



## **Press Release Transfer Project “Ecologistics”:**

### **“Survey in SME Reveals Potential of Ecologistics”**

Luxembourg/Mons (B)/Saarbrücken (D), March 12<sup>th</sup> 2014

The "Ecologistics" project involving 12 European logistic stakeholders, aims to improve the flow of collaborative information between large companies and small and medium sized enterprises (SME) in the North West Europe area by developing an ICT tool for the synchronization of a more efficient and sustainable supply chain through the EPC (Electronic Product Code) Network.

In order to draw a better picture on "tracking and tracing" opportunities, the already established practices, needs and potential sources of improvement in supply chain management have been addressed in a survey. This survey focused on small and medium sized companies (SME) in the contributing regions of the Interreg IVb project. Participants of the survey were from a broad range of business sectors with an emphasis on the automotive and metal working industry.

Most of the participating companies regard logistics as core business, mainly using ERP and PPS systems. A majority of the respondents quoted that they are not using or currently not plan to use identification systems. This indicates that Auto-ID and RFID technology will offer immense potential for SME improvement across all activities and business sectors. This lack of awareness was also evident in workshops about the EPC and its ability to drive sustainable logistics held in different European countries at beginning of this year. The survey also shows a strong need for more SME information about EPC and ID standards – only 5% of the participating companies did know about the EPC standard.

Ecological and logistical advantages of the “Ecologistics” project were recognized only by some SME and in dedicated business sectors. Only a minority of participating SME recognized admitted resource efficiency as an important objective in logistics. Although standards in supply chain management and in electronic data interchange have become routine in the industry over the past decade, improvements of process standards and EDI still seem to offer a general potential for most of the SME. In terms of Auto-ID support software, the companies would prefer to have real-time status directly in their system, some business sectors (e.g. service) also for mobile phone applications.

Many respondents quoted in the survey that they want to further participate in the “Ecologistics” project. The next step of the project will be the application of use cases in dedicated companies. Those companies will receive a material flow analysis free of charge and will have the opportunity to run a pilot implementation of the EPC as part of the project. Interested companies can respond to the participating institutes of the “Ecologistics”-project.

The project “Ecologistics” is a cooperation of 12 institutions and companies from Belgium, Germany, France, Great Britain, Luxembourg and the Netherlands to demonstrate the benefits of increased transparency in supply chains for the companies involved by consistent use of existing international and cross-industry standards. Co-funded by the EU (Interreg IVb) the innovation project specifically aims at providing concepts, methods and solutions for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Lead partner is the University of Mons (Belgium), from Germany the Institute for production and logistics systems - Prof. Schmidt is involved as project partner.

### **Contact**

University of Mons (B)  
Project Coordination  
Bertrand Tiberghien  
Tel: +32 65 34 28 39  
Fax: +32 65 34 27 98  
[bertrand.tiberghien@umons.ac.be](mailto:bertrand.tiberghien@umons.ac.be)  
Languages: French, Dutch, English

Centre de Recherche Public Henri Tudor (Lux)  
Project Communication Manager  
Romain Gaasch  
Tel: +352 42 59 91 -6 336  
[romain.gaasch@tudor.lu](mailto:romain.gaasch@tudor.lu)  
Languages: French, German, English

IPL - Institut für Produktions- und Logistiksysteme Prof. Schmidt GmbH (D)  
General Manager  
Jörg Bernarding  
Tel: +49 - (0) 6 81-9 54 31 12  
Fax: +49 - (0) 6 81-9 54 31 99  
[joerg.bernharding@iplnet.de](mailto:joerg.bernharding@iplnet.de)  
Languages: German, English