
PRESS RELEASE

Wal-Mart Packaging Scorecard should not become an industry standard

Brussels, 28 September 2007. EUROPEN, The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment, has urged the packaging industry to avoid allowing the Wal-Mart Packaging Scorecard becoming a *de facto* industry standard.

In an address to delegates at the Third Annual Sustainable Packaging Forum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania yesterday, Julian Carroll, Managing Director of EUROPEN, said "EUROPEN believes that we should all avoid the risk of the Wal-Mart Packaging Scorecard becoming a *de facto* industry standard. Not only could such an eventuality disrupt the market but even worse, it risks evolving in such a way as to become an inhibitor of innovation rather than a stimulator. Just getting a high score for your packaging with Wal-Mart should not be a reason to rest on your laurels. In our dynamic industry this is clearly something we do not want."

The packaging scorecard announced by Wal-Mart last year requires all suppliers of packaged goods to the world's largest retailer to submit data concerning their packaging and its environmental performance. The scorecard contains 9 different criteria including greenhouse gas emissions; evaluation of the packaging material type; transport distances; product packaging ratios; cube utilisation; recycled material content; methods of waste recovery; the type of energy used and any special energy saving initiatives in the manufacturing process.

EUROPEN has also cautioned that the Wal-Mart Packaging Scorecard should not be regarded as an environmental indicator. The company itself has gone to great lengths to stress that it considers its scorecard as one of its 13 business management tools introduced to evaluate the performance of its suppliers and buyers. EUROPEN has endorsed Wal-Mart's position that the scorecard should be regarded as "work in progress" with scope for continued improvement and has recommended that industry packaging experts continue to work with Wal-Mart to further develop the tool.

In pointing out differences between the North American and European approach to packaging and environmental questions, EUROPEN has identified market forces as the key driver in North America while legislative pressure has been the chief instrument driving change in Europe. Carroll said that the Wal-Mart initiative should be seen as a bold first step which has contributed to raising awareness of packaging environmental issues within the North American market.

For the full text of Mr Carroll's remarks to the conference see
<http://www.europen.be/?action=onderdeel&onderdeel=5&titel=News+Room&categorie=1&item=67>

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