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Council for LAB/LAS Environmental Research presents Lecture on Sustainability and Ecolabels
No environmental benefit found for anaerobic biodegradability criterion in ecolabel programs

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 12, 2021) – The Council for LAB/LAS Environmental Research (CLER) is today releasing a lecture on sustainability and ecolabels, focusing on anaerobic biodegradability criteria in ecolabel programs such as the EU Flower, the German Blue Angle and the Nordic Swan. The lecture concludes that anaerobic biodegradation criteria does NOT contribute to sustainability, reduce waste or increase environmental safety. Restrictions on anaerobically non-biodegradable (anNBO) substances in ecolabel programs need to be re-examined. More work needs to be done on ecolabels to better explain how the criteria relate to sustainability and increase the number of criteria that relate to this important goal.

The lecture was presented at the SEPAWA Congress in October 2020 and the full text presentation with the abstract and references is being made available now, [click here](#).

The purpose of ecolabel programs is to identify environmentally superior products using agreed criteria. For laundry detergents and cleaning products, the criteria include requirements for anaerobic biodegradability. The lecture examines potential benefits of anaerobic biodegradation criteria - reduced risk/increased safety, reduced waste and increased sustainability. Sustainability is defined as development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

LAS (linear alkylbenzene sulfonate) is examined as a test case because it is the largest volume, best studied surfactant that does not meet the requirements for anaerobic biodegradation in ecolabel programs. Because of structural similarities among surfactants, the conclusions on LAS likely apply to other anaerobically non-biodegradable substances, including alkyl sulfonates, dialkyl sulpho succinates, sulpho fatty acid methylesters, alfa olefin sulphonates and C12-18 alcohol ethoxylates.

Based on the available data for LAS, there is no scientific basis for restrictions on anNBO substances in ecolabel programs.

About CLER

The Council for LAB/LAS Environmental Research (CLER) is an organization of scientists and technical specialists representing manufacturers of linear alkylbenzene (LAB) and linear alkylbenzene sulfonate (LAS). CLER's mission is to conduct research and distribute scientific information on the environmental safety of LAS, the world's number one cleaning ingredient, and LAB, the material from which it is produced. To learn more, visit cler.com.

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