and annual printed versions were also produced.

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Farmer, A.M. (2012) (Editor). Manual of European Environmental Policy. 1043pp. Routledge, London.

# Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy (SCP-SIP) Action Plan

<b>Formal references</b> <a href="#">COM(2008)397</a>	Commission Communication on the Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan
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## Purpose of the Action Plan

The aim of the Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy (SCP-SIP) Action Plan is to introduce an integrated product policy which improves the overall energy and environmental performance of products while stimulating consumers' demand for more sustainable goods and production technologies. The integrated approach in the Action Plan entails setting up a new framework for environmental product policy, promoting cleaner and leaner production, and contributing towards sustainable consumption and production efforts internationally.

## Summary of the Action Plan

The SCP-SIP Action Plan was adopted on 16 July 2008 as part of a package of measures on sustainable consumption, production and industry. It sets out an integrated series of legislative and non-legislative measures to green European manufactured products, working towards three major objectives: an integrated policy framework for eco-efficient products; cleaner and leaner production; and contributing towards consumption and production efforts internationally.

The Action Plan does not contain any targets *per se*, but it was accompanied by several legislative proposals and Communications:

- A proposal for the extension of the Eco-Design of Energy-Using Products Directive.
- A proposal for the revision of the Eco-Label Regulation.
- A proposal for the revision of the EMAS Regulation.
- A Communication on green public procurement.

Further actions were also foreseen regarding the revision of the Energy Labelling Directive and a proposal for a Regulation creating an Environmental Technology Verification scheme. Later in 2008/2009 more actions were anticipated in the field of:

promoting resource efficiency; promoting eco-innovation; developing industrial policy initiatives for environmental industries; sectoral approaches; promoting good practice internationally; and promoting international trade in environmentally friendly goods and services.

### *An integrated policy framework for eco-efficient products*

The proposal for the extension of the Eco-Design Directive [2005/32/EC](#) proposed a wider range of products to be included in its scope, extending application of the Directive to cover energy-related products which do not use directly energy but have an indirect impact on energy consumption (e.g. shower heads, building insulation materials or windows). A list of priority groups was to be drawn up after the revision of the Directive. The SCP-SIP Action Plan also proposed two measures concerning product labelling: a revision of the Energy Labelling Directive [92/75/EC](#), extending it to cover more products; and a revision of the Eco-Label Regulation (EC) No [1980/2000](#) to simplify the process of obtaining the EU flower eco-label and to expand product coverage.

Specific implementing measures were to be further elaborated to take into account environmental impacts throughout the entire life cycle of a product, focusing on energy, resource use and reducing the use of hazardous or rare materials. Implementing measures would include minimum requirements to be attained by all products, and advanced voluntary benchmarks for higher environmental performance.

The SCP-SIP Action Plan proposed a ‘harmonized base for public procurement and incentives’, including guidance and tools for public authorities to ‘green’ their procurement practices, such as indicative targets based on the level of the best performing Member States and model tender specifications. A Communication on green public procurement accompanied the Action Plan (COM(2008)400, 2.7.2008).

Further actions proposed in the Action Plan within the integrated framework for eco-efficient products included: exploring the possibility to establish European harmonized standards for product data and methodologies; and strengthening the role of the Retail Forum in defining the baseline for existing conditions, identifying key areas for intervention, exchange of good practices and reporting on progress.

### *Cleaner and leaner production*

To amplify the effect of the proposed integrated approach to product policy and to build on existing policies such as Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control ([IPPC](#)) and the [Emission Trading Scheme](#), the Action Plan proposed actions to promote resource efficiency and eco-efficiency in production processes. This included setting benchmarks, providing monitoring tools, working towards the development of material-based analysis and future concrete targets, and stimulating eco-innovation through the EU’s research and innovation policies. The Action Plan also put forward a proposal for a Regulation on an Environmental Technology Verification Scheme to provide, on voluntary basis, third-party verification of the potential impacts of new technologies on the environment.

The package of measures associated with the Action Plan focused primarily on products, but did also include measures to target production processes. A revision of the EMAS Regulation (EC) No [761/2001](#) was proposed to increase the number of participating companies and reduce the administrative burden and cost to business, in particular SMEs. The Commission also mooted the development of industrial policy initiatives for environmental industries, including the waste and waste water management, renewable energy and eco-construction sectors, although it did not propose substantive action in the Action Plan. Instead it committed initially to analyse obstacles to the expansion of environmental industries and to their full uptake by traditional industries. The creation of a voluntary 'retailer forum' was also suggested, to identify key areas for improvements to ecological footprints and the supply chain, promote more sustainable products, and make more sustainability information available to consumers.

### *International consumption and production efforts*

Actions were also proposed within the SCP-SIP Action Plan to promote sustainable consumption and production internationally. These included: support for the development of sectoral approaches in international climate negotiations to stimulate the development of energy efficiency benchmarks by governments and industries; and the dissemination of good practice within the Marrakesh Process, the EU-Asia partnership (SWITCH Programme) and the International Partnership for Cooperation on Energy Efficiency ('IPEEC'). The Commission also saw the revised Eco-design Directive as a way to nurture the development of international standards for export markets and the liberalization of trade for environmental products.

The Action Plan will be revised in 2012.

## **Development of the Action Plan**

An Action Plan on SCP-SIP was originally called for by the European Council in June 2006, against the context of the Council's endorsement of the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), and in line with the aim of the renewed Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs to turn the EU into the 'most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy' in the world by 2010. The mid-term review of the EU's Industrial Policy in 2007 also called for actions to ensure that industrial policy contributes to more sustainable production and consumption patterns. Due to disagreements within the Commission, in particular between DG Environment and DG Enterprise and their respective Commissioners, publication of the package was delayed several times.

A public internet consultation was held from July to September 2007. The online questionnaire was accessed by 658 respondents, most notably from the industrial sector and the environmental field. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that action was needed in the fields of SCP-SIP. Actions to promote smarter consumption were identified as most important; actions related to innovation and product policy were also deemed important. The key barrier for innovation that was identified by stakeholders was a lack

of long-term policy and regulatory direction; lack of consumer awareness on better products, high risks associated with greening production processes, products and services, and little green public procurement were also deemed important. Stakeholders showed support for actions in three areas in particular: improving the link between research and industry; providing services to SMEs; and market-based instruments to promote technology adoption. The main barriers for adopting energy- and resource-efficient production systems in industry were identified as: lack of incentives to improve product processes; and disadvantages to international competitiveness caused by high environmental requirements. Support was shown for the use of incentives to encourage industries to adopt better technologies and processes, and the use of fiscal measures, subsidies and trading schemes to improve the efficient use of resources. Key barriers identified to the use of better products included lack of consumer awareness, lack of incentives for consumers, and higher prices. Significant support was shown for mandatory instruments to enhance the environmental performance of products and boost innovation. With regards to products, stakeholders suggested that efforts should be focused on products improving resource and energy efficiency, and on those products whose consumption causes the highest environmental damage. Support was also shown for the extension of eco-design instruments to new products, and for the promotion of green public procurement.

The final package on sustainable consumption, production and industry was eventually adopted by the European Commission on 16 July 2008.

On 25 September 2008, the Competitiveness Council exchanged views on the SCP-SIP Action Plan. Discussions focused on challenges faced by European industry, and emphasized the need to promote intelligent SCP to make European companies more competitive, strengthen instruments and set out incentives to stimulate eco-efficiency, ensuring an appropriate balance between regulatory and voluntary instruments. In conclusions adopted on 5 December 2008, the Environment Council stressed that an integrated framework for product policy should explore the synergies and coordination in product design and labelling and the need for ambitious benchmarks and minimum standards in the eco-design Directive. The Council supported the objective to develop measures for green public procurement, and stressed the need for guidance for Member States. Initiatives to raise the stakeholder awareness were encouraged and the Commission was invited to undertake further studies on indicators for sustainable products. The Council called for progress on implementation of the Action Plan to culminate in an assessment by the Commission by 2012, with a view to possible further revisions of the eco-design and labelling provisions. Ministers supported the proposed environmental technology verification scheme and the proposed revisions of the EMAS, and requested the Commission to conduct an analysis of barriers and market failure which can prevent the uptake of environmental technologies and thwart eco-innovation.

## **Implementation of the Action Plan**

As the SCP-SIP Action Plan in itself is not legislative, there are no specific general implementation issues. However, as described above, the SCP-SIP included commitments to revise a number of items of EU legislation and the reader is referred to these sections of this Manual for information on progress in taking these forward. The Action Plan is due for revision in 2012, which will presumably involve a review of progress that can be attributed to measures proposed or brought about by the Action Plan.

## **Enforcement and court cases**

As the SCP-SIP Action Plan in itself is not legislative, there are no relevant ECJ judgements. Any judgements dealing with related pieces of legislation are mentioned in the relevant sections of the Manual.

## **Related legislation**

There are a number of pieces of EU legislation that are related to the SCP-SIP Action Plan. These include:

- Eco-Design Directive [2009/125/EC](#).
- Eco-Label Regulation (EC) No [66/2010](#).
- Energy Labelling Directive [92/75/EC](#).
- EMAS Regulation (EC) No [1221/2009](#).
- Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive [2008/1/EC](#).

The issues of relevance to these Directives are covered in the sections which deal with them.