The silicones industry welcomes the new Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy and Batteries Regulation

Brussels (10 December 2020): The European Commission published its Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy yesterday, followed today by its proposal for a Batteries Regulation. By grouping the two files together, the Commission aims to highlight once again the importance of "green" mobility in reaching its carbon neutrality objectives and the crucial role that batteries will play in the EU's decarbonisation efforts. These proposals underline the importance of the silicones industry as an essential enabler to reach the objectives set out by both initiatives.

Dr. Pierre Germain, Secretary General of CES – Silicones Europe: "We welcome the announcement of the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy as well as the renewed Batteries Regulation. With these proposals the EU Commission has taken another important step towards reaching its decarbonisation goals. As a key component of batteries, enabler of electric vehicles and contributor to sustainable transport, silicones are an essential piece of our sustainable and smart mobility future."

An ambitious roadmap for mobility

The Sustainable and Smart Mobility strategy has one key ambition, to reach "an irreversible shift to zero-emission mobility". For that, it has taken a look at the wider set of transport options, from automotive, to rail and aviation, aiming to have at least 30 million zero-emission vehicles in operation on European roads by 2030... all of which are likely to be supported by silicone technology.

As an example, specific objectives were put in place for a significant increase of rail freight and high-speed rail traffic (double and triple respectively by 2050). Ensuring the safety and performance of high-speed trains is in fact dependant on silicones, which are used as shock absorbers as they are highly resistant and durable, as well as for electrical insulation and protection.

The Strategy also mentions that road transport will need to "respect the principle of technology-neutrality", with "electricity and hydrogen [seeming to be] the most promising options." Again, silicones have a critical role to play in the performance and sustainability of electric car batteries for example. Not to forget that silicones make an important contribution to minimising fuel consumption of cars and ships, thus reducing the CO2 footprint of the transport sector significantly[1].

A closer look at batteries

Revising the 2006 Directive, the aim of the new proposal on Batteries Regulation is to make EU batteries "the most sustainable in the world". The Regulation takes a lifecycle approach, looking at the full value chain – material sourcing, manufacturing, use, second life, end-of-life treatment. Dr. Germain states: "Silicones are a great technology to advance the sustainability of batteries because their high thermal stability provides lightweight thermal protection for batteries, ensuring they do not overheat, allowing for extended battery performance and product lifetime."

"Whether it relates to the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, with challenges such as the reduction of carbon emissions and the development of key technologies like electric vehicles, or to the Batteries Regulation where silicone technology can support making batteries 'greener', we are confident that our industry has a key role to play in supporting the ambitious Green Deal objectives of the European Commission." says Pierre Germain.

[1] https://www.siliconescarbonbalance.eu/#

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About CES – Silicones Europe: We are a non-profit trade organisation representing all major producers of silicones, silanes and siloxanes in Europe. CES is a sector group of the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), which is both the forum and voice of the European chemicals industry. We provide health, safety and environmental information on silicones and are dedicated to the principles of Responsible Care.

For more information:
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