The Chemical Footprint Project is a new initiative for measuring corporate progress to safer chemicals. It provides a metric for benchmarking companies as they select safer alternatives and reduce their use of chemicals of high concern.

The Chemical Footprint Project is the first initiative to measure overall corporate chemicals management performance by evaluating companies on their:

- Management Strategy
- Chemical Inventory
- Footprint Measurement
- Public Disclosure and Verification

“CFP is a market differentiator and provides a competitive advantage for business leaders. This new tool will add a level of transparency and help companies mitigate reputational and regulatory risks and exploit opportunities afforded by moving to safer chemicals.”

—Roger McFadden, Staples, Inc.

What is the Chemical Footprint Project?
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How does the Chemical Footprint Project work?
Companies can participate in the Chemical Footprint Project (CFP) by registering and logging in to the secure Chemical Footprint Project web site to access and complete the Assessment Tool.

The Assessment Tool allocates a total of 100 points across 20 questions. Question-specific scores are added to give a company a total score. The response data from all participants will be anonymized, collated and analyzed.

Respondents can choose whether to publicly share their participation in the CFP and can also choose whether to share the data they provide. Although third party verification is not a requirement for participation, respondents receive additional points if data are independently validated.

As a primary goal of the CFP is to recognize corporate leadership, the CFP will publicly profile top performers.

What is the mission of the Chemical Footprint Project?
The mission of the Chemical Footprint Project is to transform global chemical use by measuring and disclosing data on business progress to safer chemicals.

What need does the Chemical Footprint Project meet?
Increasingly, purchasers and investors want to know how well companies manage chemicals in products and supply chains. Are companies using chemicals of high concern to human health or the environment in products or manufacturing? Are they using safer alternatives? What actions are companies taking to systematically reduce chemicals of greatest concern and to use safer alternatives? How can companies that systematically use safer alternatives be identified and rewarded?

The lack of an independent, third party metric for publicly benchmarking corporate progress in reducing chemicals of high concern makes it difficult for investors and purchasers to identify and reward good performance. This information gap makes it difficult for companies to demonstrate superior performance. Furthermore, the lack of a common metric means that companies seeking to improve their performance lack a clear way to measure performance and identify their most significant improvement opportunities.

The CFP aims to meet this need. For investors, it supplies a key piece of information that has been missing in evaluating corporate sustainability. For retailers, it provides a credible, third party approach for driving chemicals management into the value chain. For brands, it provides a means for assessing chemicals management and benchmarking progress as well as an opportunity to be recognized as a leader. For purchasers, it will help to identify chemical management leaders in specific product categories of interest. For the public, it will mean that chemicals of high concern are reduced in consumer products, leading to lower exposures and improved health outcomes.

Hazardous chemicals “present reputational, regulatory, and reformulation risks across a broad range of industry sectors. Investors need to understand how companies are meaningfully managing these risks.”

—Susan Baker, Trillium Asset Management, LLC
results will provide valuable data to investors, retailers and other organizations seeking to understand best practices in chemicals management. In addition, CFP participants can share their results with their own customers and investors who are seeking to source products from companies that are leaders in using safer chemicals.

Any company can use the CFP Assessment Tool to benchmark its chemicals management program, understand its progress over time and its position relative to other companies. It is designed as a tool to measure continuous improvement in chemicals management.

Who can use the CFP Assessment Tool?
Similar to carbon footprinting, chemical footprinting can apply to any business sector.

The launch of the Chemical Footprint Project will focus on business sectors that are currently active in managing chemicals in products and supply chains, including the automotive, building products, consumer packaged goods, medical devices, electronics, and the apparel/footwear/outdoor industry sectors.

How is Chemical Footprint defined?
The CFP defines Chemical Footprint as the total mass of CoHCs in products sold by a company, used in its manufacturing operations and by its suppliers, and contained in packaging.

Chemical footprinting is the process of assessing progress toward the use of safer chemicals and away from chemicals of high concern to human health or the environment. A chemical footprint can be used as a benchmark to document the actions an organization takes to advance the use of safer chemicals in its products and manufacturing operations.

How are CoHCs defined?
The CFP defines a Chemical of High Concern (CoHC) as a chemical that meets any of the following criteria: 1) carcinogenic, mutagenic, or toxic to reproduction (CMR); 2) persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substance (PBT); 3) any other chemical for which there is scientific evidence of probable serious effects to human health or the environment that give rise to an equivalent level of concern (for example, an endocrine disruptor or neurotoxicant); or 4) a chemical whose breakdown products result in a CoHC that meets any of the above criteria.

For the 2015 reporting period, the CFP specifies a CoHC as any chemical on the California Candidate Chemicals List. See: https://dtsc.ca.gov/SCP/ChemList.cfm.

What is the scope of the CFP?
For the 2015 reporting period, the CFP asks companies to measure chemicals of high concern contained in the products they sell. In future years the scope of chemical footprint measurement will expand to include manufacturing operations, supply chain, and packaging.

The Chemical Footprint Project was founded by Clean Production Action, the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and Pure Strategies. Clean Production Action administers the project. The Lowell Center for Sustainable Production and Pure Strategies provide strategic and technical guidance.

Clean Production Action is an environmental organization that advances safer alternatives to toxic chemicals through its GreenScreen® and BizNGO programs. BizNGO is a unique collaboration of businesses and NGOs working together to promote safer chemicals and drive innovation into and across supply chains and government regulations.

www.cleanproduction.org

The Lowell Center for Sustainable Production is a research institute that works collaboratively with citizens, workers, businesses, and governments to create healthy work environments, viable businesses, and thriving communities that support sustainable production and consumption.

www.sustainableproduction.org

Pure Strategies is a leading sustainability consultancy that helps companies improve environmental and social performance through green product design and production, sustainable materials, strong community relationships, and transparent measures of progress.

www.purestrategies.com

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For more information visit www.chemicalfootprint.org.