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THE ECOLOGICAL TAGGING OF TEXTILE MATERIALS

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Abstract: *The eco-tagging is due to help the consumer to identify and choose the products and services which are most friendly with the environment (comparative with the similar existing products on the market). We assist, lately, to a more and more accentuated competition between producers in what it seems to be the bid of products more or less ecologic. Using arguments among most diverse, they try to assure the consumers as their products are more ecological than the competitor's.*

Keywords: ecological, textile, consumers.

1. INTRODUCTION

The first program of eco-tagging dates from the year 1977 and was scrolled in The Germany. Subsequently there were initiated this kind of programs in European Union, Brazil, Canada, China, Croatia, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, USA etc. The main feature of the eco-tagging programs is that they are voluntary. They appear from the initiative of the free organisms and they are supported, in most the cases, by those cabinets.

The respective organisms establish on scientific bases the criteria which will be directing the eco-tagging of the products. The criteria refer mainly to the potential impact of the products on the environment for their whole endurance.

The consumers, but also the distributors too, especial in the developed countries, adopt or don't a certain product not just depending on the appearances considerate important not long ago: the quality, price, the availability, but also depending on the appearances concerning the conservancy of the environment linked to it. These effects regarding the environment reunite actually the effects carried out by the products on the environment for their whole endurance.

We assist, lately, to a more and more accentuated competition between producers in what it seems to be the bid of products more or less ecologic. Using arguments among most diverse, they try to assure the consumers as their products are more ecological than the competitor's.

Sequence, the consumers, are concerned of the environment safety matter and, therefore they don't hesitate to buy products which carries mentions like "natural", "ecological", "biodegradable" etc. The respective attributes are hard to verify by the consumers and they can be humbugged. Obviously, some producers do

special efforts in the aim of making respectful products with the environment, while others just tag certain attributes to the average products "dressing them in green".

The consumers which dispose of high incomes choose the products eco-tagged in stead of others, even if they have to pay obviously, an upper price for these. In this context, the products which are not tag accordingly outface competition.

The preference for the eco-tagged products seen on different markets, raise for the producers the problem of reconceived own products, the packing and the technologies, so that the products-results be "environmental friendly". To estimate the impact exercised by the product on the environment, it needs to analyze the whole loop of life, starting from the phase of conception and arriving to that of residue.

2. THE ECO-TAGGING THE EUROPEAN UNION

The ecological tagging is a relative new method, specify especially to developed countries. The brand affiliate to the product confers it a certain individuality, and with time passing, the eco-brand will carry out one of classic functions of the brand, namely that of guarantee (and mainly of quality guarantee, all hail and originality of the product in question). The development of science and technique in the past caused the multiplication without unprecedented of the technologies used in different areas of the human activity.

Nowadays it is accentuated the problem of the modern technologies impact on the environment. Many more states of the world make efforts in supporting the decrease of the negative impact of the process and there results on the environment. The environment protection became a permanent preoccupation for many governmental and non- governmental organisms.

The ecological tagging represents an important step in this sense. Through this, many countries favored the realization of products and services with minimum environmental impact. Thus, starting with the year 1993 The Economical Community proposed the creation and the utilization eco-tag.

The European ecological label is granted on groups of products. In the practice, the EU label is granted of a number of 20 groups of products non - alimentary: textiles, bed clothes, bed mattress, footwear, detergents, paint, lacquers, electronics (fridges, washers, and dish-washers), paper, light-bulbs, and computers. The right of brand practice is difficult to obtain due to ecological exactingness established by the community organisms, the tests on which those products were submissive. The period for which is granted is 3-5 years, after that the producers must to renew the application.

The impact of non-alimentary merchandises on the environment is done on the strength of the criteria specified each groups of products. The period of validity of the criteria as for the requests of evaluation and verification are specific to each group of merchandise. Regardless of the group of non-alimentary merchandises the environment requests are referring to the quality of the air, the protection of the soil, reducing the amount of residues generated, the saving of the energy, the administration of the natural resources, the prevention of the phenomenon of global

heating, the protection of the ozone layer, the security of the environment, noise and bio-variety. All these aspects of the environment are referring to:

- the preparation of the production/ prime matters;
- the process of production;
- distribution (Inclusive packing).
- utilization /the consumption;
- reusing / recycling / elimination.

Through ecological tagging they try to limit the use of substance:

With damage effects on aquatic, soil, and air environments;

With high risk of producing the allergic, teratogenetic effects, mutagenesis, cancer genetic.

Concerning the tagging of textile products and of confections in EU, an important fact is that European law enforces merely one tag on whole territory of EU, in what it concerns fibrous composition.

The tag of maintaining isn't compulsorily, but it is certainly a rule accepted, as it isn't compulsorily the mark of origin "Made in..." Indeed, for the moment do not exists a system of clothing measurements to function on the whole territory of Europe.

The ecological tagging is voluntary, and so that to be sincere, isn't a success. In what concerns the maintaining tagging, Austria enforces compulsory tags, but this because they were used many years before it become a member of EU.

Similarly, Great Britain and Holland enforce flammability tagging for children slumber-suits. It's still working with ECS, The European Committee of Standardization, in order to find an agreement in what regards an unique system of clothes measurements for men and women. The current problem is that for the different parts involved: industry, salespeople, houses of mail-order and consumers whom comes them difficult to find the right answer.

Currently, EU enforces no obligation to the producers to apply a tag of origin on their products. The WTO rules say that if a tag "made in" is applied on item, the country of origin mentioned is that where the major transformation had place. But according to this rules, for instance, an italian cloth transformed in costume or dress in Romania, it has to be tagged "made in Romania"; any producer is free to label his products with his country of origin if he wishes. Many seek to it, some because they see an inherent advantage in saying that the product was made in Italy or France.

The compulsory tagging was tested before. In the beginning the 80's, for instance, Great Britain Government decided to enforce this obligation for the products sold to the consumers from Great Britain. This meant particularly, that all the British textile products and confections marketed in Great Britain needed a tag "made in Great Britain".

The European Courtyard decided that such law was contrary with the principle of nondiscrimination and the free competition in EU and Great Britain had to revoke that legislation. It might seem then that, on the strength of this reasoning, the only compulsorily tag which might be stipulated is a tag "Made in EU". Currently, the industry in EU has very divided opinions on this appearance. Some see it as an advantage, others as on a fringe cost.

The tagging of fibrous composition is currently the only tag truly compulsorily from the arsenal EU. Each state may certainly choose to use his

national language or languages. The concept starts from the principle that the information which a consumer receives has to be easy to understand, given the innumerability of the fibers currently on sale and even bigger number of blends.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The company responsibility for the quality of their products does not refer only to the finite items, but the whole loop of production respects the ecologic and social standards.

It distinguished just two such tags: **Naturtextil** and **Ecoproof** which belong to TÜV Rhineland.

Both variants follow up the behavior of natural textiles along the whole technological process, as well as the abundance of the social norms.

It is used by approximate 90 actors from textile internal and external chain, too.

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