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'Green Products Roundtable' Announces Steps to Bring Clarity to Green Products Marketplace

Cross-section of sustainability professionals unveil initiatives; report lays groundwork to 'Accelerate Green Commerce'

(Keystone, CO)—A cross-sector collaborative of 35 sustainability experts announces the release of a report today that heralds its debut as a key player and critical thinker in the “Green Marketplace.”

Known as the Green Products Roundtable (GPR), the group formed almost two years ago with an initial goal of identifying tools and strategies to help public and private institutional purchasers make informed environmental decisions about the products they buy. The GPR believes these tools will, in the future, be transferrable to consumers as well.

The report, [“The Green Products Roundtable Interim Report: Accelerating Green Commerce”](#) represents focused thinking on this subject and outlines specific strategies and approaches that institutional purchasers can use to make sense of the constantly evolving and often confusing green marketplace.

“This Report signals the emergence of a new and credible voice in this space,” said Peter Adler, CEO and president of The Keystone Center, an independent and neutral nonprofit organization that facilitates the GPR. “The report builds on the great work already being done and provides clear guidance that will make the drive toward meaningful and legitimate green products easier for everyone.”

The GPR is comprised of leading manufacturers, retailers, government officials, institutional purchasers, distributors, certifiers, environmental groups, information providers, and academic institutions. The Report highlights several deliverables and guidance documents that the GPR is developing, including:

- **[An anti-greenwashing pledge.](#)** Members of the GPR are launching a campaign to end false and misleading green product claims in the marketplace. This campaign centers around a pledge GPR developed, committing organizations to responsible environmental marketing including adherence to FTC’s revised Green Guides. Several GPR members have already signed the pledge including 3M, The Ashkin Group, Big Room, Inc., Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer’s Association (BIFMA), DEKRA, Five Winds International, GreenGuard Environmental Institute, Office Depot, Santa Monica Office of Sustainability and the Environment, Shaw Industries, Inc., UL Environment, Unisource Worldwide, Inc., and Weyerhaeuser.
- **A Framework for Greener Products.** The report proposes a framework for linking environmental and human health product impacts for particular product categories with standards and certification systems that seek to address those impacts. The framework attempts to bridge the gap between lifecycle-based and environmental attribute-based approaches to defining greener products.
- **[Preferred Practices for Organizational Credibility.](#)** The GPR has developed a set of “preferred practices” for organizational entities that seek to be a credible player in the green marketplace. This guide is currently undergoing pilot testing and is expected to be finalized by December 2011.

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- [A Glossary of Commonly Used Terms](#). To help improve its own discussions and avoid seemingly simple semantic disagreements, GPR developed a glossary of commonly used terms and agreed-upon definitions currently in use in the green marketplace. The GPR hopes this lexicon contributes to the goal of providing clarity and cohesion in the green products and green marketing arena.

The Report also highlights other initiatives the GPR is exploring including the development of a single coordinating organization to guide market actors to credible sustainability standards and eco-labeling programs; and to provide broad, multi-stakeholder recommendations to policymakers on advancing green commerce.

“Let’s face it: there are a lot of green claims out there,” says Scot Case, Director, Market Development at UL Environment and member of GPR. “We want to simplify the process for institutional purchasers so that they can more easily select a product that is actually better for the environment and for human health.”

The GPR is supported by membership dues, as well as funding from foundations and government. For more information, please visit the [GPR Project Page](#) on The Keystone Center’s website.

About The Keystone Center:

The Keystone Center seeks to solve our society’s most challenging environmental, energy, and public health problems. We bring together today’s public, private and civic sector leaders to confront these issues and we arm the next generation with the 21st Century intellectual and social skills required to effectively approach the questions they will face. Founded in 1975, The Center is a non-profit organization headquartered in Keystone, Colorado with offices in Denver, CO and Washington, DC.

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