



27th May 2008

ECOVER AND WATERAID LAUNCH GROUND-BREAKING PARTNERSHIP

Ecover, the world's leading manufacturer of ecological cleaning products, has today launched a three-year partnership with international charity WaterAid. This partnership supports a project in Ethiopia, providing sustainable and ongoing access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education.

Ecover and WaterAid share the objective to provide effective, sustainable solutions for the hygienic needs of people around the world, and it is this common interest that has led to the formation of the partnership. This is the first time WaterAid has worked with a business where both parties are actively working together to drive change. Ecover has always recognised that water is a precious commodity, and this is considered alongside total environmental impact at every stage, from product concept to final delivery to the store.

Ecover was founded in 1980 in Belgium, and today has ecological factories in Belgium and France. Ecover has been a trendsetter from the very start: as a pioneering company, it marketed a phosphate-free washing powder even before phosphates were branded as a problem. Based on plant and mineral ingredients which biodegrade quickly and completely, Ecover products minimise the burden on the global water supply and aquatic environment as they require significantly less water to neutralise after use than conventional alternatives. If 5% of families in the UK switched to Ecover Biological washing powder from a conventional product, in excess of ½ million Olympic swimming pools worth of water would be safeguarded against pollution in a year.

The partnership will focus on the area of Hintalo Wajerat in the Tigray region where only 22% of the population currently has access to safe water and just 6% have access to adequate sanitation. More shocking is the fact that 17 out of every 100 children will die before they reach their fifth birthday. On completion of the project 14,750 people across eleven villages in the region will have access to safe water and effective sanitation.

The partnership was launched today at an event for media and friends and from the end of June will be promoted on 1.5 million Ecover products across 10 lines. Two members of staff from both Ecover UK and Ecover Belgium have also travelled to Ethiopia to see the issues first hand and WaterAid's project work that is being funded by the partnership.

Ends

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Notes to Editors

A comprehensive question and answer document exists to support this media statement. Please request this from the press office contacts outlined above.

About Ecover

- Ecover operates from its world famous ecological factories in Belgium and France and is globally respected as an organisation, which is forging the way for ethical companies of the future. The company's guidelines for environmental criteria, the selection of ingredients and manufacturing processes are far stricter than those required by EU legislation. Ecover sets the standards for others to follow and has been recognised by the United Nations Environment programme (UNEP) for their outstanding practical achievements for the protection and improvement of our environment
- Ecover's Belgium factory has been awarded the title of "Sustainable Enterprise" from the Flemish Public Waste Association (OVAM) for operating in a socially and environmentally responsible manner
- All of Ecover's plastic bottles are made from polyethylene and polypropylene, which are both 100% recyclable and can be recycled together
- The product range is not only kinder to the environment, but also kinder to the skin as Ecover products are based on natural plant and mineral ingredients and do not contain optical brighteners.
- For more information on Ecover see www.ecover.com

About WaterAid

- WaterAid is an international charity. Their vision is of a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation
- WaterAid enables the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education. These basic human rights underpin health, education and livelihoods and form the first, essential step in overcoming poverty.
- WaterAid works with local partners, who understand local issues, and provide them with the skills and support to help communities set up and manage practical and sustainable projects that meet their real needs. They also campaign locally and internationally to change policy and practice and ensure water and sanitation's vital role in reducing poverty is recognised.
- For more information on WaterAid see www.wateraid.org.uk