

# Alliance Projects Aim to Make Businesses Greener

The Alliance for Environmental Innovation has enlisted two major American corporations, S.C. Johnson Wax and Starbucks Coffee—each a leader in its field—to participate in joint projects that will build environmental improvements into the design and development of their products and packaging. EDF and The Pew Charitable Trusts created the Alliance to engage businesses in reducing waste and pollution. EDF's work in the landmark McDonald's and Paper Task Force efforts showed that environmental-business partnerships can lead to innovative solutions.



Lewis Green

*Studying possible alternative coffee cups at Starbucks headquarters in Seattle are Starbucks environmental affairs specialist Karen Humphrey, EDF scientist Kevin Bryan, Starbucks director of environmental affairs Susan Mecklenburg, and EDF economic analyst John Ruston.*

S.C. Johnson, based in Racine, WI, is a leading maker of household and consumer products, including cleaners, insecticides and repellents, and personal care items. The company's major brands include Raid, OFF!, Drano, Glade, Edge, Future, Pledge, and Windex.

The Alliance-S.C. Johnson task force will focus on how to integrate environmental objectives into Johnson's product design and development process. The aim is to make environmental considerations an integral part of all of the company's products—from the initial prod-

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# Making Environmental Considerations an Integral Part of Businesses

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uct concept through development, production, packaging, and marketing.

“Ultimately, we want to show how building environmental factors into product development from the outset can meet consumers’ needs with less harm to the environment,” said Jackie Prince Roberts, the Alliance’s associate director.

## The Double-Cup Problem

Starbucks is the leading national retailer of gourmet coffee with more than 900 stores that sell hot coffee, coffee-based cold drinks, pastries, sandwiches, coffee beans, coffee makers, and accessories. It aims to have 2,000 stores by the year 2000.

The Alliance-Starbucks joint task force will try to solve the company’s “double-cup” problem: having to deliver one serving of take-out hot coffee in two disposable cups to insure customers’ comfort. The project’s first priority will be to maximize the use of reusable cups in the Starbucks system, for in-store customers as well as commuters and people working near Starbucks stores. The Alliance-Starbucks team will also recommend different single-use cup materials to reduce the environmental impacts of the virgin, bleached paperboard now being used.

The Alliance hopes that solving Starbucks’ double-cup problem will lead to a range of other initiatives, potentially cover-

ing additional types of packaging, store construction, and coffee growing and processing, for example.

“We believe Starbucks can enhance its customers’ experience by further integrating the environment throughout its operations,” said Alliance director Ralph Earle, a member of the EDF-Starbucks team. “This project has the potential to set a new standard for environmental leadership in the retail and service sectors.”

The Alliance intends all of its projects to produce measurable environmental and business benefits. Its aim is to create models and methods that other businesses will adopt to the benefit of both the environment and the economy.