

CIRCULAR ECONOMY PACKAGE

POSITION PAPER

8 DECEMBER 2015

The detergent and maintenance products industry welcomes the recently published Circular Economy package of the European Commission. Our sector is keen to embrace the new opportunities and fundamental changes that Circular Economy inspires, as a path towards achieving a truly sustainable development, for the benefit of society, business and the environment. We see this publication as a clear invitation to all stakeholders - and business in particular - for a major mindset shift to engage constructively towards this transition. We will use this as source of inspiration for the next generation of projects led by A.I.S.E.¹, in dialogue with our value chain and stakeholders.

The products and services provided by companies of our sector for household and professional uses play a critical role for society as they help answer vital needs for protection from disease and infection, but also for comfort and appearance. They are also key enablers for securing the adequate maintenance and durability of goods, surfaces and infrastructures, a key principle of Circular Economy.

A.I.S.E. has been very committed over the last two decades in proactively steering the sustainable development agenda within its sector. This is being done through key voluntary projects, developed thanks to the expertise of the sector, in consultation with stakeholders. Those projects – notably our flagship initiative the ‘Charter for Sustainable Cleaning’ - have been tackling topics related to resource efficiency and sustainability - two concepts which for us, go hand in hand with circular economy. Out of the topics of particular interest for our sector in this package, we are particularly interested in activities in the domains of product design and more coherent product policy framework, relevant end-user information linked to environmental information as well as safe use of products. As identified already², we also see further opportunities for securing a reliable sourcing and supply of renewable/bio-based raw materials, as well as great potential in increasing the uptake of secondary packaging raw materials, notably plastic. Clarifications between REACH, product and the waste legislations will also be critical in facilitating this transition.

In this journey, A.I.S.E. is committed to continue working constructively and proactively with its value chain on such priorities. This should help steer further tangible progress, enabling to stimulate innovation and competitiveness of the EU industry in a well functioning single market.

¹ A.I.S.E., the International Association for Soaps, Detergent and Maintenance products is the official representative body of this industry in Europe. Our membership totals 31 national associations across Europe and beyond. Through this network, we represent over 900 companies supplying both household and professional cleaning and maintenance products and services. These range from small and medium-sized enterprises to large multinationals.

² See A.I.S.E.’s external position provided as part of the response to the European Commission’s public consultation, August 2015