Does microbicide use in consumer products promote antimicrobial resistance?

A critical review and recommendations for a cohesive approach to risk assessment

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The increasing use of microbicides in consumer products is raising concerns related to enhanced microbicide resistance in bacteria and potential cross-resistance to antibiotics. The recently published documents on the topic from the European Commission have spawned much interest to better understand the true extent of the putative links for the benefit of the manufacturer, regulator and consumer alike.

This presentation is based on a two-day workshop (June 2012) where thirteen experts in the fields of microbicide usage and resistance discussed the latest information on the topic. It identifies gaps in our knowledge and also makes specific recommendations for harmonisation of key terms and refinement/standardisation of methods for testing microbicide resistance to better assess its impact and possible links with cross-resistance to antibiotics. It also calls for a better cohesion in research in this field. Such information is crucial to developing any risk assessment framework on microbicide use notably in consumer products. Finally it identifies key research questions where there are inadequate data which could promote better consumer and environmental safety.

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