

# **Green Chemistry and Commerce Council (GC3) / National Pollution Prevention Roundtable (NPPR) Joint Working Meeting**

October 3-5, 2007

Chicago, Illinois

## **BACKGROUND:**

### **Green Chemistry and Commerce Council (GC3)**

The Green Chemistry and Commerce Council (GC3) formed in 2005, providing a voluntary arena for representatives from approximately 80 U.S. companies invested in greening their supply chains to meet, talk and learn from the experiences of other firms participating in this endeavor. In addition to businesses, the GC3 includes a broad range of participants with expertise and interest in sustainability and green chemistry from academia and non-governmental organizations.

### **The National Pollution Prevention Roundtable (NPPR)**

The National Pollution Prevention Roundtable is the largest membership organization in the United States devoted solely to pollution prevention (P2). The mission of the Roundtable is to provide a national forum for promoting the development, implementation, and evaluation of efforts to avoid, eliminate, or reduce pollution at the source.

This joint meeting was prompted by working groups within the GC3 and NPPR who are interested in areas of collaboration between government and industry, and specifically, incentives that can be offered for businesses to engage in Green Chemistry and Design for Environment activities.

## **GC3 / NPPR JOINT WORKING MEETING**

Twenty five representatives of business, state agencies, federal agencies, academia, and non-governmental organizations from around the country attended this meeting. The desired outcomes were to:

1. Establish a forum for discussion of Green Chemistry (GC) and Design for Environment (DfE).
2. Identify incentives and needs for businesses to engage in GC / DfE activities.
3. Identify bridges and opportunities for stakeholders to work together to advance these areas.
4. Choose options for collaboration, and begin to understand the incentives that make those options attractive to both parties.
5. Identify three specific opportunities for collaboration to begin working on immediately.

The meeting was a mix of presentations, tours, and small and large group discussion, and ended with priority incentive areas for collaboration. Speaker slide presentations, when used, are attached.

## **Breakout Discussion Groups: A Menu of Incentives and Options for Collaboration**

Public strategies to promote green chemistry can include laws & regulations such as restrictions/bans, fees and information requirements; and non-regulatory incentives such as financial, technical support & information dissemination and recognition. The focus of our discussions was however on non-regulatory incentives. The incentives and options for collaboration that were identified include:

- Development of Green Chemistry Metrics/Certification: Businesses, government, NGO's and academia to work together to develop criteria for identifying greener products and processes. This could include working with DfE to be able to apply the DfE assessment approach. Some form of metrics needs to be developed as a basis for certifying businesses practicing green chemistry and for offering incentives.
- Creation of an expanded market for green chemistry through procurement:
  - Expand state purchasing power by compiling and disseminating information about the various state executive orders and green purchasing specifications to encourage adoption by states, local governments and other institutions that have not created them;
  - Compile existing green purchasing categories and specifications within each state that has a program to encourage the development of a consistent comprehensive green purchasing program in all states;
  - Recommend best practices for purchasing, implementation and enforcement.
- Expand existing technical assistance programs: Some existing technical assistance programs now have the capacity to determine how they can help companies meet existing or new green and sustainable standards or criteria. Other P2 Technical Assistance programs should receive training on green chemistry and on the other incentives (such as metrics and procurement policies) in order to provide GC assistance to companies.
- Grants: Some grants, especially around energy efficiency and climate change may be able to be modified to incorporate green chemistry elements within the funding.
- Education and trainings on applying Green Chemistry: These would be applicable to government technical assistance providers, agency workers, extension programs, academics, public, etc. Build green chemistry into K-12 curriculum.
- Providing value for large and small businesses: recognition around green products, stewardship and green investors is valuable to larger corporations; and economic development assistance is valuable for small businesses
- Encouragement of research funding at federal level
- States encouraging industry to get involved in Safer Detergents Stewardship Initiative (SDSI) of the EPA. SDSI recognizes environmental leaders who voluntarily commit to the use of safer surfactants. States would then be recognized also.
- Development of a clearinghouse for states regarding chemical properties, alternatives, legislation, policies e.g. use of existing tools such as P2RX to build in green chemistry. This would enable states and their technical assistance providers to provide more targeted assistance to the companies they serve.

- Strategize ways for top management at a state level to engage with top executives in businesses to garner a commitment from those businesses to implement green chemistry practices.

Some overarching principles to apply:

- Green Chemistry is dynamic; keep the system flexible so that it can continue to evolve. Do not specify too narrowly how businesses can move towards green chemistry; rather create competition and a race to the top.
- The best incentive programs often blend multiple incentives e.g. information / education, financial and recognition incentives.

**Priority Incentive Areas for Collaboration:**

1. Certification/metrics
  - Criteria for green chemistry
    1. create ranking systems; metrics for internal use; a process for evaluating new chemicals and materials; DfE approach may be most appropriate
    2. identify legitimate certification or recognition programs (e.g., accept products recognized by Green Seal; DfE; EcoLogo)
    3. create collaboratives that develop criteria (e.g., Ecobiz in OR); constraints on what states can specify (cannot endorse specific programs; especially where individual organization profits from it)
2. Procurement
  - inventory of current state procurement practices
    1. rules, areas of application, enforcement
    2. target areas going forward
  - apply green chemistry principles to purchasing
  - involve purchasing associations (responsible purchasing networks)
  - inventory state guidelines– EPA database? Add / update (See: <http://yosemite1.epa.gov/oppt/epstand2.nsf>)
  - choose sectors where there are the best opportunities to make improvements (e.g., cleaning, coatings, carpets and flooring; paper (disposable items); printing; textiles)
3. Meetings/Education/Information
4. Tech Assistance – act on recommendations for training and development of consistent program elements across states
5. Economic development – work with other state agencies (e.g., small business assistance groups) to develop portfolio of potential economic incentives to develop green chemistry-based businesses

## **NEXT STEPS**

- The DfE working group of the GC3 will “house” this collaborative effort within the GC3. Richard Cottrell and Roger McFadden co-chair this group and will be the primary contacts. Other industry members of the working group include Shaw; JohnsonDiversey and SC Johnson.
- The NPPR P2 Policy and Integration workgroup will “house” this collaborative effort within NPPR. Ken Zarker is the primary contact. Other NPPR working groups are also interested in collaborating on these efforts.
- Yve Torrie from the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production, UMass Lowell, will write up notes and distribute to all participants.
- Notes and the meeting’s contents will be shared with SAFER (Yve will follow up with this).
- The Lowell Center has monthly state dialog calls. The December call can be dedicated to GC3 / NPPR efforts. Some companies could share their experiences.
- Update EPA about this work; meeting with Charlie Auer (FOSTA may be reconvening).
- Ken Zarker will distribute notes to the NPPR Board and workgroup.
- Gary Miller from IL Waste Management and Research Center will set up an internet-based group website (GC3NPPR@yahoogroups.com)

## **Opportunities for Future Meetings:**

- The GC3’s annual meeting will be held in Spring, possibly on the West Coast. States could be invited to participate in the meeting and the DfE working group session in particular.
- NPPR’s Environmental Summit will be held in Baltimore in May. Could there be a session devoted to these efforts at the summit?
- The Lowell Center is releasing a Chemicals Policy Options report in November 2007. Some West Coast states have suggested a meeting to discuss the reports and steps forward. CA has expressed interest in support from the GC3 / NPPR group with their Green Chemistry Initiative between January and May 2007. The West Coast meeting on the Chemicals Policy report could be combined with GC3 / NPPR participants in support of the CA Green Chemistry Initiative.

Kira Matus from Harvard is working with Paul Anastas to discuss state policy initiatives and will explore avenues for collaboration with this group.

## **Resources:**

- Travel to this meeting was underwritten by NPPR and costs for location and meals were covered by SYSCO and Daley International (many thanks!)
- Lowell Center support is much appreciated for planning assistance and support.
- Recommend leveraging existing forums e.g. National Environmental Partnership; GC3 meetings; to make it easier to justify funding.
- Lowell may have student intern who could help with research.