

GC3 Retail Project Group Call
Inventory of Initiatives and Organizations Advancing Safer Chemicals and Products
November 8, 2011

Present: Sally Edwards, LCSP; Michelle Harvey, EDF; Roger McFadden, Staples; Matt Nudell, Bureau Veritas; Sarah Shields, LCSP; Yve Torrie, LSCP

Draft Inventory of Initiatives and Organizations Advancing Safer Chemicals and Products

Yve Torrie provided a brief summary of the draft inventory of initiatives and organizations advancing safer chemicals and products developed by the Lowell Center. Participants commented that the inventory provided a helpful overview of the organizations and their efforts. Continuing to advance retail sector leadership in the movement towards safer chemicals and products throughout supply chains appears to be a unique role for the GC3 Retailer group. Suggestions for adding to the inventory included:

- Listing key retailer members in the initiatives / organizations
- Incorporating individual retailer activities

Retailer Summit

Next steps for the Retailer Project Group were discussed. Roger McFadden suggested that it would be timely to plan for a retailer Summit in fall 2012, building on the retailer meeting held in May 2011. Roger offered Staples as the host for the meeting, to be facilitated by the GC3 / Lowell Center. Anti-trust concerns needs to be addressed in the structure of the meeting. Participants on the call agreed that working towards a summit meeting was a good idea. Preliminary suggestions for the 2012 Summit agenda include:

- Effectively managing chemicals of concern in supply chains and transitioning to safer / sustainable products by sharing information in a “safe harbor”
- Clarifying the role of retailers in this arena – what can retailers do to advance safe products in their supply chains?
- Identifying the “right things” for retailers to do to ensure an orderly transition to safer / sustainable products, the barriers to doing the right thing and how to overcome those barriers
- Focusing on effective harmonization and synchronization of supply chains as many retailers share suppliers and many suppliers share manufacturers and materials
- Fostering collaboration amongst retailers to enhance individual efforts
- Identifying market demand for a transition to safer / sustainable products
- Addressing standardization of data collection to facilitate information flow along supply chains

Webinar Series

The group discussed the possibility of creating a webinar series to help identify areas of concern to retailers pursuing safer / sustainable products, to highlight activities of progressive retailers and to educate retailers new to this discussion. These webinars will help inform the agenda for a retailer Summit meeting.

- Some ideas for webinar topics include data collection and standardization, consumer / market demand for safer alternatives, and ecolabelling
- Bureau Veritas has offered to work with the group in developing a webinar series with the GC3
- Participants discussed conducting a survey of retailers to identify areas of interest and concern. This information will help in planning the webinars and Summit meeting

Next steps:

- LCSP will initiate discussion on a retailer Summit with key stakeholders. They will coordinate a working group to develop an action plan for conducting a survey and planning the webinar series and retailer Summit.
- LCSP will research 3 or 4 key barriers for retailers transitioning to safer / sustainable products that could be addressed at a Summit meeting.
- LCSP will work with Bureau Veritas to map out next steps for a webinar series.
- LCSP will work with Staples to identify next steps for a retailer Summit.