



Industry unites in the fight against microplastic release from the washing of synthetic textiles

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BRUSSELS,

A new industry agreement for the prevention of microplastic release from synthetic textiles washing was officially launched today and endorsed by the European Commission.

The European Textile and Apparel Confederation (EURATEX), the International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products (A.I.S.E.), the European Outdoor Group (EOG), the European Man Made Fibres Association (CIRFS) and the Federation of European Sporting Goods Industry (FESI) struck an agreement to address the release of microplastic in the aquatic environment.

The group of European industry associations, representing the global value chain of garments and their associated maintenance, agreed that viable solutions need to be found to the release of microplastic into global marine and freshwater during the entire lifecycle of textiles; which is highlighted as one of the sources of microplastic.

In the agreement the associations commit to a cross-industry coordination and stakeholder support through a set of effective and economically feasible measures:

1) Define common measurement methods

Agree on reliable and harmonised test methods to identify and quantify the type of microplastic present in water and in the environment

2) Share Knowledge

Call for collaboration across all relevant industry sectors and other organisations, including research, to share information, define common priorities to fill knowledge gaps and advise on mid and long-term measures



3) Industrial research

Support and participate in industrial research activities to investigate feasible options to tackle the release of microplastic and to contribute towards addressing a global problem.

The industry associations believe that through mutual work and better understanding of the issue feasible solutions can be found that can be effectively applied by industry, consumers, and authorities.

Through the agreement the industries would like to tackle this issue that is potentially affecting billions of people worldwide.

The first half of 2018 foresees the mapping of actions on test methods and on-going research, discussions on potential harmonisation methodologies and conceivable cross-industry collaborations. The goal, for the end of 2018, will be to draft a proposal for the European Commission. This proposal aims to fill knowledge gaps to identify and quantify sources of microplastic pollutions in order to work on possible solutions.

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