PRESS RELEASES

Jan 12, 1998

Ecolab Completes Gibson Acquisition

ST. PAUL, Minn., January 12, 1998: Ecolab Inc. announced today it has completed the acquisition of Gibson Chemical Industries Limited of Melbourne, Australia.

Ecolab had previously announced that it had acquired over 98% of the Gibson shares through a public tender offer and through market purchases. Ecolab subsequently utilized procedures permitted under Australian law which allow for a compulsory acquisition of the remaining shares. Ecolab has completed the compulsory phase of the acquisition and now owns 100% of Gibson shares.

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and pest elimination products and services for the hospitality, institutional and industrial markets. For the year ended December 31, 1996, Ecolab reported sales of US$1.5 billion; including European joint venture sales of US$0.9 billion, Ecolab's global sales coverage was US$2.4 billion. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

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