

Organic Monitor

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Sustainable Cosmetics Summit Highlights Metric and Packaging Issues

London – The cosmetics industry needs to improve measurement techniques for its environmental impacts and increase adoption rates of sustainable packaging. These were two of the key messages from the North American edition of the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit (www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com), which took place in New York City on 17-19th May. Over 180 executives from the cosmetics industry discussed key sustainability issues over the 3-day summit.

A number of speakers discussed methods of measuring the environmental impact of cosmetic products. Although many companies are undertaking life-cycle analysis, varying methodologies, lack of standardized data and general difficulties in analyzing cosmetic formulations prevent accurate measurement. According to Denise Alves from Natura Brasil, since her company sources over 1,000 raw materials it is not possible to examine the supply chains of all ingredients. Natura Brasil finds that 76% of its products environmental impact is from raw materials and final disposal. By measuring and reducing its carbon footprint, Natura Brasil has become one of the few cosmetic companies to become carbon neutral. Its remaining carbon emissions are then offset by investing in reforestation projects.

Also in the Sustainability Best-Practices session, Avon stated it is focusing on resource efficiency, ethical sourcing and green buildings in its sustainability program. Since its business model relies on direct marketing, Avon places great emphasis on reducing paper usage. Royal Ahold USA shared its approach to sustainability, which involves factoring in consumer knowledge. Reducing waste to landfill is a major preoccupation for the international retailer. Toby Heaps from Corporate Knights stated that rising consumer expectations have made sustainability reporting no longer the domain of publicly-listed corporations, but for all types of organizations. According to Heaps, 'sustainability programs should be implemented from the CEO downwards in order to have real impact'.

The Green Formulations session highlighted new sustainable ingredients, especially for natural and organic cosmetics. With many countries having ageing populations, Dr. Alain Khaiat gave details on the range of new anti-ageing ingredients available for natural skin care products. Laboratory JaneClare showed how traditional Chinese medicine ingredients can be used in organic cosmetic formulations to treat skin conditions. Another presentation discussed the green emulsifier and surfactant options. Other papers by AAK and Evonik re-iterated the complexity of measuring the environmental footprint of cosmetic formulations.

Horst Rechelbacher, founder of Aveda and Intelligent Nutrients, opened the second day of the summit with an opening keynote on the Green Marketing Challenges. Industry challenges were discussed in more detail in the CEO Roundtable session. Heads of natural & organic cosmetic companies stated raw material availability, green washing and lack of legislation as major challenges for the industry.

Wendy McLain of PCC Natural Market said that the lack of national standards for natural & organic cosmetics puts the onus on retailers to educate consumers. The natural food retailer uses newsletters, in-store sampling and merchandising techniques to inform consumers about its natural cosmetics range. In another paper, Mark Jacobs, President of JR Watkins, highlighted the company's strategy of multi-channel distribution to expand its consumer base.

The Sustainable Packaging session explored the various options available to cosmetic companies looking at environmentally-friendly packaging. In the opening paper, Intertek stressed the magnitude of the packaging problem by stating it comprises a third of landfill waste. Proceeding papers covered the importance of eco-design in reducing packaging impact, innovations in recycled packaging, the potential of bio-plastics and novel packaging materials. At the end of the session, case studies were given of companies adopting sustainable packaging solutions. Procter & Gamble showed how it is switching to environmentally-friendly materials for its Pantene shampoos and Gillette outer packs.

Day three of the summit comprises two interactive workshops on sustainable packaging solutions and paraben-free cosmetic formulations. Some of the difficulties in reducing packaging footprints were discussed, as well as preservative alternatives to parabens in the workshops.

Following the success of its North American edition, Organic Monitor is hosting its first-ever Latin American edition of the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit in September. The summit will cover major sustainability issues concerning the Latin American cosmetics industry. More details will follow.

About the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit

The aim of the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit is to encourage sustainability in the beauty industry by bringing together key stake-holders and debate major sustainability issues in a high-level forum. The North American edition (New York, 17-19th May 2012) was the seventh edition in the international series of summits; the proceedings are available for a small professional fee. More information is available from www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com

The summit in pictures

<http://www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com/ny2012summitpics.htm>

Upcoming editions...

Latin American edition: 25-27th September 2012, Sao Paulo

Asia-Pacific edition: 12-13th November 2012, Hong Kong

European edition:

28-30th November 2012, Paris

About Organic Monitor

Organic Monitor is a London-based specialist research, consulting & training company that focuses on the global organic & related product industries. Since 2001, we have been providing a range of business services to operators in high-growth ethical & sustainable industries. Our services include market research publications, business & technical consulting, seminars & workshops, and sustainability summits. Visit us at www.organicmonitor.com

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