



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

### **Environment: 14 companies nominated for the 2012 European Business Awards for the Environment**

Brussels, 22 March 2011 – The shortlist for the 2012 European Business Awards for the Environment (EBAE) has been revealed, following a two-day jury meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. The 14 finalists come from Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Austria, Portugal, Slovakia, Finland and the United Kingdom. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in Brussels on 24 May 2012, during Green Week, the European Commission's annual conference on environment policy. The European Business Awards for the Environment are granted to innovative companies that successfully combine innovation, competitiveness and outstanding environmental performance.

European Commissioner for the Environment Janez Potočnik said: *“To prosper in resource-constrained world, our economies must become more efficient in their use of natural resources. The European Business Awards for the Environment show that this is possible. They reward companies that are making the best possible use of resources throughout their life cycle to create as much economic value and as little environmental impact as possible.”*

The finalists were selected from 156 submissions, originating from 24 European Member States and candidate countries. The high number of applications – a 10 % increase compared to the 2010 competition – highlights the increasing environmental commitment of European businesses and their willingness to adopt eco-innovative practices, despite the current economic climate.

This year's entries represent a variety of business sectors, ranging from telecommunications to retail, eco-design, transport, food industry and construction. Although a number of large-scale companies and organisations are competing, the majority of companies participating are small and medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprises. The highest number of entries was in the newly introduced "biodiversity" category for companies that have demonstrated outstanding achievements in halting biodiversity loss and supporting natural ecosystems.

The award submissions showcased the companies' contribution to sustainable development in five categories: product with 52 entries; management with 47 entries; process with 46 entries; international business cooperation with 11 entries; and business and biodiversity with 62 entries.

The high-level jury, chaired by Mr Claus Torp, Deputy Director-General at the Danish Ministry of the Environment, was composed of 20 experts from European and national authorities, academia, businesses and the green technology sector.

## **Background**

The European Business Awards for the Environment were established in 1987 by the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment. They are presented every two years with the aim of recognising and rewarding European companies that stimulate economic growth by contributing to innovation and competitiveness, while also protecting the environment.

The scheme consists of five awards, rewarding businesses for management practices, eco-friendly products, sustainable processes, international business cooperation and – most recently – activities which protect biodiversity.

The competition is open to any company, irrespective of size, from an EU Member State or a candidate country. The submission of entries to the European awards competition is managed by national coordinating bodies. Applicants must first enter one of the national award schemes and be chosen to compete at the European level. This ensures that companies awarded the European prize are 'the best of the best': the most far-sighted, responsible and innovative across Europe.

## **For more information**

More information on the awards, the selection procedure and the past EBAE competitions can be found at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/awards/>

## **Annex**

### **The finalists for the 2012 EBAE**

The shortlisted entries per category are as follows:

#### **The Management Award**

For companies with outstanding strategic vision and management systems that enable them to continuously improve their contribution to sustainable development.

- **Águas do Douro e Paiva, S.A – SME – Portugal**

*Project Title: An integrated and sustainable management model for drinking water utilities*

- **Marks & Spencer – Major corporation - United Kingdom**

*Project Title: Marks and Spencer Plan A - Doing the Right Thing*

- **SNCF – Major corporation - France**

*Project Title: The implementation of Sustainable Procurement creates value: a global value for the business, the Environment, the Society and the suppliers!*

#### **The Product Award**

For companies that have developed a new product or related service that makes an outstanding contribution to sustainable development.

- **Aquamarine Power – SME - United Kingdom**

*Project Title: Aquamarine Power's Oyster wave energy technology*

- **LichtBlick AG – Major Corporation - Germany**

*Project Title: Generating "swarm power" with intelligently controlled at-home power plants*

- **Ochsner Wärmepumpen GmbH – SME – Austria**

*Project Title: New generation of Air-Source Heatpumps by OCHSNER Heat Pump Company*

#### **The Process Award**

For companies that have developed and applied a new production technology that makes an outstanding contribution to sustainable development.

- **Freudenberg Sealing Technologies (FST) – Major Corporation – Germany**

*Project Title: Narrow Strip Forming Laser Technology (SUL): A process technology innovation for manufacturing metal rings for dynamic seals in a sustainable way which conserves both resources and the environment.*

- **Sener Ingeniería y Sistemas - Major Corporation - Spain**

*Project Title: Gemasolar, the Sun's cathedral*

• **UMICORE – Major Corporation – Belgium**

*Project Title: Recycling of NiMH and Li-ion batteries; a sustainable new business*

**The International Business Cooperation Award**

For companies that actively promote the sharing of knowledge and technology in international cross-sector partnerships, which contribute to sustainable growth in developing countries.

• **GreenStream Network plc – SME - Finland**

*Project Title: Expanding Climate Knowledge in China: A Co-Operative Business Approach*

• **Inensus GmbH – SME - Germany**

*Project Title: MicroPowerEconomy – a Private Public Partnership model for comprehensive island-grid village electrification with renewable energy*

**The Business and Biodiversity Award**

A new category for companies that have demonstrated outstanding achievements in halting biodiversity loss and supporting natural ecosystems.

• **Café Direct - SME - United Kingdom**

*Project Title: Adaptation for Smallholders to Climate Change (AdapCC)*

• **Slovenské elektrárne, a.s. - major Corporation – Slovakia**

*Project Title: Energy for Nature: Saving most precious animal species in Slovak mountains (the Tatras National Park)*

• **Voies Navigables de France - major Corporation – France**

*Project Title: Restoring the French waterways embankments in an ecological engineering approach*

Contacts :

[Robert Flies](#) (+32 2 295 35 93)

[Monica Westeren](#) (+32 2 299 18 30)