



**OECD CONFERENCE
ON CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY**

***“Consumer Empowerment
and Responsible Business Conduct”***

**15 June 2009
OECD Conference Centre
2, Rue André Pascal
75016 Paris, France**

AGENDA

2009 OECD CONFERENCE ON CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

“Consumer Empowerment and Responsible Business Conduct”

OECD Conference Centre

Paris, 15 June 2009

08:00-09:00

Registration and coffee

OPENING SESSION

09h00-10h00
Room CC1

Opening remarks

Aart De Geus, OECD Deputy Secretary-General

Keynote Speeches

Meglana Kuneva, Commissioner, Consumer Policy, European Commission

Samuel Ochieng, President, Consumers International

Nancy Nord, Acting Chairman, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

**PLENARY SESSION ONE – WHAT CONSUMERS EXPECT
OF RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CONDUCT**

What are the main drivers of consumer behaviour with respect to corporate responsibility and how consumer behaviour can be shaped? Does “corporate responsibility” mean the same thing around the world? How do consumers convey their concerns to business and governments? The session will discuss *inter alia* how more globalized and disaggregated production patterns affect consumer traditional concerns over the health, safety and quality of the products they consume. It will also assert how new concerns (notably on human rights violations, environmental degradation and non-renewable resource depletion) may be modifying consumer habits. The main purpose of the discussion will be to assess how effectively consumers are empowering corporations in responding to their evolving interests as important stakeholders to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

10:00-11:30
Room CC1

Moderators: Michael Jenkin, Chairman of the OECD Committee on Consumer Policy and **Julia Hailes**, author of The New Green Consumer Guide

Discussants

“What sustainability attributes drive consumer behaviour?”

Tom Ewart, Managing Director, Research Network on Business Sustainability, Canada

“What is the evidence of a growing demand for ‘fair trade’, ‘ethical’ and ‘green products’?”

Michael Kuhndt, Head, UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production, Germany

“Do consumers in developed and developing markets share the same interests and what are the main implications if they don’t?”

Eric Briat, General Director, National Institute of Consumption, France

Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary-General, CUTS International, India CUTS

Discussion

PLENARY SESSION TWO – THE BUSINESS RESPONSE

Consumers are no doubt the major driver of business. Business can help consumers maximise their satisfaction through low prices, product safety and quality, innovation and new products. But enterprises also have the “duty to respect” and obligated to comply with regulatory standards, such as on labelling, health, safety and consumer privacy. They are expected in many societies to assist consumers in making informed decisions and to educate them to be more socially responsible. This session will discuss *inter alia* corporate initiatives aimed at developing more environmentally friendly and resource-efficient products or educate consumers to reduce waste or buy greener products. It will focus on good corporate practices in integrating consumer interests into business operations taking into account the recommendations made by the OECD Guidelines.

11:30-13:00
Room CC1

Moderators: **Cheryl Hicks**, Manager, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and **Tamzin Booth**, European Business Correspondent, *The Economist*

Discussants

“What challenges do multinational corporations face in protecting consumers along the supply chain?”

Colin Hensley, General Manager, Corporate Affairs & Planning Division, Toyota Motor Europe

Anousheh Karvar, French Democratic Confederation of Labour (Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail, CDFT)

“What means do companies have to promote socially-responsible consumption?”

Alison Smith, Associate Director, Procter & Gamble Company

Ernst Primosch, Chief Communications & CSR Officer, Henkel

Discussion

13:00-14:30

Lunch break

14:30-16:15	3 parallel sessions
PARALLEL SESSION 1 – THE SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGE	
<p>With the globalization of production, consumers have become more aware of the challenges of ensuring the safety and quality of the products at each point along the supply chain. Health and safety are consumers’ top priorities worldwide. In spite of demanding regulatory norms, grave health and safety hazards in internationally-traded consumer products such as food and toys products have occurred, arising public worries and hurting the reputation of producers, retailers and host economies. In addition, consumers are also more conscious that their decisions can have significant human rights implications such as the exploitation of children and workers. Keeping an eye on the OECD Guidelines, what lessons can be learned from recent supply chain failures and how the industry can be more responsive to consumer concerns? How in particular can problems be affectively addressed when they occur in countries which have not adhered to the OECD Guidelines?</p>	
14:30-16:15 Room CC1	Moderator: Dan Rees , Director, Ethical Trading Initiative
	<p>Discussants</p> <p><i>“Responding to supply chain challenges”</i></p> <p>Yang Hongcan, Secretary General, Chinese Consumers’ Association</p> <p>Farid Baddache, Europe Director, Business for Social Responsibility</p> <p>Representative, Global High-Tech Industry Underwriters Laboratories</p> <p><i>“The supporting role of governments”</i></p> <p>Dirk Meijer, Chief Executive of Prosafe, the European Coordination Point on Market Surveillance on Consumer Product Safety</p> <p><i>“Enhancing consumer awareness and diligence”</i></p> <p>Mei Li Vos, Dutch MP</p> <p>Discussion</p>

**PARALLEL SESSION 2 – ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE:
HOW CONSUMERS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Consumers are a powerful ally in the fight against climate change. They can contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions by using available energy more efficiently or moving to climate-safe technologies. For this to happen, however, they need to be sensitized to the impact of their consumption patterns on the environment and have access to affordable clean energy. This also requires the leadership of enterprises and governments in increasing the availability, and reducing the cost, of greener and innovation-led products and encouraging consumers to buy and use them. To take action consumers need to have confidence in claims on climate change that business makes. This parallel session will discuss ways to mobilize consumers in becoming more energy efficient, adopting cleaner technologies and empowering corporations to the climate change cause. It will also discuss how the OECD Guidelines could be used to spread good practices at the international level.

14:30-16:15
Room CC4

Moderators: **Véronique Deli**, Chair, OECD Working Party on Global and Structural Policies, and **Julie Chauveau**, *Les Echos*

Presentation

Stephen Hine, Head of Responsible Investment Development, (EIRIS)

Discussants

“The responsibilities of consumers”

Bjarne Pedersen, Director of Operations, Consumers International

“The supporting role of business”

Jürgen Sturm, Secretary General, European Lamp Companies Federation

“The supporting role of governments”

Michèle Pappalardo, Commissionner, Grenelle de l’Environnement

Discussion

**PARALLEL SESSION 3 – PROTECTING AND EDUCATING CONSUMERS
IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR**

The financial crisis has revealed shortcomings in the mechanisms designed to protect consumer interests in some financial markets. Misleading or fraudulent lending practices, inadequate disclosure and excessive risk-taking on the part of both borrowers and lenders are cases in point, as is the failure of regulatory bodies to detect and respond to emerging problems. The discussion will focus on the policies and practices that financial institutions could follow to better protect financial consumers. Specific attention will be paid to the role that financial education and awareness can play in helping consumers to make better financial decisions. The discussion will draw on the work of the OECD Financial Markets Committee.

14:30-16:15
Room CC6

Moderator: Erich Harbrecht, Vice Chair, OECD Committee on Financial Markets

Discussants

Udo Reifner, Head of the Institute for Financial Services, Germany

Anne Fily, Head of the Legal & Economic Department, BEUC

Brian Branch, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, The World Council of Credit Unions

Bruno Levesque, OECD Financial Affairs Division, on *The implementation of the OECD Recommendation on Principles and Good Practices for Financial Education and Awareness*

Discussion

PLENARY SESSION THREE – THE SUPPORTING ROLE OF THE OECD GUIDELINES

Chapter VII of the OECD Guidelines recommends that “*when dealing with consumers, enterprises should act in accordance with fair business, marketing and advertising practices and should take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and quality of the goods or services they provide*”. This session will discuss ways in which governments could promote corporate initiatives to protect and promote consumer interests and the desirability of considering possible refinements or additions to the OECD Guidelines.

16:15-17:45
Room CC1

Moderator: Vernon Mackay, Chair of the Working Party of the Investment Committee

“The role of international standards”

Dr. Christian Thorun, ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility, Federation of German Consumer Organisations

“Promoting greater awareness and use of the OECD Guidelines”

Cornis Van Der Lugt, Corporate Responsibility Program, UNEP

Gordan Renouf, General Manager, Policy and Campaigns, CHOICE, Australia

“The point of view of stakeholders”

Hubert Van Bremen, BIAC, Chairman of the BIAC Consumer Policy Group

John Evans, General Secretary, TUAC

Serena Lillywhite, Brotherhood of St. Laurence and Representative of OECD Watch

Discussion

17:45-18:00
Room CC1

CONCLUDING REMARKS [*Chairs of OECD Investment Committee, Committee on Consumer Policy, Environment Policy Committee and/or Committee on Financial Markets*]