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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

*accompanying the*

Proposal for a

**DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL**

**establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy related products**

**SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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## SUMMARY

This Impact Assessment accompanies the proposal for the amendment of the Ecodesign Directive for Energy Using Products<sup>1</sup>. The amendment of the Ecodesign Directive is one of the elements of the Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production and on Sustainable Industrial Policy (SCP/SIP) which is a joint initiative of DG ENTR, DG ENV and DG TREN. The main element of the SCP/SIP is an integrated product policy. The Ecodesign Directive is an important building block of the Action Plan.

The current Ecodesign Directive covers only energy using products (excluding means of transport). For these and under the condition that no self-regulatory mechanism is offering a valid alternative, the Directive allows the setting of mandatory minimum requirements corresponding to the performance of the product that has least life cycle cost. Also, the Directive specifies a number of criteria and safeguards such that minimum requirements take into account competitiveness and social issues. This guarantees that improvements in environmental performance are cost-effective. While the purchase prices of these products might rise in the short term, their superior performance more than offsets this over the life span of the product by lower usage costs.

However, the impact assessment of the Action Plan mentioned above has shown that the limited scope of the Ecodesign Directive represents an important restriction on the potential impact that the EU's Integrated Product Policy can have. This impact assessment report therefore analyses whether the scope of the Ecodesign Directive could be extended and what impacts the extension could have. The objective of the report is therefore to provide information to policy makers on the possible scope of such an extension.

Three options are considered:

- (1) No extension of the scope, thus only energy using products can be covered,
- (2) Extend the scope beyond energy using products maintaining the exclusion for means of transport, and
- (3) Extend the scope beyond energy using products including means of transport

Changing the scope of the Ecodesign Directive would not have direct impacts on products, since the Ecodesign Directive is a framework Directive. The environmental, economic and social impacts are linked with the implementing measures for specific product groups. These implementing measures are adopted by the Commission under the regulatory comitology procedure. Before the implementing measures are adopted, stakeholders will be formally consulted and a specific impact assessment will be made by Commission services. All impacts mentioned in the report are illustrative examples of the impacts that could be reaped by having implementing measures for products of the different options. Moreover, the impacts would only be realised in the long run since the adoption of implementing measures is done product by product and after a thorough assessment process.

The analysis of the options takes into account a number of issues. First, the environmental impacts are discussed for broad product categories. Second, it is reviewed whether the Ecodesign Directive would overlap with existing legislation already addressing environmental impacts. Third the environmental improvement potential and the economic and social impacts of the options are assessed.

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<sup>1</sup> Dir 2005/32/EC

The analysis of the available data indicates that significant reductions of environmental impacts are possible while at the same time also allowing economic savings for businesses and final consumers. Generally speaking, the potential benefits are larger the broader the scope of products that can be addressed through implementing measures.

Although the potential benefits would be highest in the case of covering all products (option 3) the report shows that the Ecodesign Directive does not appear to be complementary to the Type-Approval System since much of the potential benefits in the transport sector will already be reaped by forthcoming legislation such as the CO<sub>2</sub> in cars legislation and the new Euro standards. Within the products screened in Option 2 a high environmental impact that can be reaped cost effectively would come from energy related products such as construction products and water using products. Furthermore, also a number of other product groups may offer significant potential for cost efficient improvements, as there is evidence that their impact is even more significant than both the Labouze 2003 and the EIPRO study have demonstrated when looking at products such as: detergent/cleaning products, footwear/leather products, other food products, print-media (books, journals, newspaper), hygiene paper, mattresses, batteries, and toys. Ongoing Commission studies will look further into the environmental impact and improvement potential of these products. Further research could also investigate the environmental and economic sustainability of the use of concrete/cement, steel, aluminium, plastics and other important materials. These product groups and materials are presented for illustrative purpose only.

The screening analysis of the cost and benefits of option 1 and 2 shows that the importance of the upfront costs is highly dependant on the nature of the products and even between sub-categories of the same product type. In the illustrative cases analysed, net benefits increase over time with an increased uptake of products responding to minimum requirements.

An extended scope will allow introducing implementing measures for those non energy using product categories that have the highest potential for improvement of environmental performance while also leading to the highest savings during the use phase. This would not necessarily be possible under the current Directive which is restricted to energy using products. More detailed analyses will be conducted for the impact assessments that need to be prepared for each implementing measure.

At this stage, it can be recommended based on the available evidence to widen the scope of the Directive to energy-related products. Extending the scope to means of transport would have limited benefits. While there are also strong indications that widening the Directive beyond those products could deliver significant benefits, it is recommended to carry out further investigations and further assess the option of including non-energy related products in the scope of the Directive following a future review.