

Session 3 speaker:

Life-cycle perspectives and sustainability of products and chemicals– how to inform consumers

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Ann Kristin works as an expert on chemicals, nanomaterials and microplastics and are the contact point in Norway for EU Ecolabel. Are part of our Nordic political group following EU's Green Deal closely. Started in Ecolabelling Norway one year ago after having worked twenty years in the Norwegian Environment Agency, with hazardous chemicals, chemical legislation (CLP, Reach, RoHS) and hazardous waste. Have participated in several expert groups in the EU Commission and in the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) in UN.

Short abstract

In our efforts to create sustainable products, we may risk solving a problem in one place, but creating another environmental problem somewhere else.

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel generates sustainable solutions, which build upon a life cycle assessment. Ecolabelling is an effective tool for pioneering businesses that want visible proof of their environmental efforts.

Only the environmentally best products can obtain a Nordic Swan Ecolabel. This gives consumers and procurers a safe and easy guide for choosing among the environmentally best products, without having to be environment and climate experts themselves.

The entire life cycle of the product, from raw material to production, use, disposal and recycling, is included in the assessment, when drawing up the requirements for an ecolabelled product. This is important to ensure that we reduce the overall impact on the environment and the climate. Alongside environmental requirements, the criteria also include requirements regarding product properties that ensure quality and durability.

Nordic Swan Ecolabel wants to exclude or limit certain substances that are suspected of having undesirable properties, even though these are neither harmonised classified nor on an authority-regulated list. For example, if substances are self-classified by the manufacturers. Or if new research has shown that a substance is suspected of having an undesirable property.

It can take some time before new research is confirmed and ends up with a harmonised classification and for groups of substances, it might only be selected substances that have been fully investigated. Nordic Ecolabelling can choose to exclude or limit the substance, or the entire group of substances, by use of the precautionary principle.

An important task to ensure sustainability and that we are ahead of legislation is to follow the initiatives under EU's Green Deal closely. Especially EU's chemical strategy, EU's new circular action plan and the taxonomy, including the framework to define safe and sustainable by design (SSbD) criteria for chemicals and materials and the new proposal for Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation, are essential for us.