PRESS RELEASES

May 14, 1999

Ecolab Shareholders Elect Directors, Approve Incentive Plans, Ratify Appointment Of Independent Accountants

ST. PAUL, Minn., May 14, 1999: At today's annual meeting, Ecolab Inc.'s shareholders re-elected five directors to the board for three-year terms: James J. Howard, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Northern States Power Company; Jerry W. Levin, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Sunbeam Corporation; Reuben F. Richards, retired Chairman of Terra Industries Inc.; Richard L. Schall, Consultant and retired Vice Chairman and Chief Administrative Officer of Dayton Hudson Corporation; Roland Schulz, Executive Vice President in charge of Human Resources and member of the Executive Board of Henkel KGaA.

At the same meeting, shareholders approved an amendment to the Company's 1997 Stock Incentive Plan which increased the number of shares authorized under the plan and extended the plan's term by two years. Shareholders also adopted the Company's 1999 Management Performance Incentive plan, essentially extending a similar plan adopted by shareholders in 1994.

In other business, shareholders also ratified the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP as the Company's independent accountants for the current year.

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and pest elimination products and services for the hospitality, healthcare and light industrial markets. For the year ended December 31, 1998 Ecolab reported sales of $1.9 billion; including European joint venture sales of $0.9 billion, Ecolab's global sales coverage was $2.8 billion. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at http://www.ecolab.com; and by telephone at 1-800-FACT-ECL.

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