

# ECOMpetition



## What is the Roche ECOMpetition?

In 1995, the Roche divisional eco-delegates developed a Group-wide initiative which they called the ECOMpetition. This competition is designed to give employees an opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions on how the company can further enhance its sustainability culture and performance. The ECOMpetition raises awareness of environmental protection and aims particularly to encourage sustainability by identifying ways which financial savings can be achieved through environmental protection. The 2010 event was the last one organized by the ecodelegates. By then the responsibility for ECOMpetition was fully taken over by Group Safety, Security, Health and Environmental Protection (LS).

## How does it work?

Employees submit their suggestions as to how Roche can help to protect the environment or use energy or natural resources more efficiently, and prizes are awarded for the best submissions. The competition is open to individuals or teams of up to three employees.

Managers at the local site level then examine the feasibility of their employees' suggestions, estimate the potential cost savings, and commit to implementing the proposed improvements.

Ideas are evaluated by a team consisting of the eco-delegates and two members of Group SHE (LS). The inclusion criteria have been tightened up over the years in order to focus on those projects which are significant at a group level.

## Facts & Figures

Year	No. of suggestions	Participants	Winning proposals
1995	2500	1400	52
1999	550	865	26
2004	130	214	18
2007	130	201	22
2010	300	302	29

## What impact does it have?

Ideas submitted as part of the ECOMpetition have resulted in significant successes in a variety of areas including energy conservation, waste reduction, decreased consumption of water and raw materials, and reduced air pollution. Additionally, a number of submissions have addressed the social aspect of sustainability. As well as yielding environmental improvements, suggestions relating to individual manufacturing processes have resulted in major cost savings at specific Roche sites. Other ideas, including measures to reduce energy consumption of air-conditioning systems, have proved useful at multiple sites. Closed-loop systems and water reuse schemes have been set up in countries where water conservation is an issue due to its scarcity as a resource. In the social responsibility sphere, ideas have

included a paper recycling scheme managed by a charitable institution, and helping schools and universities to dispose appropriately laboratory chemicals.

### **Example: Goats for Landscaping**

The Boulder site is responsible for the upkeep of a remote piece of property near the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park. One of the challenges it faces is the infestation of invasive plant species that is occurring across Colorado. These foreign plants wreak havoc on the native vegetation. With no established predators, their growth is unchecked and they crowd out the native plant species. After testing a variety of sometimes expensive methods such as moving, selective weed pulling and even chemical options for controlling the invasive weeds these seemed to be winning this battle of wills, until a fourlegged solution was found in terms of a herd of goats. This idea was one of the winning proposals of the 2010 ECOmpetition.

It turned out that the goats are amazingly efficient weed-eating machines. They attack the weeds by gnawing through their leaves, including the seed pods. They then grind the seeds for digestion, preventing any reseeding. Along the way, the goats aerate and fertilise the soil. Properly timed, these lawn treatment experts will create space for the native plant species to mature and thrive in a more hospitable environment.

### **Why an employee competition?**

Roche has a long tradition of commitment to environmental protection as is reflected in our participation in a variety of national and international programs. We believe that engaging each of our employees, and encouraging them to apply the concept of sustainability to their daily work activities is essential to long-term success in this area.

Employees benefit from the challenge of being asked to come up with new ideas and Roche benefits by having all employees apply their unique skills and perspective to the question of how to improve the company's sustainability performance.

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