

Pick n Pay promises phasing out of refrigerants, deforestation

In late 2010, the global Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) announced its commitment to phasing out the use of refrigerant gases with high global warming potential and ending deforestation. The two initiatives were announced at the its climate summit in Cancun.



The initiatives were announced by the its board of directors, which comprises 50 CEOs and is co-chaired by Muhtar Kent of The Coca Cola Company and Lars Olofsson of Carrefour. "The initiatives that our industry announced are good examples of the kind of bold and positive action that will be needed to move the needle in combating climate change," Kent said.

On refrigeration, the CGF agreed to begin phasing out hydro fluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerants as of 2015 and replace them with non-HFC refrigerants. Refrigeration plays a vital role in the retail and consumer industry, delivering high quality products to consumers every day, but is also a significant and growing source of greenhouse gases, thousands of times as potent as carbon dioxide.

Pick n Pay commitment

As a member of the CGF, Pick n Pay joined 400 global consumer goods manufacturers and retailers in pledging to transform the sector's thinking about climate change. Its chairman, Gareth Ackerman said, "This is the first time that the entire sector has aligned on the importance of taking action to accelerate the move to climate-friendly refrigeration. In this regard, the group has already established programmes to cease the purchase of HFCs."

In 2009, the group began replacing outdated harmful ozone-depleting HFC-based refrigeration with cutting-edge energy-efficient German refrigeration technology. The new refrigeration is currently being trialled in its Strand Store in the Western Cape and Randpark Ridge store in Gauteng. The challenge in coming years will be to firmly establish natural refrigerant technology to substitute HFCs in air-conditioning and commercial applications.

Deforestation pledge

On deforestation, The CGF members pledged to mobilise their collective resources to help achieve zero net deforestation by 2020. Deforestation is one of the principal drivers of climate change, accounting for 17% of greenhouse gases today. The consumer goods industry, through its growing use of soya, palm, oil, beef, paper and board, creates many of the economic incentives which drive deforestation.

"Pick n Pay is proud to be associated with the CGF's significant agreement. Since the early 1990s, long before it was popular or on the global agenda, the group placed priority on environmental issues and sustainable practices and has continually sought ways to promote awareness and opportunities for positive action," Ackerman concluded.

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