

Vourvoutsiotis Apostolos

Architect Engineer

**EAEME**

Application Module Rotterdam  
Environmental Management in business community

Assignment of the week No4  
Main Actors and Stakeholders of UNILEVER

Rotterdam ..13.03.1998

My part of the Unilever' s presentation is about Social Economics relations, Main Actors and stakeholders. Even there is an overlap at Main Actors and Stakeholders I decided to focus at the most important actors-stakeholders that influence the environmental policy and in general the Unilever' s strategy.

I will start presenting the internal main actors who influence Unilever's Environmental policy.

- **The chairman** of Unilever' s operating companies are responsible for the environmental performance of their companies. They will agree environmental targets with their responsible board member and ensure that their Product Group' s environmental strategy is implemented.
- **The director of Research & Engineering**, Dr. Asshok Ganguly is the member of the Unilever's Board with specific environmental responsibilities.

These include:

- ensuring that targets are set and progress is monitored against these targets.
- ensuring that proper environmental systems and procedures are applied and that product innovation takes full account of environmental responsibilities.
- providing expert technical resources so that best practise is applied.
- keeping Unilever' s environmental policies up-to-date.

**The director of R&E is supported by the :**

- **UEG – The Unilever Environmental Group –**

This is company' s leading body on environmental issues, chaired by the Director of R&E. It brings together senior managers from the four Product Groups, technical experts from the R&E Division and representatives from the corporate Centre. Its main focus is to develop and review corporate environmental policies, strategies, and targets. It also ensures that Product Group policies and plans are consistent with these.

- **SHEACO – Safety, Health and Environmental Advisory Committee.**  
SCEACO helps Unilever companies and employees to implement policies. It is central corporate resource, working to improve standards of Safety, Health and Environmental Care.

- **SEAC – Safety and Environmental Assurance Centre.**  
This central research resource provides expert information and advice on health, safety and environmental quality matters within the company.

#### **Research Institutes are:**

- Environment Centre at Port Sunlight laboratory in UK has state-the-art facilities for studying the fate and effect of chemicals in the environment.
- There are other five main laboratories located in the NL (Vlaardingen), GB (Colworth), USA (Eggewater) and India (two URL's)

These laboratories cover three types of research.

- The science Base is embedded in the scientific domain.
- Multicategory Research Groups
- Category Research Groups

Unilever has also collaboration with:

**ICC** Chapter of Sustainable Development

**OECD** Guideline for Companies

**WWF** for Nature to form Marine Stewardship Council

Unilever also co-operates with an external advisory group (Aspinwall & Co.) in Environmental aspects.

## **STAKEHOLDERS**

Unilever believes that effective environmental progress can be made only in partnership with others. Therefore, the establishment and development of relationships with external stakeholders forms an important element for their environmental management system.

### **Suppliers-Contractors**

Unilever set standards for suppliers and contractors to ensure that safety and quality of the materials and services they use. They also work with some of them to develop a database on raw materials for life cycle assessments.

### **Customers and consumers**

The co-operation of the customers and consumers is vital in addressing the environmental impact of the use or disposal of the products or packaging.

It is important that customers and consumers have easy access to clear information about how to use and dispose of the product carefully.

Unilever establishing methods of communicating this information through:

- Telephone advise lines
- Consumers bureaux
- On-pack labeling

### **Local Communities**

The management of many issues which affect the local environment around sites can be done only in consultation with the communities in which they operate.

Unilever encourage companies to work closely with local communities, through a variety of mechanisms.

### **Regulatory authorities**

Unilever works with the academic and regulatory establishment to provide insights into processes and procedures, in order to ensure that regulations are founded on a firm basis of science and set achievable goals.

In the same way, Unilever work with standards committees and similar bodies helps to ensure that regulations reflects industrial best practise.

### **Other stakeholders**

Unilever supports Responsible Care, has an active participation in ISO 14000 and EMAS.

Unilever has also collaboration and partnerships with the organisations:

**AISE**-The trade association of Europe's soap, detergent and maintenance product manufactures

**CESIO**- The trade association of Europe's surfactant manufacturers.

**ECETOC**-European Centre for Ecotoxicology and Toxicology of Chemicals

**SETAC**-Society for Environmental Toxicology & Chemistry.

**SPOLD**-Society for the Promotion of LCA Development

**WBCSD**-World Business Council for Sustainable Development

**CONEG**-The Coalition of Northeast Governors(USA)

**ERRA**-European Recovery and Recycling Association

Vourvoutsiotis Apostolos

Architect Engineer

**EAEME**

Application Module Rotterdam  
Environmental Management in business community

Assignment of the week No5  
Unilever's Management System

Rotterdam ..20.03.1998

Unilever has developed its own EMS based on BS7750 since 1993. It has an active participation in the development of ISO Environmental Management Systems (ISO14000) and EMAS. A number of sites has ISO 14000 certification or are in the process in order to be certified, but this responsibility of chairmen operating companies.

All factory environmental managers in Europe have been trained in environmental management systems and auditing procedures by the end of 1995

Thirty operating companies in Europe have also been audited on their EMS  
Half the volume of the raw materials has been screened to date as part of an LCA style assessment of Unilever's portofolio. Unilever foods is committed to improving its global environmental performance.

Unilever focus its efforts on three activities:

- Measuring and benchmarking
- Training
- Auditing

**Measuring and benchmarking**

The major findings of the LCA screening programme will be communicated to R&D and marketing managers – those best placed to act on them.

Its Unilever's objective to use this information to specify environmental targets for key products, processes and packaging.

## **Training**

Training programme in environmental management systems and audits will be extended to cover all operating company environmental managers globally.

## **Auditing**

The environmental auditing is parallel with the quality audit. A committee usually from internal company's auditors with 3 auditors for quality and 1 auditor for environmental management systems every three years audit Unilever's companies.

Company Environment managers in Europe underwent on-site environmental audit training in 1994.

Unilever has now auditors who will audit the Unilever's 42 European sites on a three year rolling basis, and auditors to cover North America and other regions. Globally Unilever's environmental auditing increased from 21 in 1993 to 25 in 1994, with a programme of 33 audits planned for 1995.

A referi is responsible for the audits in order to be compatible and understandable.

## **Site reports**

Sites reports are important for Unilever in order to achieve the best performance and 100 per cent compliance in all its operations.

There is records only for the first two years or the EMS implementation.

Year	Number of Sites	Number of Sites reporting	Number of fines
1993	524	429	30
1994	525	435	29

The director of Research & Engineering, Dr. Asshok Ganguly is the member of the Unilever's Board with specific environmental responsibilities.

The director of R&E is supported by the:

UEG – The Unilever Environmental Group –

SHEACO – Safety, Health and Environmental Advisory Committee.

SEAC – Safety and Environmental Assurance Centre.

The chairman of Unilever's operating companies are responsible for the environmental performance and the implementation Of the EMS of their companies.

Environmental group's main focus is to develop and review corporate environmental policies, strategies, and targets. It also receives the audits ensures and controls the implementation of Unilever's EMS.

## **Environmental Report**

Environmental group is also responsible for the preparation of Unilever's Environmental Report. The first report was publicised at 1996 and the second will be published at 1998.

The Environmental Report is mainly produced for internal use for the managers all around the world, for suppliers, regulatory authorities, local communities, and it is produced by Unilever's Corporate Relation Department. Probably is not published for the customers because Unilever is known as a company to the customers/consumers but their brands are only known.

The environmental report is a tool for the public relation and the good image of Unilever's.

Unilever is using an independent (Aspinwall & company) verifier for the statements and the data. The opinion of the verifier is that the Environmental Report provides a good indication of Unilever's global manufacturing impact and a sound basis for future reporting.

### **Conclusions**

Unilever has adopted its own EMS to comply with the regulations in order to avoid fines and liabilities, which would give a negative image of the firm.

Unilever belongs to the active firms without willing to go beyond the regulations.

Is not a proactive firm and a leader, as they want to be named but just a reactive corporate.

Due to the decentralised system Unilever has, allows to its companies to adopt ISO14000 or EMAS but with the chairman responsibility without to encourage it. In their Environmental strategy ISO 14000 or EMAS is not included because they just want to comply with the regulations and their internal EMS is enough for Unilever.

Unilever has done a lot of investigation on the LCA. This is obvious at its Environmental Report.

Unilever follows Environmental solutions only when are profitable and good for corporate's image.