

ESPRIT

7 December 2012

ESPRIT'S COMMITMENT TO ZDHC

ESPRIT recognizes the urgent need to eliminate the industrial releases of hazardous chemicals¹ into the environment. In line with the content of the Joint Roadmap² and according to our approach in support of the Precautionary principle³, ESPRIT fully acknowledges and understands the seriousness of the problem of hazardous chemicals and is committed to the goal of zero discharge⁴ of hazardous chemicals for all its products across all pathways of release (discharges, emissions and losses) in our supply chains (with a full life-cycle perspective) by 2020.

ESPRIT is fully committed to the content, actions and timelines outlined in the Joint Roadmap. The scale and complexity of this endeavor make this a very challenging task. We will work collaboratively on this task through an active engagement with all stakeholders needed to create systems change, via an open and informed dialogue to satisfy this commitment.

ESPRIT also commits to support systemic (i.e. wider societal and policy) change to achieve zero discharge of hazardous chemicals by 2020. This commitment includes sustained investment in moving industry, government, science and technology to deliver on systemic change across the industry towards this goal.

If we are to deliver lasting solutions, our actions need to be guided by transparency, fact-based decision-making and based on a precautionary and integrated approach to chemicals management. The goal of zero discharge by 2020 demands the collective action of industry and other stakeholders. We believe that the elimination of hazardous chemicals needs not only collaboration and partnership with our industry peers, but also a holistic and integrated approach. We will apply value-chain as well as life-cycle thinking and innovation towards the development of integrated chemicals management.

In order to achieve our goal of zero discharge of hazardous chemicals by 2020, mechanisms for disclosure and transparency about the hazardous chemicals used in our global supply chains are important and necessary. Disclosure, in line with the Right to Know principle⁵, will be among the most challenging of issues as we continue towards the goal of zero discharge of hazardous chemicals by 2020. Although we see potential value in disclosure, we also believe that the strategy must be appropriate in order to achieve the desired impact.

ESPRIT understands the scope of the commitment to be a long term vision – with short term practice defined in the actions and timeline described in the Joint Roadmap.

To make this commitment a reality ESPRIT will continue phasing out hazardous chemicals in our supply chain and we will accelerate the phase out of the highest priority⁶ hazardous chemicals. ESPRIT will continue to work with brands, material suppliers, the broader chemical industry, NGOs and other stakeholders to achieve this goal. We will drive towards innovative solutions for transparency in chemical management disclosure.

¹ Hazardous chemicals means all those that show intrinsically hazardous properties (persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT); very persistent and very bio-accumulative (vPvB); carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic for reproduction (CMR); endocrine disruptors (ED); or equivalent concern), not just those that have been regulated or restricted in other regions.

² Available at: <http://www.roadmaptozero.com/joint-roadmap.php>

³ The Precautionary Principle means that when (on the basis of available evidence) an activity may harm human health or the environment, a cautious approach should be taken in advance – even if the full extent of harm has not yet been fully established scientifically. It recognizes that such proof of harm may never be possible, at least until it is too late to avoid or reverse the damage done. The process of applying the Precautionary Principle must involve an examination of the full range of alternatives, including, where necessary, the development of sustainable alternatives where they do not already exist.

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⁴ Zero discharge means the elimination of all releases, via all pathways of release, i.e. discharges, emissions and losses, from our supply chains and our products. In light of the increasing sophistication of analytical tools and methods, references to “elimination” or “zero” must be understood as “not above background concentration” rather than “not detectable.”

⁵ “Right to know principle” is defined as practices that allow members of the public access to environmental information – in this case specifically about the uses and discharges of chemicals based on reported quantities of releases of hazardous chemicals to the environment, facility-by-facility, year-by-year.

⁶ Our approach is to prioritize hazardous chemicals that pose the greatest risk to consumers, workers and the environment.