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Press Relations Officer: Martin Ittershagen
PR-staff: Anke Döpke, Dieter Leutert,
Fotini Mavromati, Theresa Pfeifer, Martin Stallmann
Address: Postfach 1406, 06813 Dessau-Roßlau
Telephone: +49 340/21 03-2122, -2827, -2250, -2318, -3927, -2507
E-Mail: pressestelle@uba.de
Internet: www.umweltbundesamt.de



First eco-label with same award criteria for Germany and China

Use of label for recycled toner cartridges becomes much easier

Cooperation between the German Blue Angel eco-label and the Chinese eco-label has borne fruit: the two institutions responsible in both countries- the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) and the RAL German Institute for Quality Assurance and Certification in Germany, and the Environmental Certification Center of the Chinese Environment Ministry- jointly determined for the first the award criteria for recycled toner cartridges used in printers and copiers. "This agreement is part of a more general cooperation on environmental protection issues between Germany and China. It is helping to make it easier for products with favourable ecological properties to enter the market and for consumers to buy such products more regularly. This will benefit them and the environment", said UBA President Prof. Dr. Andreas Troge.

Award criteria, which are now identical for both eco-labels, concern requirements of the recyclability of the toner, the module labelling, and consumer information.

Common award criteria will make it easier for manufacturers of environmentally-friendly products to adopt a clearly recognised label. Anyone who already labels their products as particularly environmentally friendly with an eco-label and applies for the partner label, be it the German or the Chinese, must now only submit proof of compliance with standards in cases where they are not identical in both systems. This concerns matters of national technical standards. In all other cases proof of possession of the partner eco-label is sufficient. In other words, German producers can now have the Chinese eco-label put on their products a lot more quickly than previously. The same is true for Chinese producers seeking to put the Blue Angel on their goods.

The objective of Germany and China is to continuously expand the list of eco-labels with shared award criteria and to make it easier for producers of other ecological products to be included. The German Blue Angel eco-label and its Chinese counterpart label goods and services that demonstrate-- when compared to other conventional products- superior properties in terms of health and environmental protection. This includes lower consumption of resources, low energy consumption, or low pollution levels. Some 10,000 goods and services from 80

products and services groups are presently labelled with the Blue Angel, and the Chinese eco-label has been awarded to about 18,000 products from 65 product and services groups.

More information is available at www.blauer-engel.de and <http://www.sepacec.com/cecen/>.

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