



# ECOS Newsletter

## Winter 2014

### From the Director

*2014 has been an exciting year for ECOS with many successes to look back upon. Within the organisation, we have expanded, taking on new projects in the areas of nanotechnologies and smart grids for example, and also focused on increasing our presence and connections amongst our members, in particular through work visits to members and annual events. We have also had a couple of major successes in our priority areas, including Ecodesign, chemicals and nanotechnologies.*

*Looking onwards to 2015, standardisation and sustainability will be important topics for the Latvian Presidency with the European Standardisation Summit focusing on the construction sector and taking place in Riga, on 4 June 2015.*

*We are also expecting improvements in the organisation, governance and inclusiveness of the European Standardisation System, as a result of the independent review currently being carried out by EY consultants for the Commission. ECOS is also about to enter a long term relationship with DG Growth, as they will be the common entry point for the European standardisation organisations, the societal and other weaker stakeholders*

*involved in standardisation and receiving Union financing (so-called Annex III organisations).*

*We will be launching our brand new website and increase communications with our members and the outside world. Together with the UK Sustainability Network for Standardisation, we will also explore the feasibility of a pan-European project to set up national networks of environmental NGOs to get involved in standardisation.*

***We would like to thank all of our members, experts and partners for your time and cooperation this year and wish you a happy holiday and new year!***

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**Laura Degallaix**  
Director



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## New ECOS Executive Committee

ECOS warmly welcomes our two new Executive Committee members, Greg Archer from Transport and Environment (T&E) and Maja Bozicevic Vrhovcak from the Society for Sustainable Development Design in Croatia (DOOR) who were approved at the Annual General Meeting, replacing Costas Orountiotis from Terra Cypria and Nina Renshaw who recently left T&E to join the European Public Health Alliance as Secretary General (EPHA).

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude Costas and Nina for their commitment and support and wish Nina all the best in her new endeavour!



From left to right: Pieter de Pous, Greg Archer, Ursula Weiss, Angela van Aalst, Claudia Kuss-Tenzer, Maja Bozicevic Vrhovcak, Adam White, Laura Degallaix

## ECOS Annual Events

ECOS held three back-to-back events in October, kicking off with the 2014 ECOS Annual General Meeting (AGM). Members approved the ECOS 2015 Work Programme and budget and revised the ECOS legal statutes. All documents will be made publicly available on the ECOS website beginning of 2015.

Following the AGM, ECOS held its first annual workshop aiming to discuss how to bridge the gap between standards and policy and exploring cooperation opportunities between policy makers, standardisers and stakeholders in key priority environmental areas: nanotechnologies, Ecodesign and energy performance of building, and smart grids. With panellists participants ranging from the Commission to experts, and from industries to NGOs, the topics

discussed led to active debates amongst listeners and led to new insights for the organisation and its network. A summary covering the key points of the presentations and discussions is available [here](#).

The week was finished off with a training provided by ECOS in collaboration with CEN delving deeper into the world of standardisation and how to promote environmental aspects in standards.

ECOS truly appreciated the fruitful discussions which took place during the days and at the related social events.



## Independent review of the European Standardisation System

ECOS contributed to the independent review of the European Standardisation System (ESS) carried out by EY (formerly Ernst & Young) for the EC in response to Action 29 of Communication [COM\(2011\)311](#). The review aims to evaluate whether and how the ESS responds to the EU strategic objectives for standardisation including: speed of the standard setting process, support to competitiveness for European businesses, support to legislation, inclusiveness and support to competitiveness worldwide. The review also aims to assess the

impact of the current governance on the performance of the European Standardisation System and the overall performance of the ESS, as well as to identify areas where improvements are required. After a face-to-face interview during Phase I, ECOS submitted a detailed response to the online consultation during Phase II. ECOS also participated in the third phase of the independent review, consisting of case studies.

ECOS welcomed the adoption of (EU) Regulation 1025/2012, entered into force 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013, and aimed to increase the effectiveness, speed, transparency and inclusiveness of the ESS. We believe that efforts are still needed to ensure the realisation of these objectives. ECOS argues that in the absence of NGO participation at national level, the participation of ECOS and the other Annex III organisations (representing the interests of consumers, workers and SMEs respectively), is crucial for the openness, representativeness and credibility of the system, and should be acknowledged by all parties and facilitated. A separate, specific partnership category within the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) for Annex III organisations should be considered. The national standardisation organisations should also be encouraged to withdraw barriers to NGO participation at national level and identify ways to cooperate. Finally ECOS raised the need to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness and transparency are respected when standardisation work is undertaken at international level, especially when triggered following a Commission's mandate to meet public needs. These are some of the views ECOS conveyed to the consultant in the context of the independent review. We hope the outcomes of the review will lead to clear recommendations to break down the barriers to effective participation of societal stakeholders at both European and national level.

## One step closer to the removal of toxic flame retardants in televisions

ECOS has successfully persuaded National Standardisation Organisations (NSOs) to oppose the introduction of requirements encouraging the use of flame retardants in televisions in the EN 60065 and EN 62368 standards. When studied, many flame retardants have been linked to adverse health effects, including thyroid problems, reduced sperm count, infertility, hyperactivity, and cancer.



Further work remains in the opposition against external ignition requirements. At the international level, the candle flame test specifications IEC TS 62441 will go out for vote in late December, including specifications for large quantities of toxic flame retardants. The danger of this is two-fold, IEC TS 62441 can be linked to the IEC/EN 60065 and IEC/EN 62368 as a means to include external ignition requirements and, if voted on positively in the parallel European vote, the standard could be used as presumption of conformity with the Low Voltage Directive.

## Cold feet in supermarkets soon over?

Back in July, the Commission submitted a regulatory proposal entailing Ecodesign measures and an Energy Label on commercial refrigeration for discussion. If this measure goes through, it would enable already affordable solutions with short payback times, such as the door settings on display cabinets to be more systematically implemented in our shops.

The measures are expected to result in electricity savings of about 18TWh/year by 2020 and up to 58TWh/year by 2030. However, ECOS, several Member States and stakeholders have raised concerns about the proposal clearly lacking ambition. ECOS regrets that no measure to reduce refrigerants is expected. Our stance, in more detail, can be found [here](#).

## Review of the Ecodesign regulation on motors

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2014, the Commission submitted a working document to the Ecodesign Consultation Forum, which is expected to extend the scope of the existing regulation 644/2009 on motors and setting stricter requirements on various parts of the product group. This could result in an additional electricity savings of up to 21.2TWh/year by 2030. Although ECOS welcomes this proposal, there is evidence that further steps should be taken to strengthen the proposal, including stricter requirements in a shorter timeframe.

This Ecodesign regulation could also help deal with the presence of rare earth material in magnets, by indicating their localisation, as well as their extraction process and potentially anticipate ways to maximise a cost-effective reuse and

recovery process. Further information about these proposed changes can be found in the Coolproducts' position paper available [here](#).

[Sign up to the Coolproducts' newsletter here!](#)

**Should the EU introduce a mandatory registration system for products falling under the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Directives?**

**Washing machines energy efficiency: How they are verified and what consumers should care about**

ECOS' Alun Jones discusses the benefits and barriers of introducing a mandatory registration system in a joint paper with Topten and other European partners. An interesting read for those interested in product policy, monitoring, verification and enforcement, and consumer behaviour. You can find the paper [here](#).



**Why Europe should introduce mandatory product registration and a public database for energy related products**

**Discussion paper**

12. November 2014  
Topfen International Services (TIS)

Anette Michel, Sophie Attali, Eric Bush, (TIS)  
Alun Jones, ECOS



Supported by WWF

ECOS has been a part of the ATLETE II project, which has checked the pan-EU compliance of washing machines with energy labelling and Ecodesign requirements using a new measurement method. The project, which ran over two years and has recently been completed, tested a random selection of 50 models across the EU markets. Read more about the project and the full set of results and outcomes in our leaflet [here](#).



## **INTERNORM: Improving civil society participation in standards**

In order to support the involvement of not-for-profit organisations in standardisation, the University of Lausanne launched a four-year pilot project in 2010. The project, which is now in its final phase, has demonstrated its effectiveness to improve civil society participation in standards making.

INTERNORM is conceived as a platform for civil society organisations to strengthen their participation in standards setting. Environmental and consumer organisations are part of the INTERNORM platform, as well as trade unions and a disability association. The project provides logistical, procedural and substantive support allowing civil society organizations to contribute to standardisation in the domains of Nanotechnologies and Touristic services (the involved associations have chosen these two areas).

After nearly four years, the INTERNORM pilot-project could show that effective participation in standards setting implies to rely on both expert and procedural knowledge. This knowledge is hardly ever found in civil society organisations, but structures such as INTERNORM can act as knowledge and resources brokers for them. Nevertheless, the consensus rules and the weight of industry interests can be an obstacle to the participation of civil society: when organisations can't voice, they may prefer to opt out.

Partner organisations, together with University of Lausanne, are currently investigating the possibilities to get a stable funding for civil society involvement in standards making. Cooperation with ECOS and other similar organisations is part of the reflection, so as to strengthen the role of European society within international standardisation.

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**Nanotechnologies: Register now to the upcoming  
ECOS Strategic Workshop!**

ECOS and the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), in collaboration with the German Öko-Institute, invite you to a Strategic Workshop on "Ensuring proper risk assessment of nanomaterials to establish a precautionary based regulatory framework". The workshop will take place in Brussels on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2015. For further information and to register, click [here](#).