



ORGALIME

The Secretary General

Mr Timo MÄKELÄ
Director, DG Environment

European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

Brussels, 10 June 2005

IPP Stakeholder consultation

Dear Mr Mäkelä,

In the course of DG Environment's consultation of stakeholders on the "suitability of tools for the greening of products" in the context of the ongoing IPP pilot case on mobile phones, Orgalime would like to draw your attention to a number of key aspects related to this issue, in particular regarding the coherence of the ongoing proceedings:

Orgalime industries are continuously improving the environmental performance of their products manufactured for both, professional and private customers.

While we support the emphasis that the Commission places in its consultation document on the link of European standardisation to the international work ongoing in this field, as well as the clarification provided that the Commission does not intend to develop instruments to apply reduced VAT rates on eco labelled products, Orgalime feels that the present Commission consultation document to a large extent constitutes a repetition of the elements outlined in the Communication on IPP of 18 June 2003. At the same time, we believe it risks creating an inconsistent parallel track to the recently adopted directive for establishing a framework for the setting of eco design requirements for energy using products (EuP) and leads us to question the coherence of the Commission's approach on environment product policy for our sector.

In its consultation document the Commission announces that it will "*come forward with a discussion document that will consider ways to promote implementation of the IPP approach in companies, including if appropriate general obligations for specific products*". This will "*take into account existing legislation influencing the eco design of products as the WEEE, RoHS and EuP directive*". Our industry is at the present time not only faced with the challenge of the implementation of the highly complex WEEE and RoHS directives (while not receiving sufficient and timely guidance as to how both, regulators and industry, should apply it), but is also faced with the transposition and implementation of the EuP directive adopted on 23 May 2005. The establishment of a parallel and overlapping initiative would therefore be clearly unacceptable in the light of Better Regulation principles.

We are especially concerned about the added value of the ongoing work considering that fundamental principles acknowledged under the EuP framework, such as a true balance of the three equally important pillars of sustainable development, social, economic and environment, are neither respected in the consultation document nor the conduct of the ongoing IPP pilot case on mobile phones: The present sole focus on the environment pillar becomes particularly evident since the draft pilot case report repeatedly quotes that "*neither the environmental benefits nor the socio-economic impacts of the proposed improvement options have been assessed during this stage of the IPP pilot and that the feasibility of implementing them is also not adequately analysed in this stage*".

ORGALIME Liaison Group of the European Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic and Metalworking Industries Ass. Intern. A.R. 12.7.74

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Besides the above-mentioned conflicts of such an approach with the core principles of the recently adopted EuP directive, the validity of possible conclusions to be drawn from the pilot case remains somewhat unclear.

Furthermore, we regret that the Commission consultation document fails to mirror the reality of our industries that act on a global scale characterised by highly complex supply chains as well as highly competitive international markets: putting too strong a focus on the promotion of the regional European instruments of EMAS and eco label rather than on international standards is not in the interest of promoting environmentally friendly products at an international level for our sector nor does it promote the competitiveness of our industry.

Also, the IPP approach is meant to integrate, amongst others, the principles of life cycle thinking. The present approach, however, gives the impression of focusing on life cycle assessment (LCA) as a general principle. From a practical point of view, LCA cannot be generally applied. In particular, LCA is not an appropriate tool for highly complex and rapidly evolving equipment, such as consumer electrical and electronic appliances or for SMEs. Developing tools, which over 95 % of companies in Europe will find practically impossible to apply, is not, in our opinion, appropriate or proportionate. Orgalime, therefore, does not support the promotion of the uptake of LCA.

Regarding further aspects of the ongoing IPP pilot case on mobile phones, we welcome the importance that has been given to the use of voluntary tools, as we consider that market forces are the key driver for innovation in our industry. We share the view that the use of self-declaration should be the preferred option used by the sector. While we support that environment front-runner should be further encouraged in their progress, the "top runner approach", which as a general principle has not been accepted in the EuP directive, is not appropriate.

Finally, we would like to take the opportunity to equally stress our concern on overlaps of the work commissioned under EuP and the current DG Environment EIPRO study. This latter study states as it aim the identification of products with the greatest potential for environmental improvement. Once again, the exclusive focus on environmental aspects in the EIPRO study is clearly in conflict with the framework established under the EuP directive. We can therefore only question the added value that such an approach will have in the framework of a directive, which clearly prioritises a holistic approach.

We would be happy to discuss these matters with you at your earliest convenience and remain at your disposal for any further information that you may wish to obtain.

Yours sincerely,



Adrian Harris

Cc: Mrs Marianne Klingbeil, Mrs Orsolya Csorba, Mr Bengt Davidsson