



DR. PETER WHITE
DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY, P&G

TURNING DOWN THE TEMPERATURE ALL ROUND

- P&G'S DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY DR. PETER WHITE SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON WASHING CLOTHES SUSTAINABLY

As a signatory to the Copenhagen Climate Communiqué, P&G strongly supports the call for a global, fair, and equitable agreement to come out of COP15 that will deliver the reductions needed in greenhouse gas emissions to avoid dangerous and irreversible climate change.

The business community needs a system that is globally compatible, and provides the certainty needed to allow investment in low-carbon products and technologies.

As must all businesses, P&G will continue to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with its own plants and operations. We have already reduced CO₂ emissions from our own operations by 52% per unit of operation since 2002, with a commitment to a further reduction of 20% between 2007 and 2012.

However, we will not reach the required levels of emission reduction through increased process efficiencies alone. All actors, businesses, governments, and consumers need to identify where their biggest impacts occur so that we can identify where the best improvement opportunities exist. For P&G, our biggest opportunity lies in product innovation to help consumers reduce their own emissions.

At the start of the decade P&G analyzed the energy consumption associated with all its product categories from cradle to grave. The results surprised many. The biggest energy (and hence GHG) impacts were due to the energy consumers used to heat water and wash clothes in their homes. In total, this dwarfed the energy used in all our manufacturing plants worldwide. This insight prompted the search for innovations that

would allow cold-water washing as well as the communications programs to encourage this. The rest is history. Starting with Ariel Coolclean and Tide Coldwater, and more recently Ariel Excel Gel, we have provided products that give excellent cleaning as low as 15 °C. The Ariel Coolclean "Turn to 30" and "Future Friendly" campaigns have helped convince consumers to make the change too. Data show that low-temperature washing is increasingly becoming the norm in Europe.

While Copenhagen will focus on government targets, consumers will continue to have a significant opportunity to make a difference, even through simple actions. If everyone in the US, for example, were to wash their clothes in cold water, the savings in GHG emissions would be over 6% of the original US Kyoto commitment. The successor to Kyoto will require significantly increased targets and action from us all. Harnessing consumer behavior changes via product innovations will be an essential requirement for success. ■

