



# Eco Mark News

The Eco Mark is a voluntary program ran by Japan Environment Association. Contract fees from licensing companies cover whole budget for our activities. In this "Eco Mark News", the information related to Eco Mark Program such as newly selected Eco Mark product category and proposals for certification criteria is provided on the basis of the "Guidelines for Eco Mark Program Implementation".

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The First Certified Copier under the Mutual Recognition Agreement between Eco Mark and Nordic Swan SHARP "AR-160M" page 7

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\* Annexes are separate from our newsletter and please contact our office if you wish to obtain them. They are also available on our website.

## Expected Role of Eco Mark in Building the Recycling-based Society Interview with Mr. MORISHITA Ken, President of Eco-Management Institute

Eco Mark has been taking an important role in promoting the environment-friendly products and the general lifestyle in our society. However, in order to pervade this system wider in the society, we consider it requires further reinforcement of the activities. From such viewpoint, we interviewed Mr. MORISHITA Ken, President of the Eco-Management Institute. Mr. MORISHITA has been supporting the Eco Mark activities throughout including serving as a commissioner of the Eco Mark committee for Establishing Category and Criteria.



### Eco Mark Influence on the Commodity Market

*- How do you acknowledge and evaluate the role, which Eco Mark so far accomplished ?.*

**Mr. MORISHITA** When I look back the beginning of the Eco Mark program, the terms such as “ecology” or “eco” weren't widely spread in our society. For this reason, there were opinions against the naming. Some thought that people would think “eco” as in economy, and some thought “Environment Conservation Mark” or “Environmental Protection Mark” would be easier to understand.

In such condition, Eco Mark has been carrying out its important role to promote the eco-life including the word “ecology” itself as well as its concept. It has been some 10 years since the program was established, and the importance of the lifestyle and the consumption behavior that consider the environmental issues currently has been widely spread and implemented. There are many background contribution factors but the part the Eco Mark program and the Eco Mark products played has been contributing to the current ecology awareness significantly.

*- Since the establishment, you have been involved in promoting the Eco Mark in various ways. Is there any particular project that was especially impressive to you ?*

**Mr. MORISHITA** In the beginning, we experienced many difficulties in expanding the target products and promoting the Eco Mark products. However, as we have successfully cleared those issues one by one, the awareness in the society has been increased and the industrial world also has become more involved. One example of the Eco Mark's influence for promoting the environment-friendly products is the stay-on tabs of canned drinks.

Canned drinks used to have the pull-tabs until 1980's, which are removed from cans. So the problem of having discarded pull-tabs occurred everywhere. Eco Mark started to promote the stay-on tabs, which aren't removed from cans. Unfortunately, the beverage industry as well as the can manufacturing industry was skeptical about the new system considering the possibility of rejection by the consumers due to the sanitation problem, therefore, the potential damage to their sales. There was also a concern about the change of the production line. The movement to switch to the stay-on tabs didn't start in full swing.

But the trend has been changed since the first product with a stay-on tab was released in 1990. It was a canned beer and certified as the Eco Mark product. After the first product, switch was made quickly and almost 100% of the canned drinks were changed to the stay-on tabs in short period of time. Regardless of the tab, you need to drink directly from a can. Therefore the sanitation issue they seriously considered didn't become a major hurdle.

Without Eco Mark activities, majority of the canned drinks probably still have the pull-tabs. Although the environmental burden directly caused by the pull-tabs may not have been large, this is one fine example of the Eco Mark effect on the commodity market.

### Clarify The Positioning /Collaborate With Various Systems

*- Collaboration in the international community is also critical in the area of promoting the ecolabelling.*

**Mr. MORISHITA** In addition to promoting the environment-friendly products and the eco-life in Japan, Eco Mark has also been contributing in spreading the ecolabelling internationally, and set the stage for establishing the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN).

During the environment-month in July 1990, we invited the main ecolabelling organizations from various countries, and held a first international conference as well as a meeting to exchange the opinion among the people in charge of the activities. The second gathering was held in Berlin, and GEN was established as a result of our discussion on the necessity for an international ecolabelling organization. At that time, every country's system had the similar issues such as an introduction of the criteria that reflected the viewpoint of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), or how to approach the industrial circles. So, once GEN was established, it has become easier for us to exchange the information that led to the reinforcement of each country's system.

Japan is expected to take more important role in the future in terms of spreading the ecolabelling in Asian countries. This is not to force our system to other Asian countries, but it is important to improve their systems based on each country's current condition and to promote the environment-friendly products. Another important issue is to carry forward the establishment of the mutual recognition with the other countries' ecolabelling systems.

*- What kind of viewpoint is expected to promote the Eco Mark in the society more widely in the future ?*

**Mr. MORISHITA** Currently we have several programs related to the environment-friendly products other than the Eco Mark in Japan, and there are some aspects that are not fully comprehended by the consumers in correctly organized form. So that we need to clarify the hierarchical structure and the role of each program including the criteria that should be fulfilled as the base, the criteria required for the green purchase and the criteria to evaluate the products, which are exceptionally superior in the environmental aspect. It is important for Eco Mark to clarify its positioning among the others and collaborate with the other programs.

As for the operational side of the systems, it is expected to expand the target items and organize the product criteria system so that we can cover various products that are purchased frequently by the general consumers. We should also consider evaluating not only the environment-friendliness of the products themselves but also the environment related activities of the companies that manufacture and sell those products.

Although Eco Mark has an important role in building the recycling-based society and promoting the eco-life, it is impossible to change the society and the lifestyle only by Eco Mark. We need to collaborate with various systems including ISO14001 and the certification systems for the small and medium-sized companies as well as the environmental education programs for young people. I hope we will be able to carry out more effective activities.

*- Mr. Morishita, thank you for your time today.*

## Committee Report/Decisions

### Eco Mark Steering Committee (11<sup>th</sup> meeting)

The 11<sup>th</sup> Eco Mark Steering Committee (Chairman: Prof. Akio Morishima, Graduate School of Toa Univ.) was held on September 19, 2003 at Tokai University Koyukaikan. At the meeting, discussions on progress of the Eco Mark annual plan, the international cooperation activities and other topics were delivered.

Especially, comments were made and questions were asked actively about the release of a position paper by Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) on "Ecolabelling and Trade" issue tabled at WTO Trade Ministerial Conference held in Mexico and about external activity of GEN to submit a position paper on "revision of ISO 14024 'Environmental labels and declarations - Type I environmental labeling - Principles and procedures'" to ISO TC207 (International Organization for Standardization 207 Technical Committee) and SC3 (the 3<sup>rd</sup> sub-committee).

Also, in regard to the mutual recognition agreement among the overseas ecolabelling organizations, a discussion was delivered based on the fact that Asian 4 programs (Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Japan) has started the work of establishing the common core criteria for mutual recognition on "TVs (including CRT, LCD, PDP)", "VCRs (including DVD)" and "multifunction devices" along with the product category strategy. This activity was preceded by work to conclude the basic agreement among these 4 programs on the mutual recognition and to establishing the common core criteria for the mutual recognition on "Toner Cartridges" and "Paints" in April.

## Eco Mark Committee for Establishing Category and Criteria (25<sup>th</sup> meeting)

The 25<sup>th</sup> Eco Mark Committee for Establishing Category and Criteria (EMCECC, Chairman: Prof. Takashi Gunjima, Doshisha Univ.) was held on October 7, 2003 at Kokukaikan. After the discussion, the following decisions were made;

### Decisions

- Primary assessment of 6 categories presented at the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the EMCECC was conducted. As a result, “Repeatedly Usable Filtering Material for Protection against Dust” was to be discussed continuously.
- Secondary assessment of “Seamless Can Using Resin Laminate” presented at the 24<sup>th</sup> EMCECC was conducted, which was not adopted as an Eco Mark product category.
- It was decided that certification criteria for Eco Mark Product Category No.127 “Fire Extinguishers Version1.0” is to be established on November 1, 2003.
- It was decided that Eco Mark Product Category No.67 “Inert-Gas Smothering Systems and Apparatuses Using No Ozone-Layer Depleting Gases” is to be discontinued on November 1, 2003.
- The partial revision of certification criteria for Eco Mark product category No.103 “Clothes Version2.0”, No.104 “Textile Products for Home Use Version2.0” No.105 “Textile Products for Industrial Use Version2.0” and No.118 “Plastic Products Using Recycled Materials” that are submitted by Eco Mark Committee for Product Certification was approved and decided to be revised on October 7, 2003.
- It was decided that certification criteria for Eco Mark Product Category No.118 “Plastic Products Using Recycled Materials” is to be revised.

### Certification Criteria for Eco Mark Product Category (as of October 31, 2003)

Classification	Category No.	Category	Period of Open to Public	Date of Establishment/Revision/Discontinuance	Certification Criteria	Status
Establishment	127	Fire Extinguishers Version1.0	2003.6.20-8.18	2003.11.1	Annex1	Publication is closed
Discontinuance	67	Inert-Gas Smothering Systems and Apparatuses Using No Ozone-Layer	2003.6.20-8.18	2003.11.1	-	Publication is closed
Open to Public	110	Biodegradable Lubricating Oil Version2.0	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.10	-	Publication is closed
Announcement of Discontinuance	10	Containers for Collecting Used Bottles	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.1	-	Publication is closed
	45	CFC Recovery Systems for Air Conditioners	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.1	-	Publication is closed
	49	Multi-Pass Thermal Transfer Ribbons	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.1	-	Publication is closed
	52	Briquettes Made of Waste	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.1	-	Publication is closed
	70	Agricultural Mulch Sheeting of Recycled Pulp	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.1	-	Publication is closed
	110	Biodegradable Lubricating Oil	2003.9.1-10.30	2004.1.10	-	Publication is closed
Partial Revision	103	Clothes Version2.0	-	2003.10.7	Annex 2	
	104	Textile Products for Home Use Version2.0	-	2003.10.7	Annex 2	
	105	Textile Products for Industrial Use Version2.0	-	2003.10.7	Annex 2	
	118	Plastic Products Using Recycled Materials	-	2003.10.7	Annex 3	
Announcement of Revision	118	Plastic Products Using Recycled Materials	-	Not decided yet	-	Preparing WG

## Important Information

### Introduction of Application Fee

As we have announced in Eco Mark News No.40 (published on April 20, 2003), No.43 (published on August 30, 2003), we have introduced an application fee since October 1, 2003. Certain amount of cost occurs for the certification examination from the same day. For details on procedure and the fee, please refer to “A Guide to Eco Mark” of supplemental brochure of March 2003 edition in Japanese or Eco Mark website.

### Partial Revision of Eco Mark Guidelines and Regulations

In accordance with the revision of validity period along with the revision of Eco Mark fee structure to link with the amount of sales, we decided to indicate the validity period (5 years) in the documents of certification criteria established or revised after October 1, 2003. We revise current Eco Mark Guidelines and Regulations partially as follows;

#### 1. Revision description (deleted == parts and added bold parts)

. Official Guidelines for the Eco Mark Committee for Establishing Category and Criteria

2.2 Establishment of certification criteria

“Attachment” [Contents of the Certification Criteria Format]

6. Others

~~Revision~~ Validity Period

Validity period (five years) shall be indicated and described in the certification Criteria documents.

~~These certification criteria for the product category will be reviewed in five years after the date of enactment, and the certification criteria and/or the product category will be revised or abolished~~ when deemed necessary.

#### 2. Date of Revision: November 1, 2003

## Information

### The First Issue of “FeEEL”

The first issue of “FeFEL”, a free ecology magazine, was launched on October 10, 2003. It is an ecology magazine focused on the policy, “a magazine that can be picked up casually”. You can find FeFEL at the nationwide MOS Burger stores and ATC Green Eco Plaza.

“FeFEL” considered why so-called “Green Consumers” select such lifestyle. As we looked into their lives, it revealed the environment each of them had grown up in, the childhood scenes and experiences.

In the first issue of “FeFEL”, we edited the magazine with a theme of “Neighbors Green, Earth on the Ground”. We would like to awaken the readers childhood memories from the familiar places and everyday things so that they can find a chance to think about the ecology.



## Workbook for Children “Let's find Eco Marks! (Vol.1)” has been published

We published a workbook “Let's find Eco Marks! (Vol.1)” targeted at elementary school children. Featuring water used in daily life in the first issue, the contents are interesting for children with the quiz and checklist as well as the assignments for their research.

We made 10,000 copies this time and distributed at Eco Mark Zone in ATC Green Eco Plaza (Osaka city), and at about 180 stores of Ito-Yokado Co., Ltd. during “Environmental-friendly Shopping Campaign” during October.

Vol.2 is at work now and will be published in December.



Workbook for Children  
“Let's find Eco Marks! (Vol.1)”

## Exhibition Booth at Kyoto Environment Festival 2003 (Eco Mark Consultation Meeting is held at the same time)

Eco Mark Office will display panels and distribute materials at “Kyoto Environmental Festival 2003”, which introduces activities of companies and groups who are working on environmental protection to citizens in Kyoto Prefecture. Please come and join us !

**Date and Time:** Dec. 6 (Sat) - 7 (Sun) 10:00-16:00

**Place:** Pulse Plaza (Kyoto-fu Sogo Mihon-ichi Kaikan) (15 Tobadencho, Takeda, Fushimi-ku, Kyoto city)

**Sponsors:** Kyoto Prefecture, Citizen of Kyoto Forum of Kyo and the Earth, Japan Center for Local Autonomy

**Contact:** Eco Mark Office Ms. Mizuno TEL 03-3508-2662

### Eco Mark Consultation Meeting (held during the above festival)

We will hold an “Eco Mark Consultation Meeting” on application at the above Kyoto Environment Festival 2003.

**Time:** 1) Morning 10:00-12:00 2) Afternoon 13:00-16:00

**Place:** Area within the festival

If you wish to attend the consultation, please apply to Eco Mark Office with following information by fax. The deadline is November 21 (Fri). We will contact you after November 21. Please understand that we cannot accept when applications exceed our capacity or depends on your questions. Also, we arrange the time table according to your priorities, which will not be always fulfilled. Consultation is only in Japanese.

- 1) Company/Organization
- 2) Names of attendants
- 3) Phone and Fax number of attendants
- 4) What do you wish to consult about ? (Please specify the product and questions.)
- 5) Date and time (Please specify first priority and second priority.)

To apply Japan Environment Association Eco Mark Office Certification Section  
FAX: 03-3508-2656 Contact Mr.Sazanami

## Topics

### The First Certified Copier under the Mutual Recognition Agreement between Eco Mark and Nordic Swan

Eco Mark in Japan and Nordic Swan, the eco-label run by NMN, which is the Nordic Ecolabelling Board participated by 5 Nordic countries have been carrying out the partial mutual recognition of the certification criteria for the ecolabelling of the copiers since April 2002. The partial mutual recognition is a system with which a review result by an organization can be accepted by the other organization if the product belongs to the common criteria between two concerned ecolabelling systems, and when some of the certification requirements and the verification processes are identical.

Recently “AR-160M” and “AR-200M” by Sharp Corporation received the certification as the first products under this scheme (see the cover picture). These products received the certificate from Eco Mark in Japan first, then from Nordic Swan on August 15, 2003 based on the agreement concerning the partial mutual recognition between Japan Environment Association and NMN.

For the companies that carry out the global business, it requires lots of tasks and huge cost if they try to receive the ecolabelling certification in each country. By organizing a scheme of the mutual recognition, it can simplify the examination procedure, speed up the certification process and reduce the cost. Eco Mark will continue to consider the mutual recognition with the other countries' ecolabelling systems so that we can promote the environment-friendly products from the global point of view.

### Light Weighted Bottles are Spreading in Market

Glass bottle is used as a container for various products including drinks and seasoning, or cosmetics. Because of its great strength, it has been used widely as the returnable bottle for drinks to be reused. However, as the lighter and easier to carry one-way container such as a metallic can and PET bottle has become popular, the returnable bottles share has been decreased. For this reason, the glass bottle industry is developing the lighter bottle with the same strength as before.

Based on this circumstance, Eco Mark has also set the certification criteria for the light glass bottle in Product Category No.124 “Glass Products Version1.0” in order to pervade/promote the glass bottle. In particular, the value of L in the formula below should be less than 0.7 (corresponding to the “ultra light bottle” specified by Japan Glass Bottle Association), the color of glass should be transparent or brown, the material should not include harmful substance, and the appropriate procedure to be taken during the manufacturing phase.

$$L = 0.44 \times \text{Bottle Weight (g)} / \text{Volume at full (ml)}^{0.77}$$

In August 2003, “Takara Yuki Hon-Mirin” (Japanese organic and sweet rice wine for cooking) by Takara Shuzo Co., Ltd. received the Eco Mark certificate as the first glass bottle in this product category. The bottle used for this product is more than 30% lighter (the product weight is reduced by approximately 100g), and it also has an easy to remove cap and non-wood paper label.

With the certification criteria of Eco Mark, it accepts the application not only from the bottler (the manufacturer of the content of a container) but also from the bottle manufacturer. Therefore, Toyo Glass Co., Ltd. also received the certificate in September for 25 Category (27 Item) glass bottles as the “Ultra Light Glass Bottle Series”. (See the picture.)

As the glass bottle becomes lighter, it reduces the resource consumption as well as the environmental burden during the transportation of the products. In the meantime, it also reduces a burden for the consumers when they purchase, use, return and dispose the products. The number of such ultra light glass bottle products is expected to increase in the future so that it is also expected to promote the returnable container movement.



Toyo Glass Co., Ltd. “Ultra Light Glass Bottle Series”

## From Eco Mark Office - Our Activities on Environmental-friendly Shopping Campaign during October

In order to promote active purchasing of Eco Mark products during the “Environmental-friendly Shopping Campaign” held in October in 39 prefectures throughout Japan, Eco Mark Office made POPs (informational indications to appeal on the merchandise shelves and etc.). Ito-Yokado Co., Ltd. and Ministop Co., Ltd. are participating in this campaign and they are putting up these POPs.

At about 180 Ito-Yokado stores national wide, Eco Mark POPs will be placed on their Eco Mark Products shelves and other places. POPs will be used for the daily products such as daily commodities and stationery. On the other hand, Ministop will appeal to the consumers by putting up Eco Mark POP stickers on the shelves and sticking them on the products at about 280 stores in Tokyo.

We hope that the consumers will experience the environmental considerate shopping and realize the importance of green purchasing.



an example of Eco mark POP

## Report on Booth at Environment Day Nagoya 2003

On Sept. 7(Sun), the Eco Mark Office had a booth at a fair that was held at Hisaya Oodori Park in Nagoya city. Owing to very good weather, we had a lot of visitors and about 500 people participated in the Eco Mark Quiz. We provided a presentation to introduce Eco Mark program in quiz form on stage, which was also popular.

## xellent Ecological Topics

In this column, we introduce the eco-friendly activities of corporations and organizations.

### Osaka City Has Launched the Fiest “Natural Gas Truck Leasing System” in Japan

Recently the air pollution by NOx and the suspended particulate matter emitted by car has become a serious issue, and a movement to enhance the restriction on the diesel engine automobile has been spreading mainly in the autonomous communities of metropolitan area. On the other hand, most of the companies in the transportation industry are small-sized, and it is difficult for them to respond to such movement considering their severe business environment.

“Natural Gas Truck Leasing System” by the city of Osaka is attracting attention as a unique system among the others. This system is to lease the natural gas trucks to the business owners and the difference of the price between the diesel truck and the natural gas truck is born by the city. This is the first attempt in Japan, and the business owners can use the low-emission trucks without worrying about the large sum of the initial cost but with the cost similar to the conventional way. They plan to lease 50 trucks this year and to increase the number of trucks to about 400 in next 4 years.

The low-emission cars are not increasing due to the lack of sufficient number of the service stations. On the other hand, the number of the service stations is not increasing due to the lack of sufficient number of the low-emission cars. By offering the specific number of the low-emission cars through the official system, it is expected to promote the low-emission car as well as to improve the infrastructure.

