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EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, **XXX**
D032212/02
[...] (2014) **XXX** draft

COMMISSION DECISION

of **XXX**

establishing the ecological criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for absorbent hygiene products

(Text with EEA relevance)

COMMISSION DECISION

of **XXX**

establishing the ecological criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for absorbent hygiene products

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel¹, and in particular Article 8(2) thereof,

After consulting the European Union Eco-labelling Board,

Whereas:

- (1) Under Regulation (EC) No 66/2010, the EU Ecolabel may be awarded to products which have a reduced environmental impact during their entire life cycle.
- (2) Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 provides that specific EU Ecolabel criteria are to be established according to product groups.
- (3) The criteria, as well as the related assessment and verification requirements should be valid for four years from the date of adoption of this Decision, taking into account the innovation cycle for this product group.
- (4) Since consumption of materials can contribute significantly to the overall environmental impacts of absorbent hygiene products, it is appropriate to establish EU Ecolabel criteria for this product group. The criteria should, in particular, promote sustainable sourcing of materials, limited use of hazardous substances, high-quality and high-performance products which are fit-for-use and are designed to minimise waste production.
- (5) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established by Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No 66/2010,

¹ OJ L 27, 30.1.2010, p. 1.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. The product group “absorbent hygiene products” shall comprise baby diapers, feminine care pads, tampons and nursing pads (also known as breast pads), which are disposable and composed of a mix of natural fibres and polymers, with the fibre content lower than 90% by weight (except for tampons).
2. The product group shall not include incontinence products and any other type of products falling under the scope of Council Directive 93/42/EEC².

Article 2

For the purpose of this Decision, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) 'cellulose pulp' means a fibrous material mainly composed of cellulose and obtained from the treatment of lignocellulosic materials with one or more aqueous solutions of pulping and/or bleaching chemicals;
- (2) 'optical brightener' and 'fluorescent whitening agent' mean any additives used with the only purpose of 'whitening' or 'brightening' the material;
- (3) 'plastic materials', also referred to as 'plastics', means synthetic polymers to which additives or other substances may have been added which can be moulded and used as main structural component of final materials and articles;
- (4) 'synthetic polymers' means macromolecular substances, other than cellulose pulp, intentionally obtained either by a polymerisation process or chemical modification of natural or synthetic macromolecules or microbial fermentation.
- (5) 'Super absorbent polymers' means synthetic polymers designed for absorbing and retaining large amounts of liquid compared to their own mass.

Article 3

In order to be awarded the EU Ecolabel under Regulation (EC) No 66/2010, a product shall fall within the product group "absorbent hygiene products" as defined in Article 1 of this Decision and shall comply with the criteria as well as the related assessment and verification requirements set out in the Annex.

Article 4

The criteria for the product group "absorbent hygiene products", as well as the related assessment and verification requirements, shall be valid for four years from the date of adoption of this Decision.

² Council Directive 93/42/EEC of 14 June 1993 concerning medical devices (OJ L 169, 12.7.1993, p. 1).

Article 5

For administrative purposes, the code number assigned to the product group "absorbent hygiene products" shall be "047".

Article 6

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Janez POTOČNIK

Member of the Commission