

## FOE anonymous consumer survey finds secrecy, uncertainty in use of nanotechnology in sunscreens and cosmetics



Key findings from the anonymous consumer survey<sup>1</sup> of 140 companies include:

- Secrecy is a big problem. Over 46% of companies failed to give the consumer a straight answer regarding their use of nanoparticles. Four companies refused explicitly to answer
- Many companies are uncertain about their own use of nanoparticles
- Companies reveal different things to different questioners. One company told FOEA it was nano-free but told the consumer that its products do contain nanoparticles, although it is developing a nano-free formulation
- Coupled with our earlier survey, FOEA has now identified that at least 20% of companies use nanoparticles in sunscreens and cosmetics that contain sunscreens. The real figure is likely to be much higher
- Several companies are developing, or have developed, nano-free formulations. Sourcing reliable nano-free ingredients is a challenge for some companies
- Mandatory labelling of nano-ingredients is required to enable informed consumer and company choice and to enable tracing of any adverse effects

### **Secrecy persists – companies are reluctant to tell their own consumers whether or not they use nanoparticles**

- The response rate to the anonymous consumer survey (72.86%) was more than double the response rate to FOEA's survey for its Safe Sunscreen Guide (30.08%)
- However, over 46% of companies still failed to provide a straight answer to questions regarding their use of nanoparticles, asked by someone who claimed to use their products. 27% of companies failed to reply while 19% gave unclear responses and failed to reply to requests for clarification
- 4 companies (Clarins, M.A.C. Cosmetics, Skinceuticals and Tropicare) refused explicitly to answer questions from the consumer about their use of nanoparticles

### **Many companies are uncertain about the nano-content of their own products**

- There was uncertainty among several companies regarding their use of nanoparticles. Four companies (Australis, Cover Girl, Shiseido and Target) said they didn't have access to information about their company's use of nanoparticles
- ECO Minerals stated that it had recently discovered that contrary to instructions given to their manufacturer, their best-selling foundation does contain nanoparticles (the company is now re-formulating the product)
- Jane Iredale first told our consumer that its products do contain nanoparticles, then provided contradictory advice subsequent to communication with FOEA

### **Companies reveal different things to different questioners**

- Fifteen companies<sup>2</sup> were prepared to tell the anonymous consumer that they used nanoparticles, although they had failed to reply to FOEA's previous survey

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<sup>1</sup> Friends of the Earth Australia (FOEA) commissioned one of its supporters to conduct an anonymous consumer survey of 140 sunscreen and cosmetics companies regarding their use of nanoparticles. The companies, all previously surveyed by FOEA, were contacted in late January-early February 2010 and the last replies received in early April. The anonymous consumer stated that they used the brand's products and wanted to know about the brand's use of nanoparticles, because of health concerns.

- Additionally, Jurlique told our anonymous consumer survey that it uses nanoparticles, despite having told FOEA that its products are nano-free
- Eight companies<sup>3</sup> told FOEA that their products contain nanoparticles, but failed to reply to the anonymous consumer survey, or provided unclear responses
- Twenty nine companies told our anonymous consumer survey that they are nano-free, but had failed to reply to FOEA's survey<sup>4</sup> or told FOEA that they did not know their company's nano-status<sup>5</sup>

### **Several companies are developing nano-free formulations**

- 4 companies (Avado Organics, ECO Minerals, Jurlique and Living Nature) said they were developing nano-free formulations. Aussie Mineral Makeup stated that it had recently reformulated to become nano-free

### **An urgent need for mandatory labelling of nano-ingredients to enable informed company and consumer choice**

- The large numbers of companies failing to respond to requests about nanoparticle content, the discrepancies in company-provided information and the uncertainty that several companies have regarding their own use of nanoparticles are all worrying
- It is concerning that companies may provide different information to different questioners. The companies which told the anonymous consumer survey that they use nanoparticles are almost entirely different from the companies that told FOEA that they use nanoparticles. Jurlique provided conflicting responses to different questioners
- There is an urgent need for mandatory labelling of nanoparticle ingredients used in sunscreens and cosmetics so that both companies and consumers can make informed choices about buying or selling products that contain nanoparticles
- Ensuring informed consumer choice, and traceability of nano-content in the event of adverse effects, are important from both a public health perspective and to establish potential liability

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<sup>2</sup> Avado Organics, Avène, Avon, Dermalogica, Dr Lewinn, Hamilton, Kosmea Australia, Natralia Nourish, Neutrogena, Nivea, Olay, Paula's Choice, True Solutions Suncare, UV Natural Sunscreen and UV Triple Guard

<sup>3</sup> Ambré Solaire, Dior, Garnier, Helena Rubinstein, L'Oréal, Maybelline New York, Shu Uemera and Yves Saint Laurent

<sup>4</sup> Amcal House Brand, Amway, ASAP, Banana Boat, Bloom Cosmetics, Chapstick, Chemmart House Brand, Cricket Australia, Da Vinci Cosmetics, David Jones Beauty Brand, EarthSkinFoods, Ecotanicals, Eles Mineral Makeup, Éminence Organic Skin Care, In Clinic Cosmetics, Key Sun Zinke, La Prairie, Livina Natural Skincare, Mei Mei, Miessence Organics, Mineral Makeup, Pelactiv, Pro Block, RoC Skincare, Sisley, SK-II, Skinstitut, UV Solar Care

<sup>5</sup> Blistex

**Table 1: Results of the anonymous consumer survey regarding use of nanoparticles in sunscreens and cosmetics April 2010**

Brand	Response to anonymous survey	Company's self-stated nano status	Response to FOEA 2009-10 guide	FOEA 2009-10 guide status	Comments
Alizé	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Aloe Up	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Ambré Solaire	No	No response	Yes	Use nano	
Amcal House Brand	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Amway	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Aquasun	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
ASAP	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Auscreen	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Aussie Mineral Makeup	Yes	Nano-free	N/A	N/A	
Australian Surfer Sunblock	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Australis	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Didn't know
Avado Organics	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	Currently developing nano-free formula
Aveda	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Avène	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Avon	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Banana Boat	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Beauty Mineral	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Blistex	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	May use nano	
Bloom Cosmetics	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Bobbi Brown	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Bonne Bell	Yes	Nano-free	N/A	N/A	
BronZinc	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Cancer Council	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Chanel	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Chapstick	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Chemmart House brand	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Clarins	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Refused to answer
Claytime Australia	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Clinique	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Coles Own Brands	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Cover Girl	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Didn't know
Cricket Australia	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Da Vinci Cosmetics	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
David Jones Beauty Brand	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Dermalogica	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Dior	No	No response	Yes	Use nano	
Dove	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	

Dr Lewinn	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Dream Skin	No	No response	N/A	N/A	
EarthSkinFoods	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
ECO Minerals	Yes	Use nano	N/A	N/A	Recently found its foundation may contain nano, despite instructions to manufacturer. Now developing nano-free formulation
Ecotanicals	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Eles Mineral Makeup	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Elizabeth Arden	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Ella Baché	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Éminence Organic Skin Care	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Estée Lauder	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Eternally Young	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Face of Australia	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Garnier	Yes	Unclear response	Yes	Use nano	
Givenchy	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Graham's Sunclear sunscreen	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Guerlain	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Would only answer questions about precise products but implied some products do contain nano
haf Mineral Makeup	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Hamilton	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Helena Rubinstein	No	No response	Yes	Use nano	
HissyFit	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Home Brand	Yes	Unclear response	Yes	Nano-free	
In Clinic Cosmetics	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Innoxa	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Invisible Zinc	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Issada Cosmetics	Yes	Nano-free	N/A	N/A	
Jan Marini Skin Research	Yes	Unclear response	Yes	Nano-free	
Jane Iredale	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	First said products do contain nanoparticles, then provided advice contradicting this
John Plunkett's Superfade	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Johnsons	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Jurlique	Yes	Use nano	Yes	Nano-free	Told FOEA that it was nano-free. Told anonymous consumer survey was developing

					nano-free formulation
Key Sun Zinke	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Kit Cosmetics	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Kosmea Australia	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Krush Minerals	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
La Mer	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
La Prairie	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Lancôme	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Lanolips	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Le Tan	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Livina Natural Skincare	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Living Nature	Yes	Use nano	Yes	Use nano	Developing nano-free formulation
L'Occitane	No	No response	No	May use nano	
L'Oréal	Yes	Unclear response	Yes	Use nano	
M.A.C. Cosmetics	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Refused to answer
Marine Blue	No	No response	Yes	Nano-free	
Mary Kay	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Max Factor	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Maybelline New York	No	No response	Yes	Use nano	
Mei Mei	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Miessence Organics	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Milk Skincare	Yes	Unclear response	Yes	Nano-free	
Mineral Makeup	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Mukti Botanicals	Yes	Nano-free	N/A	N/A	
Musq	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Napoleon Perdis	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Natio	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Natralia Nourish	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Nature's Care	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Natural Instinct	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Neutrogena	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Nivea	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Nutrimetics	No	No response	Yes	Nano-free	
Olay	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Origins	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Palmers	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Paula's Choice	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Pelactiv	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Priceline Own Brand	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Pro Block	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Protecta Sunblock	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
QV	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Revlon	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
RoC Skincare	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	

Sea & Ski	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Sheer Cover	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Shiseido	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Said were unable to respond
Shu Uemera	No	No response	Yes	Use nano	
Simplicité	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Sisley	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
SK-II	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Skinceuticals	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Refused to answer
Skinstitut	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Soleo Organics	No	No response	Yes	Nano-free	
Soul Pattinson	No	No response	N/A	N/A	
Sunblock Australia	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	
Sunsational	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Sunsense	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Sunzapper	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Target	Yes	Unclear response (sunscreen nano-free, cosmetics unknown)	No	May use nano	Sunscreens are nano-free but don't know nano-status of their cosmetics that contain sunscreens
Thalgo	No	No response	Yes	Nano-free	
The Body Shop	Yes	Use nano	Yes	Use nano	
The Wiggles Sunscreen	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
Tropicare	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	Refused to answer
True Solutions Suncare	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Ultraceuticals	Yes	Unclear response	No	May use nano	One or more products in their range may contain 1-6% nanoparticles
UV Natural Sunscreen	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
UV Solar Care	Yes	Nano-free	No	May use nano	
UV Triple Guard	Yes	Use nano	No	May use nano	
Wet Dreams	No	No response	No	May use nano	
Woolworths	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Wotnot	Yes	Nano-free	Yes	Nano-free	
Yves Saint Laurent	No	No response	Yes	Use nano	
Zinke Stick	No	No response	No	May use nano	