

COMMISSION

COMMISSION DECISION

of 14 February 2003

establishing revised ecological criteria for the award of the Community eco-label to laundry detergents and amending Decision 1999/476/EC

(notified under document number C(2003) 143)

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2003/200/EC)

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 on a revised Community eco-label award scheme⁽¹⁾, and in particular the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Under Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000 the Community eco-label may be awarded to a product possessing characteristics which enable it to contribute significantly to improvements in relation to key environmental aspects.

(2) Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000 provides that specific eco-label criteria are to be established according to product groups.

(3) It also provides that the review of the eco-label criteria, as well as of the assessment and verification requirements related to the criteria, is to take place in due time before the end of the period of validity of the criteria specified for each product group.

(4) It is appropriate to revise the ecological criteria that were established by Commission Decision 1999/476/EC of 10 June 1999 establishing ecological criteria for the award of the Community eco-label to laundry detergents⁽²⁾ in order to reflect the developments in the market. At the same time, the period of validity of that Decision as extended by Decision 2002/172/EC⁽³⁾ and the definition of the product group should be modified.

(5) A new Decision should be adopted establishing the specific ecological criteria for this product group, which will be valid for a period of five years.

(6) It is appropriate that, for a limited period of not more than 18 months, both the new criteria and the criteria established by Decision 1999/476/EC should be valid concurrently, in order to allow sufficient time for companies that have been awarded or that have applied for the award of the eco-label for their products prior to the date of application of this Decision to adapt those products to comply with the new criteria.

(7) The measures provided for in this Decision are based on the draft criteria developed by the European Union Eco-labelling Board established under Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000.

(8) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee instituted by Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

In order to be awarded the Community eco-label under Regulation (EC) No 1980/2000, a laundry detergent must fall within the product group 'laundry detergents' as defined in Article 2, and must comply with the ecological criteria set out in the Annex to this Decision.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 237, 21.9.2000, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 187, 20.7.1999, p. 52.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 56, 27.2.2002, p. 32.

Article 2

The product group 'laundry detergents' shall comprise all laundry detergents, in powder, liquid or any other form, for the washing of textiles, and which are intended to be used principally in household machines, but not excluding the use in laundrettes and common laundries.

Article 3

For administrative purposes the product group code number assigned to this product group shall be '6'.

Article 4

Article 3 of Decision 1999/476/EC is replaced by the following:

'Article 3

The product group definition and the specific ecological criteria for the product group shall be valid until 31 August 2004.'

Article 5

This Decision shall apply from 1 March 2003 until 29 February 2008.

Producers of products falling within the product group 'laundry detergents' which have already been awarded the eco-label before 1 March 2003 may continue to use that label until 31 August 2004.

Producers of products falling within the product group 'laundry detergents' which have already applied for the award of the eco-label before 1 March 2003 may be awarded the eco-label under the terms of Decision 1999/476/EC. In these cases the label may be used until 31 August 2004.

Article 6

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 14 February 2003.

For the Commission

Margot WALLSTRÖM

Member of the Commission