



16 September 2011

## SCOTCH WHISKY INDUSTRY EMPHASISES COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENT

- Industry calls for governments to work with industry to meet environmental targets -

At this week's Worldwide Distilled Spirits Conference 2011 in Glasgow, the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) emphasised "environmental excellence" as a key consideration in the industry's investment decisions to ensure sustainability and long-term competitiveness. The SWA also called for government action to underpin distillers' green commitments.

As demand for Scotch Whisky grows across the world, the industry is making an unprecedented level of investment in production capacity. The continuing buoyancy of the market and optimism about the future has led to over £1 billion of new capital investment over the last five years across the industry - with the industry's Environmental Strategy in mind.

The strategy, published in 2009, sets ambitious targets for 2020 and 2050 - for example on energy use and recyclable packaging - which can only be achieved by partnership working.

Julie Hesketh-Laird, SWA Director of Operational and Technical Affairs, told conference delegates that the Scotch Whisky industry is almost unique in its willingness to work together to build on its long-standing "green credentials".

Julie Hesketh-Laird said:

"The industry's Environmental Strategy resulted from exceptional partnership across a sector known for fierce competition among brands. There is a real desire to make a difference. The industry has already made impressive strides to meet our targets. For example, 98% of packaging used is recyclable or reusable against a 2020 target of 100%."

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However, she said there are challenges to be overcome - both within the industry and externally - if the industry is to meet its goals.

Legal, institutional and financial challenges - including waste legislation restrictions, planning issues and lack of incentives for distillers wishing to harness their by-products for energy - must be tackled.

Julie Hesketh-Laird explained:

“The Scotch Whisky industry has effectively been denied access to the Government’s Renewable Heat Incentive scheme due to the low threshold for biogas schemes. Governments and regulators must give clearer financial signals, equitable across all sectors. Government policies must be coherent.”

She called on the UK and Scottish Government to incentivise operators in remote areas to investigate the potential of renewable energy. “We look to the Scottish Government to support our industry’s investments in renewables by championing our case for better tailored incentives from Westminster.”

**End**

**Notes to editors:**

- For more information on the industry’s Environmental Strategy visit: <http://www.scotch-whisky.org.uk/swa/files/EnvironmentalStrategy09.pdf> and <http://www.scotch-whisky.org.uk/swa/files/EnvironmentalStrategy09.pdf> where a number of environmental case studies are available.

- Key commitments of the strategy:  
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels;  
Manage water requirements effectively;  
Reduce packaging material and waste;

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Seek to ensure all casks brought into the industry are made from oak sourced from sustainable forests;

Work with supply chain stakeholders in areas not under the industry's direct control eg maltings, glass manufacture, transport and distribution;

Report annually to stakeholders on progress.

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