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AESGP Annual Meeting, Day 2 (Part 3): Reckitt Calls For AESGP Sustainability Consortium

by [David Ridley](#)

At the third session of the AESGP 58th Annual Meeting in Madrid, Spain, Reckitt's head of product sustainability and stewardship Oliver Price called on the association to explore consortia relating to shared sustainability issues within the Europe's consumer healthcare sector. Also in the session, regulatory experts Andrew Fasey, Mayer Brown Europe, and Sevrine Pereira, Euron, critically examined major pieces of incoming legislation related to the EU Green Deal, pointing to areas of concern for the OTC industry.

Reckitt has called on the Association of the European Self-Care Industry to explore consortia relating to sustainability issues within the region's consumer healthcare sector.

Speaking at the AESGP's 58th Annual Meeting in Madrid, Spain, Reckitt's head of product sustainability and stewardship Oliver Price noted the shared interests OTC companies have with regards to sustainability, for example, in providing data to regulators, consumers and investors.

"In future, it is likely that our sector will have to share a lot more environmental information with a variety of stakeholders, not just consumers," he said, in the third conference session of the day. "We will also have to manage a lot more data from our suppliers."

Environmental data management and exchange could be an area that would "benefit from consortia activities in this space within AESGP," he suggested.

Within such consortia, companies could "share learnings and development needs on holistic eco design tools," he continued, and "then look towards facilitating comparative assessments for

medicines, medical devices and food supplements.”

“Understanding that there are various constraints today, are there ways that we can look to explore and move that forward?” he asked delegates.

Cosmetics Example

Price pointed to initiatives in adjacent sectors through which firms have started to collaborate on shared sustainability issues.

In cosmetics, the EcoBeautyScore Consortium, announced in September 2021 without a name and with only five companies – Henkel AG & Co. KGaA, L’Oréal SA, LVHM Moët Henessy-Louis Vuitton, Natura & Co. and Unilever PLC – has now grown to 36 members across four continents, Price noted.

Additional major players that have joined include The Estée Lauder Companies, Inc., Colgate-Palmolive Co., Coty, Inc., Procter & Gamble Co., Johnson & Johnson, Shiseido Company, Limited, Beiersdorf AG, and Kao Corporation.

The initiative’s aim is to collaboratively design a scoring framework for measuring environmental impacts throughout a product’s lifecycle, one that the consortium says will be “brand-agnostic and which provides consumers with clear, transparent and comparable environmental impact information, based on a common-sense methodology.”

As part of the International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products, Reckitt is also working with other companies within the hygiene industry to “explore ways to integrate relevant information and methods into a charter for sustainable cleaning.”

Global Beauty Consortium For Eco-Scoring Products Is 36 Companies Strong; Prototype By Year-End

By [Eileen Francis](#)

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The EcoBeautyScore Consortium, dedicated to launching an environmental scoring system for products, has grown to 36 cosmetics and personal care firms as well as trade groups across four continents, L’Oréal Groupe reports after unveiling the effort in September. A prototype is targeted for the end of 2022.

[Read the full article here](#)

All these initiatives are driven by a need to be transparent with consumers and to enable comparative assessment – also increasingly demanded by investors – as well as by a desire to meet the challenge of climate change faced by everyone on planet Earth.

However, the important takeaway from these initiatives, Price emphasized, is that they are

“proactive” – they aim to get ahead of incoming regulation. “I think that’s an important message that we need to reflect on.”

Price noted the manifold regulations that the consumer healthcare industry is already facing in Europe as part of the wide-ranging EU Green Deal.

Chemical Bans

Earlier in the session, Andrew Fasey, senior scientific and regulatory advisor for Mayer Brown Europe, outlined the implications of this major piece of European sustainability legislation.

Of particular importance to the OTC medicines sector, he argued, is the European Commission’s Chemical Strategy for Sustainability (CCS), which aims to simplify and strengthen the region’s framework for chemical management, phasing out of harmful chemicals like endocrine disruptors, unless they are deemed “essential for society.”

According to the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), CCS could require up to a third of substances currently on the market to be reformulated, Fasey reported, costing the region’s chemicals industry anywhere between 20-40% of total turnover.

At last year’s European Chemicals Agency’s Safer Chemicals Conference, CEFIC director general Marco Mensink noted that the CSS will fundamentally change the chemicals industry, changes which will be very challenging for some companies, especially small and medium sized chemical producers. (Also see "[Downstream Users Emphasize Focusing On Risk In Europe’s Chemical Strategy for Sustainability](#)" - HBW Insight, 22 Oct, 2021.)

“For a lot of chemistries we don’t have alternatives today, and you’re going to need long range research programs,” he said.

Woefully Inadequate

Fasey was critical of the Commission’s approach so far, for example in how it has been engaging

EU Chemicals Strategy Stands To Transform Cosmetics Regulation

By [Ryan Nelson](#)

03 Nov 2020

Cosmetics Europe Director-General John Chave says whichever way the European Commission proceeds under its recently released sustainable chemicals strategy, there almost certainly will need to be changes to the Cosmetic Products Regulation. Chave counts the strategy among “the biggest legislative policy proposals affecting our sector probably ever.”

[Read the full article here](#)

stakeholders via consultation, which he said has been so far “woefully inadequate.”

“The Commission used to try and reach a consensus,” he said, “but this is no longer the case.”

A lot of the impact assessments currently underway on specific chemicals are based on assumptions that aren’t necessarily shared, for example as to what is and isn’t considered “essential for society,” he maintained.

In general, the revision “lacks a real architecture,” he said. “There are lots of lovely ideas, but little on how it will be delivered.”

The whole revision is perhaps too ambitious, he suggested, and will potentially result in a significant loss of chemicals currently on the market.

Companies should be discussing with their supply chains what the risks are for their products, he advised. “Your businesses will be affected,” he concluded, “of that there is no doubt.”

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Complementing Fasey’s presentation, European’s Sevrine Pereira covered the parts of the new EU Green Deal that concern packaging.

Public affairs and communications officer for the European packaging industry association, Pereira described the multiple EU frameworks currently in development in this area as a “regulatory tsunami.”

Concentrating on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, which is currently being reviewed, Pereira explained how the Commission wants all packaging reusable or recyclable by 2030.

A proposal as to how the EC wants to revise the Directive was expected to appear in July, but will now be delayed until Autumn.

Possible measures within this directive include a definition of what recyclable packaging is, which may require companies to include a 95% recyclability threshold per unit of packaging.

A negative list of materials that could be banned from use in packaging may also be in the pipeline, she suggested – a proposal that European is “very concerned” about.