

## Incandescent Light Bulb Banned by European Union

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Energy-inefficient incandescent light bulbs have been around a long, long time; actually some 130 years!

European Union Energy Ministers decided in Luxembourg recently to **ban incandescent light bulbs in Europe as of 2010**. The move comes just a few days before the lifting of EU import duties on energy-saving lamps from China, which will help bring down retail prices of the most efficient light bulbs. The massive switchover, which will affect all of the European Union's 500 million citizens, was first ordered at a Brussels summit last year as part of an ambitious energy policy to fight climate change.

Support for the new bulbs has proved controversial in the past as they are considerably more expensive. However, more efficient lights will be cheaper in the long run as they use significantly less energy and last longer. The ban of energy-intensive lamps will also increase demand for more efficient products such as CFLs and light-emitting diodes (LEDs). Mariangiola Fabbri, WWF Energy Policy Officer:

These decisions clearly show that promotion of energy efficiency brings benefits to the economy, the climate and consumers. The European Union should champion the phase-out of highly energy consuming products, facilitate access of energy saving products to the European market and help consumers make their choice responsibly, in line with the 2020 climate change targets.

Last year Australia became the first country to announce an outright ban by 2010 on incandescent bulbs. The changeover in the United States will be more gradual, not mandated to begin until 2012 and phased out through 2014.