



ECOLABELLING –

AS A POTENTIAL MARKETING TOOL FOR AFRICAN PRODUCTS

(An overview of opportunities and challenges)



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1. SOME BASIC POINTS ON ECOLABELLING

Ecolabelling entered mainstream environmental policy making in 1977, when the German government established the Blue Angel Programme. Since that time, ecolabels have become one of the more high-profile market-based tools for achieving environmental objectives. Ecolabelling has also run into criticism from those who claim that it may, in some cases, operate as an unjustified non-tariff barrier to trade. This point is of particular concern for industries in most developing countries which lack the basic institutional and infrastructural capacities to run an elaborate ecolabelling schemes. The fact remains that environmental requirements, including some related to ecolabelling, are increasingly used to define commercial relationships between producers and buyers. While meeting these requirements is not mandatory, it is becoming an economic imperative, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises and producers in developing countries.

The Economics and Trade Branch of UNEP has recently commissioned a study on 'The Trade and Environmental Effects of Ecolabels: Assessment and Response'¹. While the intention of the Expert Meeting is not to discuss the possible trade effects of environmental labelling, the following points highlighted in the report could be cited as background considerations.

- Basically, an ecolabel is just a means of communicating information. For a long time the only target for that information was assumed to be the final consumer and ecolabelling was a tool to customers act in a manner that was consistent with their personal preferences.
- There are different range of incentives and incentive mechanisms that facilitate the success of an ecolabelling programme. In some cases incentives are derived from a price premium while in others they are derived from the predictability of future revenues or market access. The source of the incentives could also vary as it may be provided by consumers, private companies and often by government policy.
- The benefits of the incentive may accrue to producers, middlemen or (frequently) the final retailer. What is important is not that consumers are willing to pay more for ecolabelled products, but simply that one of the market actors in the value chain has a financial incentive to promote ecolabelling.
- If incentives are important to the adoption of ecolabels, as they most certainly are, it is important to recognize that other market actors have a greater arsenal at their disposal, including providing access to long-term supply contracts, preferred supplier agreements, prime shelf space, etc. all of which help to improve profitability.
- It is perhaps unlikely that consumers will remain the primary focus of ecolabelling in the future, in view of evidence that private and public procurement policies have been important elements in the success of many ecolabelling programmes.
- Given the influence of industry sectors and supply chains on the development and spreading of many new ecolabels, there is a need to consider how to ensure that environmental and other types of requirements used by supply chains are also prepared, adopted and applied in such a way that they do not become unjustified barriers to market access.

The report underlined that the spread of environmental requirements, including ecolabelling and other types of standards, can be expected to continue to increase due to the actions of private market actors, particularly through supply chain contracts and big retail chains. It also underlines the need to contribute to the design of ecolabelling programmes and accompanying private and public policies that respond to SMEs and developing country needs and conditions, including 'phased approaches' to the introduction of standards, technical equivalence agreements and lower-cost conformity assessment and certification services.

¹ <http://www.unep.ch/etb/publications/index.php>

What is the Purpose of Eco-labels?

Eco-labels are intended to educate and increase consumer awareness of the environmental impacts of a product and bring about environmental protection by encouraging consumers to buy products with a lower environmental impact. Consumers include individual retail consumers, as well as the procurement officers of governments and large corporations. Consumers' purchasing decisions can provide a market signal to producers about product preferences. Under effective Ecolabelling regimes, producers and sellers have an incentive to compete to improve the products, perhaps by changing inputs or adopting different technologies to lower the environmental burden of the product. Producers of environmentally superior products have an incentive to use environmental marketing techniques such as Ecolabelling to differentiate their products. Firms may be motivated by gaining extra market share, improving their public image or pre-empting mandatory labelling requirements.

What are the Benefits of Eco-labels?

Economic Benefits

Rather than aligning with the polluter pays principle, where the costs of pollution are integrated into higher product prices (usually through taxes), Ecolabelling encourages decreased emissions and reduced environmental impact, the extra cost of which is passed on to the consumer in a price premium. As a result, widely acknowledged benefits of Ecolabelling for producers being certified include potential for premium market prices, access to new markets, safeguarding of existing market channels, preferred supplier status, potential to attract ethical investment in the sector as well as (co)funding of local community social and economic infrastructure.

Case Study – The Blue Flag Programme in South Africa: Lessons from Early GEF Phases

"The greatest benefit to the Blue Flag programme in South Africa has been the improvement of environmental management in the coastal zone - standards provide local authorities with a framework for action - i.e. the criteria and obligatory requirements of having a Blue Flag beach, provide the mechanism by which the implementation of coastal legislation can be managed and carried out."

- Alison Kelly, co-ordinator of the Blue Flag Programme, South Africa

Environmental Benefits

Eco-Labels are meant to communicate and promote environmental benefits through their positive influence on consumers' purchasing decisions. While the consumer recognizes an emblem or a logo as a selection aid to make an informed decision, the manufacturer uses the product logo to communicate its good environmental practices to the consumers. Nevertheless, this practice should be accompanied by institutional and regulatory policies that will help to differentiate justifiable environmental claims from fraudulent marketing slogans. Such a mechanism encourages industries to promote continuous improvement of their production processes thereby reducing their impact on the environment. Ecolabelling is also considered to be a useful vehicle for raising environmental awareness in some cases by highlighting the available alternatives in specific product categories

Case Study: The EPOPA Programme in Uganda & Tanzania

The Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa (EPOPA), is a programme initiated by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) funding that has been running mainly in Uganda and Tanzania since 1994, and operated by Agro-Eco and Grolink. The objective of EPOPA is to initiate and facilitate the export of organic products in order to improve the livelihood of organic farmers. The project facilitated organic certification of farming operations through groups of small-holder farmers. As a result of the project >60,000 farmers have obtained 15-40% higher price on cash crops from 1997-2006. With an average of 8 people per household, this has benefited about 480,000 people. Farmers may increase overall income by 50% or more.

Eco-labels are increasingly used to define commercial relationships between producers and buyers. While not mandatory, it is becoming an increasing concern, especially for producers in developing countries. The spread of environmental requirements, including Ecolabelling and other types of standards, can be expected to continue to increase due to the increasing health, safety & sustainability concerns and targeted purchases of private market actors, particularly through supply chain contracts and big retail chains. Ecolabelling is seen by many producers and manufacturers as an opportunity to seek value-based distinction over a cost-based advantage.

GROWING ETHICAL & ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PRODUCTS (EPPs) MARKETS

- (i) Government & Corporate Procurement
- (ii) Consumer

Working as Market-based Mechanisms mobilized by CSR & Consumer Social Responsibility (CnSR)
Function as Market Opportunities and/or Barriers
Can facilitate mainstream market expansion for Developing World producers

ECO-CERTIFICATION LABELS - TRUST MARKS - PROTECTIVE STANDARDS - ASSURANCE TOOLS
About making markets work for sustainable development
Mechanisms that align market forces with sustainable business approaches

Collaborative Multi-stakeholder Voluntary Approaches
Comprise Eco-Labels, Fair Trade, Organic, Eurogap, Energy/Eco-efficiency, ISOs etc

NEED: Products aren't created by the economy out of nothing and have direct effects on nature. They come from the Earth, and when they are used up, they will be returned to the Earth as garbage and toxic waste. It takes energy to extract, process, manufacture, and transport products, while air, water, and soil are often polluted at many points in the life cycle of the product.

Push - Pull Effect attracts participants

CONCERNS ADDRESSED:

1. Climate Change
2. Energy
3. Water
4. Biodiversity & Land Use
5. Chemicals, Toxics
6. Air Pollution
7. Waste Management
8. Ozone Layer Depletion
9. Oceans & Fisheries
10. Deforestation

Plus CDMs

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC & SOCIAL BENEFITS
Growers, Producers, Businesses, Manufacturers commit to standards for EPP market & CSR benefits
Raises awareness and stimulates environmental & social consciousness
AFRICAN ECO-LABEL: i) off-sets high rate of natural resource degradation
(ii) Access to high growth, premium-price ethical products markets etc

2. EXISTING ECOLABELLING INITIATIVES IN AFRICA

There are a number of Ecolabelling initiatives operating in the region, the majority are international Ecolabelling schemes relevant to a sector (i.e. fisheries, forestry, organic agriculture, etc.), and used by African products or services, although there are some that are eco-labels specific to the region. A number of sectoral Ecolabelling schemes are being implemented on a regional basis such as the East African Organic Standard and the West African Organic Cotton initiatives. There is currently only one national Ecolabelling scheme in operation in Africa, which is the Tunisian Eco-label. A further national Ecolabelling scheme is under development in South Africa. There are also a number of national energy-efficiency appliance labelling schemes which have been initiated in African countries.


2.1 Fisheries Sector

Importance of the Sector in Africa


Overfishing is a worldwide problem. The failure of fisheries management systems to regulate and control fishing efforts as well as poor compliance with existing fisheries regulations may be the major reasons for this. At the same time, the demand for fish is constantly growing worldwide. Developing countries contribute the major share of fish and fisheries products in the global trade. The actual critical status of world fisheries, the significant importance of the fishery sector and export of fish and fishery products for developing countries as well as the growing international market demand for certified sustainable fish and seafood products make it of critical importance to promote, support and facilitate initiatives for fisheries eco-certifications in developing countries' fisheries. Ecolabelling schemes are increasingly perceived as a way to simultaneously maintain the productivity and economic value of fisheries while providing incentives for the improvement of fisheries management and the conservation of aquatic biodiversity.



Existing Fishery Ecolabelling Initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) 	International since 1997 (www.msc.org)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South African Hake Trawl Fishery was MSC certified in 2004 (primarily US & EU exports) • MSC's Developing World Programme allocated funding to increase outreach to African fisheries (since 2006) • Exploring opportunities to increase participation of African fisheries in MSC • 2 fishery Ecolabelling workshops in Ghana & Gambia (2006) • The German funding organization GTZ Responsible

Existing Fishery Ecolabelling Initiatives in Africa....contd

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
		<p>Fisheries Project commissioned a pre-feasibility study of MSC certification of artisanal fisheries at the coast of Senegal. Together with the MSC Developing World Programme's cooperation and support. The information concerning bottlenecks towards certification is also valid for other African artisanal fisheries. Two MSC Pilot Programmes in Senegal are currently being developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GTZ is also funding the MSC Pre-Assessment for EAC's Lake Victoria Fishing Organisation (LVFO) for entire Lake Victoria. this pre-assessment together with the first experiences gained through pilot projects in Tanzania will provide valuable information for LVFO towards a lake wide ecolabelling strategy
<p>Naturland</p> 	<p>German</p>	<p>The GTZ (Promotion of responsible fisheries project) has also funded the first Ecolabelling pilot of small scale Nile Perch fisheries that is currently starting at the landing sites of Bukoba, Tanzania. There is now a pilot programme for Naturland Standard in Tanzania (Bukoba) rather than MSC label</p>

The Abuja Declaration of Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa²

This Declaration was adopted by the Heads of State meeting of the NEPAD "Fish for All Summit" in Abuja, Nigeria, August 2005, and recognises the following:

- The dependence of millions of Africans on fisheries and aquaculture for livelihoods (including economic well-being & commerce)
- The potential for increased benefit from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
- The depletion of fisheries resources, the degradation of aquatic environments and the threats to sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
- Resolves to improve governance of fisheries
- Resolves to ensure environmental sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture
- Provides clear evidence relevance of Ecolabelling to fisheries in the African region

² <http://www.iss.co.za/af/RegOrg/nepad/fishdecl.pdf>

Opportunities & Challenges for Fishery Ecolabelling in Africa

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World wide crisis of fishery sector due to overexploitation of fish and other seafood stocks • There is an urgent need for sustainable management of fisheries in Africa • Strong international demand for ecolabelled products from marine capture fisheries • One internationally well-accepted standard for sustainable fisheries (MSC) • Increasing number of big market players in US & EU are demanding MSC Products • Highly significant sector economically for many African countries (particularly relevant to poverty alleviation) • Traditional/artisanal fisheries are most important in terms of economic & social aspects • MSC currently investing into support for Ecolabelling of African fisheries • Pilot projects under development can be replicated in other areas of the region • The cost involved in the fishery assessment process and its potential constraints imposed on a local fishery are of less significant importance since experiences show that through proper implementation and broad stakeholder-based set-up of the certification programme, sufficient financial means can be provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently very few fisheries in Africa with eco-labels • Will require significant capacity building emerging from pilot projects • Not relevant to all fisheries in the African region • Need for standards development, harmonisation & certification capacity building in the region • Ecolabelling of fisheries requires the initiative, effort and commitment of all relevant stakeholders • It is a long process – cannot begin with certification in same year. • The participatory initiative and interest as well as the commitment from all relevant stakeholders towards the process of Ecolabelling is key for successful achievement • Developing countries' fisheries are experiencing multiple constraints in regard of the certification process – not only a result of a mismatch between modern certification requirements and the reality of many small-scale artisanal fisheries, - but also due to a general lack of a sound fishery management • There is the need to gain practical experience on how to best address Ecolabelling procedures and certification schemes to small scale and artisanal fisheries and on how to overcome the specific related constraints in developing countries.

CASE STUDY: Ecolabelling of Artisanal Coastal Fisheries in Senegal³

The Senegalese fishery sector is pre-dominated by its artisanal small-scale fishery which supplied 90% of total national landings of fish and seafood-products in 2006. The country's economy heavily depends on the fishing industry which is significantly contributing to national export revenues, job opportunities, local income sources as well as protein supply for the people. The sector contributes closely to 30% of the total value of Senegalese exported goods. Despite the critical importance of the fishery sector for the nation's development, Senegal has not yet achieved introduction of sustainable fisheries management within its coastal marine areas. The once abundant and vast marine resources off the Senegalese coast are today heavily over-exploited and threatened in their long term yields in regard of fish landings. Insufficient national regulatory and enforcement procedures as well as the country's weak position in negotiating and controlling the fishing efforts exerted by foreign countries' fleets have led to the actual crisis. A feasibility study into the Ecolabelling of artisanal coastal fisheries in Senegal was commissioned by the GTZ. The analysis of the Senegalese artisanal fishery sector in regard of the pre-requisites for achieving MSC-certification revealed the following main conclusions:

- MSC-certification for multi-species and widely dispersed small-scale fisheries is not feasible – given the actual insufficient status of regulation and enforcement.
- There are, however, small-scale fisheries that have developed a sufficient organisational status and basic fishery management procedures – these fisheries can act as feasible and realistic learning and capacity building examples and pilot projects for conduction of MSC-certification programmes.

2.2 Forestry

Importance of the Sector in Africa

Over 70% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa is rural and depends on forests or woodlands for its livelihoods. Sub-Saharan Africa also contains 25% of the world's remaining rainforests and 20% of the world's biodiversity hotspots.⁴ African forests are of social, economic & environmental importance. Trade and the way it is managed by countries can have a positive or negative impact on sustainable forest management. Demand for wood and wood products is outstripping the sustainable level of supplies in all the countries in the sub-region, although no realistic estimates are available on the actual consumption as also the level of sustainable supplies. Forest certification and Ecolabelling schemes have gained significant currency as a market-based instrument to address a number of problems in the forestry sector that have led to a depletion and degradation of the resource. Sustainable forest management (SFM) has been a core objective of both inter-governmental initiatives on forest policy and forest certification schemes. Forestry certification and labelling will become critical if Africa has to maintain its traditional wood markets in Western Europe.




³ Feasibility Study: Ecolabelling of Artisanal Coastal Fisheries in Senegal, commissioned by GTZ, conducted and elaborated in conjunction with BlueYou & ENDA, Zurich & Dakar, May 2007

⁴ <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTARD/EXTFORESTS/0,,contentMDK:20628792~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:985785,00.html>

The Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (AFLEG) Declaration and Action Plan

In the Declaration (2003⁵, governments expressed their intention to, inter alia: mobilize financial resources for FLEG; provide economic opportunities for forest-dependent communities to reduce illegal activities; promote cooperation between law enforcement agencies within and among countries; involve stakeholders in decision making; raise awareness of FLEG issues; and explore means of demonstrating the legality and sustainability of forest products. The declaration specifically includes the intention to explore the ways and means of demonstrating legality and sustainability of forest products to encourage consumer market confidence and thereby enhance legitimate trade for a greater financial return to producing countries. The Heads of States committed their countries to adopt harmonised national forest policies and accelerate the implementation of forest management tools notably harmonised forest certifications systems, internationally recognized, approved by States of Central Africa and develop human resources for their implementation. ⁶


Existing Forestry Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
Forestry		
Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) 	International since 1993 (www.fsc.org) (Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 Forest management and 101 Chain of Custody certificates in Africa to date • Representing about 2.4 million ha in 10 countries in Africa with FSC certification (Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of Congo, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) • FSC Africa office has been set up since 2003 and legally registered in Ghana in 2005 • Number of FSC members in Africa has increased to 81 in 20 countries • FSC Africa has hosted training and stakeholders' workshops in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Gabon, and Republic of Congo, and participated in several national, regional and international workshops – in order to increase certification of African forests • FSC National Initiatives have been established in 10 African countries • National and Sub-Regional (Congo Basin) Forest Stewardship Standards are under preparation • Four studies have been completed on "Forest resources, local communities and prospects of responsible forest management and certification in Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana and Republic of Congo" • Increasing interest from donors and major logging companies • Technical assistance has been given to some timber companies who are seeking FSC certification

⁵ http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTFORESTS/Resources/AFLEGMinisterialDeclaration_English.pdf

⁶ http://www.yale.edu/forestcertification/symposium/pdfs/gabon_symposium.pdf

Existing Forestry Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa...contd

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first FSC-certified logs have already arrived in Europe Translating many core FSC documents into French to facilitate uptake in francophone countries in Africa
PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) 	International since 1999 (www.pefc.org)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAFC Gabon is the first African member of the international PEFC Council The first ever PEFC Chain of Custody certification in Africa was awarded in 2006 to the timber processing company Medidis in Morocco
PAFC (Pan African Forestry Certification)	National: Gabon since 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African Timber Organisation governments Based on the Principles, Criteria & Indicators established by CIFOR (Centre for International Forestry Research) Validated by the International Tropical Timber Organisation Tested in the Ivory coast, Ghana, Cameroon, Central African Republic and Gabon Gabon is the first country to develop a national PAFC system Aims at becoming the basis of an all African standard - "Pan African"

Opportunities & Challenges for Forestry Ecolabelling in Africa

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable forest management essential for African region Economically relevant to countries in West, Central & Southern African regions There is a considerable area of forest resources in Africa FSC is currently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack or low level of awareness about forest certification in Africa Africa is lagging behind in forest certification (only about 3% of total of certified forests globally) and may be excluded from markets A wide range of forest types in Africa – requiring different management techniques – not similar across the region Need to build up local certification capacity and harmonisation of standards in the region

Opportunities & Challenges for Forestry Ecolabelling in Africa...contd

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
	<p>developing strong regional capacity and national initiatives/national working groups in Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of standards by ATO/ITTO will strengthen the forest policy and institutional arrangements • Forestry certification is necessary to combat illegal logging and avoid bad reputation for African forestry products • Relevant not only to forestry paper & timber products but also to wood-based arts/ crafts from Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is inadequate basic information about forest resources in Africa, and lack of African-based Forest Certification Bodies (only one in RSA), poor infrastructure systems (roads), corruption and political instability in some countries that hinder forestry Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa • A critical and transparent analysis of the forestry certification problems in Africa is required and strong efforts to address them • Inadequate financial, physical and human resources to promote forest certification in Africa • Weak forest development, training and research institutions

2.3 Tourism

Importance of the Sector in Africa

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the tourism sector is a priority sector in 32 countries in Africa, and for 27 countries tourism is the no.1 or no. 2 foreign income earner.

- Tourism is a labour intensive industry
- Generates employment opportunities at semi-skilled, technical and managerial level
- Decentralised industry capable of diversifying regional economies
- Relatively non-pollutant industry - if properly managed, can contribute to conservation and promotion of natural and cultural heritage
- Acts as a catalyst for development of other sectors of the economy of many countries
- Africa is one of the fastest-growing regions for international tourism. (E.g. In South Africa, tourism is expected to generate ZAR 236.5bn (US\$31.2 bn) of economic activity in 2007, growing to ZAR 593.0 bn (US\$60.0 bn) by 2017)⁷
- Ecotourism is the fastest-growing sector (UN World Tourism Organisation)
- Environmental and social certification schemes for tourism companies and organisations is becoming increasingly relevant in global tourism
- Fairtrade and eco-rating schemes are increasingly recognised by international tourists

⁷ www.wttc.org/search/results.php

Policies acting as incentives for sustainable tourism in Africa include:

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD 2002), article VIII – Sustainable Development in Africa, which includes (no. 70):⁸

Support Africa's efforts to attain sustainable tourism that contributes to social, economic and infrastructure development through the following measures:

- (a) Implementing projects at the local, national and sub regional levels, with specific emphasis on marketing African tourism products, such as adventure tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism;
- (d) Assisting host communities in managing their tourism projects for maximum benefit, while limiting negative impact on their traditions, culture and environment;

2007 Hammamet Declaration (<http://www.unwto.org/newsroom/news/en/pdf/0706025.pdf>)

From the Fifth UNWTO International Forum for Parliamentarians and Local Authorities, Hammamet Tunisia, 13-15 June 2007, includes the following relevant points:

- The tourism sector continues to make a powerful and sustained contribution to global and local economic growth, employment and trade flows, with particular benefits for developing countries and for poorer regions in all states.
- It is particularly important, that developing country markets are growing at a higher rate than the global norm.
- With sustainable management, the sector can make a lasting contribution to socio-economic development at both a global and local level.
- Tourism has to play its part in responding to the two major challenges of our time - the issues of extreme poverty and climate change.
- Tourism is well suited to support the MDGs – poorer countries all have important tourism export flows, direct impacts of tourism at community level is significant and catalytic indirect effects on other economic activities are substantial. At the local level it has unique potential for marginalized communities, for young people and for women.
- Tourism is a crosscutting sector which can provide valuable inputs and synergies for many sectors of the economy at local, national, regional and global levels – e.g. infrastructure, communications and investment. It is important that government at all levels recognize this reality and factor it into their primary decision making activities. The development community should also take account of both its social and economic impacts and synergies.

⁸ http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIChapter8.htm

Existing Tourism Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
<p>Blue Flag Beaches</p> 	<p>International since 1987 (www.blueflag.org)</p>	<p>An eco-label awarded to over 3200 beaches and marinas in 36 countries across Europe, South Africa, Morocco, New Zealand, Canada and the Caribbean in 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Programme is owned and run by the independent non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) • In Africa- South Africa and Morocco - since 2001 • 2006/7 season: 24 South African beaches and 4 Moroccan beaches awarded Blue Flag status • Workshop held in Tunisia in 2006 – aim to begin programme in Tunisia
<p>Heritage Environmental Rating Programme</p> 	<p>Regional – southern Africa (www.heritagesa.co.za)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 7 similar international programmes • Best practice sustainable tourism & management practices • Community involvement • Heritage Responsible Travel and Accommodation Guide • Members in South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia, Zambia
<p>Fairtrade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA)</p> 	<p>National since 2001: South Africa (www.fairtourismsa.org.za)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated by IUCN South Africa – now independent • Locally relevant • Focus more on developmental aspects than on market access • Contracted by Indalo Yethu to develop national environmental endorsement system
<p>Ecotourism Kenya's environmental rating</p> 	<p>National since 1996: Kenya (www.ecotourismkenya.org)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rating system with criteria for best practice • Awarded to 32 establishments to date
<p>Western Province Green Tourism Rating</p>	<p>Under development in South Africa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on a pilot projects by the Western Cape Provincial Department for Environment and Development Planning (DEADP) • Previously (2005/6) demonstrated Cleaner Production activities in the tourism sector: involved CP assessments in 9 hotels/lodges in the Western Cape - implemented CP recommendations for energy, water and waste reduction • Followed by Greening of Hotels for the ICLEI Conference (hosted in Cape Town in 2006)

Existing Tourism Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa...contd

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New proposed environmental rating system for the hospitality sector in the Western Cape - starter funding from British High Commission⁹ • Due to the upcoming FIFA World Cup in 2010 in South Africa - significant interest in developing green tourism rating standards

Opportunities & Challenges for Ecolabelling in the Tourism sector in Africa

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly relevant economically for most African economies (for 27 African countries tourism is the no.1 or no. 2 foreign income earner. It is a priority sector in 32 countries) • Highly relevant w.r.t. sustainable development and poverty alleviation • Ecolabelling in this sector responds to demanding international customers and at same time educates the local customer and workers in the sector • Being based locally it has local economic benefits through saving resources (water, energy, etc) as well as environmental benefits • Properly managed the creation of ecotourism opportunities in a country can create strong economic incentives for the maintenance of the cultural services provided by ecosystems, but poorly managed ecotourism activities can degrade the very resource they depend on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited initiatives at this stage in the area – mainly Blue Flag (in only 3 countries), Ecotourism Kenya and Heritage in southern Africa • A variety of Fair Trade programmes exist but not coordinated and include limited environmental considerations • Tourism is a different type of sector from other export sectors – would need a different approach from other sectors • Need for capacity building and training within the sector • Lack of local standards and certification bodies in this sector • Requires significant effort in getting the relevant players to work together in this sector

⁹ Proposed Environmental Rating System for the Hospitality Sector in the Western Cape, PART 1: BACKGROUND, June 2007, Sustainable Energy Africa & DEADP

2.4 Leather & Textiles

Importance of the Sector in Africa

Leather

- The business chain of leather-footwear and leather goods is one of the main sectors of the manufacturing African industry
- Strongly export-oriented for the raw material and semi-finished hides
- Finished products export is smaller and limited to sub-contracting production
- Tough international competition for European market (especially from Asia & Eastern Europe)
- An emerging market for eco-leather products, with a growing number of eco-labels
- Most only consider the environmental quality of the finished product
- Makes certification affordable for exporters from developing countries



Textiles

- The textile industry is one of the world's worst polluters
- Increased environmental awareness and legislation for the industry internationally
- More pressure on African producers looking at export opportunities, especially to countries with stringent requirements
- Developing countries disadvantaged by Ecolabelling schemes
 - excluded from more "environmentally sensitive" markets
- Environmental matters will continue to have a central role in future development of international trade in textiles & clothing
- Supply of eco-friendly textile products can be an additional competitive advantage
- The European market for such products is of increasing importance



Existing Tourism Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
Oeko-Tex 100 	International since 1990s (>30 countries worldwide) (www.oekotex.com)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 research & testing institutes in Africa belong to Oeko-Tex (Tunisia & Egypt) • 2 in South Africa -associate laboratory status • > 100 companies/products in African countries using Oeko-tex label • In Egypt, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zimbabwe, with the most being in Egypt and Tunisia
EU-Flower 	European since 1992 (www.eco-label.com)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danida project: EU Flower awarded to RSA garment for WSSD2002 • New UNEP project: Enabling Developing Countries to seize Eco-label Opportunities: Aimed at promoting European eco-labels in African Countries including South Africa (textiles) and Kenya (leather) as focal project countries

CASE STUDY: Organic Cotton in Africa

Cotton is an important cash crop for many African countries. It accounts for 50 to 70% of export revenues in Benin and is the second largest export earner in Tanzania. Some 10million people in Central and West Africa depend on cotton. However, African cotton is affected by subsidies paid by the USA, EU and China that undermine world market prices through overproduction; by rising production costs and the impacts of agrochemicals on human and environmental health. For example, cotton uses 22% of all insecticides applied in agriculture and 11% of all pesticides. Because of these pressures, many African smallholders are being driven to the margins of economic viability or out of cotton altogether, and there are few alternative cash crops. Organic cotton offers an opportunity to reduce the human health and economic impacts of pesticides in Africa, reduce damage to the environment and improve food security and incomes for many smallholder cotton farmers.¹⁰

Sales of organic cotton are set to triple to \$2.6 billion at the end of 2008 from its current \$900 million level as retailers and brands make significant new commitments to sustainable textile and apparel production. The organic cotton market is set to become a \$1 billion industry. This is very important as it suddenly attracts the attention of global investors.¹¹

While organic cotton production in sub-Saharan Africa was, until recently, a virtually experimental phenomenon, experience suggests it could be a viable, beneficial option for many farmers and could improve as it attracts interest and resources from market development (through direct investment and support from research, state and donor communities). Organic production began in 1994 (Tanzania/ Uganda), with Senegal and Zimbabwe joining in 1995 and Benin in 1996. Uganda, Tanzania and

¹⁰ Organic Cotton: A New Development Path for African Smallholders?, Simon Ferrigno, Saro G. Ratter, Peter Ton, Davo Simplice Vodouhê, Stephanie Williamson and John Wilson, 2005, International Institute for Environment & Development (IIED), <http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/14512IIED.pdf>

¹¹ Demand for Organic Cotton Continues to Grow, John Mowbray, Inteletex - Bradford, West Yorkshire, UK, Sept. 2006, (Organic Consumers Organization) http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_2417.cfm

CASE STUDY: Organic Cotton in Africa....contd

Senegal are the main producers, although Benin has increased production rapidly. Organic production also recently started in Togo, Kenya and Zambia. In sub-Saharan Africa organic cotton is grown to basic standards set by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) and certified by private agencies.

In East Africa, while labour costs remain similar, the reduction in inputs and the comparable yields to the conventional sector make organic cotton an economic and attractive option for farmers, with much potential to increase production. In the sub humid regions of West Africa, the re-evaluation of cotton production is vital given that it is the main cash income generator for the region's 6 million farmers and rural workers. Reductions in input costs make organic cotton an option for many poorer farmers, with most motivated by reduced health costs and debt. Poor education in rural areas is a constraint for developing organic projects when technical advisory services and administrative tasks are required for smallholder certification. In Benin, trained agronomists are employed as field agents who support elected representatives of producers in documentation and record keeping, while the organic farmers in Senegal have a literacy/language programme. Small producers of organic cotton struggle with the cost of organic certification. Producers exporting to more than one country may have to meet multiple criteria due to the requirements of national or regional regulations (EU, US, Japan). Projects are forced to use overseas consultants at international rates, making market access difficult. This is an area to address if small farmers are to gain and maintain access to potentially lucrative markets.

Opportunities & Challenges for Ecolabelling in the African leather & textile sector

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
Textiles & Leather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly competitive international market requires Africa to differentiate itself – Ecolabelling a significant opportunity otherwise a barrier Economically & environmentally relevant to a number of African countries Significant opportunities for organic cotton & wool in the region through interest from international and some local (RSA) retailers Significant number of businesses with Oeko-tex certification Existing testing & certification facilities in the region New projects under 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited Ecolabelling initiatives apart from Oeko-Tex Need to develop further technical capacity for Ecolabelling Need for support to address risk for local businesses & cotton/wool farmers Cost for certification currently outweighs the benefits Information gap for manufacturers around Ecolabelling opportunities, certification and access to markets. Certification bodies currently competing with each other – not helping manufacturers – perceived as a money-making strategy Uncoordinated policy instruments and lack of enforcement by government regarding manufacturing environmental standards

Opportunities & Challenges for Ecolabelling in the African leather & textile sector....contd

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
	<p>development – including organic cotton as well as UNEP project around textiles & leather</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant know-how around cleaner textile production in southern Africa • Free trade opportunities for African Textile products, e.g.: AGOA. 	

2.5 Agriculture



Importance of the Sector in Africa

- Agriculture is undoubtedly the most important sector in the economies of most non-oil exporting African countries. It constitutes approximately 30% of Africa's GDP and contributes about 50% of the total export value, with 70% of the continent's population depending on the sector for their livelihood.¹²
- Consumers in Europe & the US expect high quality food from around the world, produced according to high ethical, environmental and safety standards, at an affordable price and in all seasons.¹³
- The organic food sector has been growing at an annual rate of 20% for the past decade and Eco-Labels could soon move into the mainstream.¹⁴
- Organic farming in Africa must be viewed beyond the perspective of providing commodities for the global market – it is a viable sustainable development option for Africa.¹⁵
- Organic farming practices deliberately integrate traditional farming practices and make use of locally available resources - highly relevant to a majority of African farmers.
- Eco-labels open up new market opportunities for agricultural producers in developing countries
- But standards and certification processes are also a potential barrier for smaller scale producers - are also a potential barrier for smaller scale producers, who form the backbone of the African rural economy. Given the importance of these producers for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals this is of major concern

¹² http://www.ceepa.co.za/Climate_Change/index.html

¹³ *Our Common Interest*. Report of the Commission for Africa: More Trade and Fairer Trade

¹⁴ *Nutrition Today* article on Eco-Labels, W. Lockeretz & K. Merrigan, at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University

¹⁵ http://shop.ifoam.org/bookstore/product_info.php?cPath=64_22&products_id=72

- Export markets offer very lucrative opportunities but can be very hard to exploit
- Whether certified or not, organic agriculture has grown in Africa

- Certified organic production only represents a tip of the iceberg
- Evidence of a far larger agro-ecological movement in parts of Africa
- Local NGOs and farmers' groups & development agencies are increasingly adopting organic techniques for addressing food security

Eco-labels for Agriculture


In the agricultural and food industry sector, certification refers to all kinds of food products (juices, cereals and grain including rice, and even alcoholic beverages, sugar, meat, dairy products or eggs) which have been produced either by organic or bio-dynamic farming technologies or through integrated pest management. Certification can also refer to agricultural food and non-food products (coffee, tea, cocoa, and flower) which are produced with less fertilizers and pesticides as opposed to traditional practices on plantations and in monoculture. Also, other non-food agricultural products like animal feeds (for production of organic meat, dairy products and eggs), grain seeds, natural pesticides and insecticides, cosmetics and textiles (cotton, leather and leather goods) may also be certified if they meet certain environmental criteria.¹⁶

Organic Agriculture Movements in Africa


Indigenous NGOs, and farmers' groups are particularly active in organic field in Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe, and have got to the point of forming national organic networks that provide effective lobbying and advocacy bodies for the organic movement. These are most developed in Uganda (NOGAMU), Tanzania (TOAN) and Kenya (KOAN). In addition KULIKA in Uganda and SACRED Africa in Kenya are further examples of networks that are, often very effectively, integrating the organic message into more general development efforts. There are also pro-organic NGOs active in training, support, and advocacy in Togo, Benin, Zambia, Ethiopia and Madagascar. Elsewhere international development agencies are recognizing the potential of organic farming as a central plank in developing sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor. A number of development agencies such as Helvetas, HIVOS and GTZ (the Swiss, Dutch and German development agencies) explicitly support (non-certified) organic approaches to agriculture.

¹⁶ *Eco-labelling and Strategic Rivalry in Export Markets*, Basu, A.K.; Chau, N.H.; Grote, U.; July 2006, http://www.ceu.hu/econ/economic/eco-label_ceu.pdf

Existing Tourism Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission 	International	Currently there are hundreds of private organic standards worldwide; and in addition, organic standards have been codified in the technical regulations of more than 60 governments
International Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing 	International (www.ifoam.org)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous international standards and labels Mostly for export beyond Africa's shores Certified organic farming is relatively underdeveloped, even c.f. other low-income continents Basic standards set by IFOAM and certified by private agencies Two main forms of achieving organic certification for agriculture in Africa: relatively large farms or plantations under single ownership OR smallholder groups that collectively implement an internal control system & form co-operatives Evidence of substantial growth in certified organic land in Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia
Organic Guarantee System	International (at a local level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many Participatory Guarantee Systems – for local market IFOAM PGS in some African countries – e.g. South African Bryanston Organic Market
Demeter Label	International since 1997	Active on 5 continents and in 38 countries around the world, including in Africa)
East African Organic Standard 	East Africa since 2006 (www.kilimohai.org)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on IFOAM standards & adapted for the region - harmonisation To facilitate regional trade and seek similarity with other major standards e.g. the EU, USA To encourage the flow of organic products to such markets
National Organic Labels	Tunisia, Uganda (Also Egypt South Africa, Morocco & Zambia under development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To negotiate as a bloc at the international markets Tunisia has its own organic (EU compatible) standards, certification and inspection systems Egypt and South Africa in development - certifying organizations and developing standards Morocco and Zambia developing their own standards

Existing Tourism Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa...contd

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
Utz-Certified 	International since 1997 (www.utzcertified.org)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International certification for good agricultural practice and social benefits for coffee producers • The largest certification program in Africa • 13% of the Kenyan coffee market and 25% of Zambian
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents 15 farms and coops in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda • Major projects in Malawi, Burundi and Rwanda • 6 exporters, traders and roasters hold the Utz Certified Chain of Custody certification • Cooperating with several international partners to assist with capacity building and developmental initiatives in Africa
Fair Trade 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 National Labelling Initiatives grouped under the umbrella organisation Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO e.V.) which develops the standards. FLO-Cert certifies all the products. • There are a number of Fairtrade initiatives in agriculture in Africa, particularly for coffee and cocoa

Opportunities & Challenges for Ecolabelling in the agriculture sector in Africa

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly relevant to African region both economically and environmentally • Relevant to MDGs – especially w.r.t. poverty alleviation • Organic is a development tool - connecting rural growers and small-scale farmers to the international market – makes a big difference • Significant number of existing initiatives and long-term projects with successes (both within Africa and in other developing countries)– exist as models to replicate and build upon • Highly relevant to export market – organic market growing fast – undersupply situation • Organic farming has benefits for farmers in reducing costs and ensuring food security in addition to ensuring premiums and a growing international market • Existing initiative of EAOS in harmonisation of organic standards in sub-region (cooperation beyond countries) can be used as a case study for similar projects • Huge natural/eco potential of Africa, increased farmer income through doing little more/ even less sometimes, increasing consumer demand for “double value” foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture sector has too many other priorities in Africa – not significant political & institutional support for organic agriculture • Distance from end-market (international organic market) is a challenge as well as access to market • Market linkages for African producers to export market is essential • Concern over carbon footprint of air-freighted food from Africa to export markets could significantly impact this sector • The organic sector in most African countries is reliant upon both foreign standards and certifying bodies. This is a major constraint on the development of the organic sector. The absence of local certification and inspection capacity is a critical bottleneck that needs to be overcome in order to develop the potential of African organic exports. • Need for additional capacity building in certification as well as harmonisation of standards across the continent • Need for training in organic agriculture as well as internal controls systems (paperwork for certification) • The development of networks between NGOs, development agencies and research institutes will be a necessary step for formal & informal sector to share knowledge

Existing Tourism Ecolabelling initiatives in Africa...contd

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
South African Rooibos	National – South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale farmers in the west of South Africa • Sustainably produced cultivated and wild rooibos tea • Working group on Sustainable Wild Harvesting • Supported organic certification for the EU and North America
Natural Futures Project	Regional in southern Africa since 2005 (www.iucnsa.org.za/our_work/initiatives/natural_futures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated by IUCN South Africa as joint project with Phytotrade Africa • The project addresses market failures that hinder the emergence of the sector • Lack of certification readiness and knowledge regarding certification in region & sector. In-accessibility and appropriateness of existing certification schemes in regional natural products context. • Interventions: assist SMEs to pursue and prepare for certification inspection. Focus on increasing market access through certification • Influence the development of an improved certification scheme for southern African natural products sector • Systems of interest: UNCTAD's BioTrade Facilitation Programme, Organic, Fair Trade Nuts and Oilseeds

2.7 Energy Efficiency

Importance of the Sector in Africa

Due to the current emphasis on global warming in the political agenda, energy efficiency is a priority in almost every region on the globe. Energy efficiency labelling is becoming increasingly relevant in the global economy. All sectors of the economy are highly energy consuming in addition to other natural resources consumption. Most countries in the region are in the process of developing economies and have very limited resources coupled with a fragile environment. Therefore, energy efficiency in particular should be one of the common criteria in each and every Ecolabelling scheme. Energy efficiency standards and labels (S&L) for appliances, equipment, and lighting products are an especially cost-effective policy for conserving energy. They fit well with most other energy policies and can play a role as the backbone of all countries' energy policy portfolios. Efficiency standards and labels can force a shift to energy efficient technology and dramatically improve national energy efficiency. Currently, all energy efficiency appliance labelling schemes in Africa are national initiatives, driven by the requirements of the national government policy for sustainable development around energy issues. Another incentive is the assistance provided by international organizations such as the Collaborative Labelling and Appliance Standards Program (CLASP).





Existing initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
CLASP (Collaborative Labelling & Appliance Standards Programme)	International since 1999 (www. clasponline. org)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from CLASP (International NGO) for national Ecolabelling initiatives in the following African countries: Ghana, Egypt, Tunisia, Africa • CLASP works at the national level to build the skills and institutional capacity necessary to develop, enforce, and maintain standards and labels. National successes help build a critical mass of knowledge, skills, and infrastructure in each region. Participation by multiple countries in the same region begin to have an effect at the regional and international levels through effects on cross border trade flows

Opportunities & Challenges for Energy Efficiency Ecolabelling in Africa

Sector	Opportunities	Challenges
Energy Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of EE initiatives for appliances in many countries that can be harmonized and up-scaled through a coordinated effort • Initiatives on energy efficiency in buildings would be highly relevant economically & environmentally for the region – a significant growth sector across Africa • Energy efficiency in new buildings is an essential sector for interventions – as cannot afford to develop unsustainably • Significant opportunities for funding these initiatives through CDM projects • International interest in supporting such initiatives • Existing projects, know-how and guidelines from South Africa that could be shared across the region (particularly at local government level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not many producers of energy appliances in Africa - limited to a few countries and to domestic market • Limited existing experience in sustainable building applications in Africa • Significant requirement for capacity building and technical skills transfer across Africa • Political support will be essential to ensure sustainable development in the building sector

Existing initiatives in Africa

Name of the Ecolabel	International/ Regional	African Initiatives
NATIONAL INITIATIVES		
<p>Tunisian national Ecolabelling scheme</p> 	<p>National in Tunisia since 2004</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated by International Centre of Environmental Technologies of Tunisia (CITET) • ISO Type I eco-label (voluntary scheme) • Technical studies and contribution from national and international experts • Legal, regulatory, and institutional framework as well as criteria development • Focus on products relevant to EU markets (stringent requirements) • Encourage manufacturers to produce goods with less pollutant
<p>South African national environmental endorsement scheme – Indalo Yethu</p> 	<p>National (under development in 2007) (www.indaloyethu.co.za)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Environmental Awareness Campaign • Government initiated, independent organization • In process of developing a national environmental endorsement scheme and brand

3. THE NEED FOR AN AFRICAN ECOLABELLING MECHANISM

3.1 Why Ecolabelling for Africa?

The development and marketing of environmentally preferable products (EPPs) is a key tool to support the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. It is also a growing area of opportunity in global trade and consumerism. However, this could be either an opportunity or an obstacle for African products depending on the level of preparedness by the region. Ecolabelling can be seen as an opportunity for Africa, not a threat, if implemented effectively. Africa, as a region, needs to develop a regional Ecolabelling mechanism in order to:¹⁷

- Expand market access to African products and increase its share in the global economy (including opening up domestic niche markets for these products/services)
- Enhance its progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by facilitating economic growth on a sustainable basis
- Demonstrate Africa's proactive engagement in emerging environmental markets and promote the branding of Africa ("Being part of the solution rather than part of the problem")
- Address the misperception and potential use of environmental considerations as technical barriers to trade
- Promote sustainable consumption within Africa and globally

The first meeting of the Marrakech Taskforce on Cooperation with Africa, which was held back-to-back with the Fourth African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP-4) identified the development of an African Ecolabelling scheme as a key opportunity for collaboration. It also links to a number of key priorities on the continent.

The Relevance of an African Ecolabelling Scheme to NEPAD

The proposed African Ecolabelling scheme supports the following principles and priorities of NEPAD:

- Regional co-operation and integration;
- Building the competitiveness of African countries and the continent;
- The Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) of NEPAD aims at improving Africa's trade-related capacity for market access and share in global trade;
- The Environmental initiative of NEPAD (2001) which aims to reduce poverty and environmental degradation and thereby ensure sustainable development on the African continent;
- Forging a new international partnership that changes the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world;
- Ensuring that all Partnerships with NEPAD are linked to the Millennium Development Goals and other agreed development goals and targets.

The Relevance of an African Ecolabelling Scheme to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
Ecolabelling in Africa can contribute to the achievement of the following MDGs:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

¹⁷ Report on the Regional Expert Meeting on Ecolabelling, Addis Ababa, 11-13 June.

The First Regional Expert Meeting on African Ecolabelling Scheme that was held in June 2007 agreed that Ecolabelling could be one of the useful tools to make African products competitive irrespective of destination

market. African industries, therefore, need to be actively engaged in Ecolabelling their products in order to:

- Benefit from growing market demand for environmentally preferable products (international & domestic)
- Maintain market positions and go into new market niches
- Increase profitability
- Meet requirements (policy, legislation, consumer demand) for sustainable business practices
- Satisfy the demand for sustainable products from consumers

In view of the various ecolabelling related initiatives that are currently being promoted in the region, the Regional Expert Meeting underlined that it would be more useful to focus on harmonization and accreditation of existing labelling systems in the first phase. This could lead to the development of an African ecolabelling as part of the NEPAD's initiative on Branding African products.

3.2 Key Issues for Africa

Many of the ecolabelling initiatives that are operating in the region face similar challenges and opportunities. The challenges in all sectors include lack of capacity, lack of technical expertise, minimal resources, minimal local certification organizations, long term commitment. Opportunities include an increasing interest internationally, role in improving livelihoods, and a significant resource base. The following table summarizes the key issues that need to be addressed for greater success of African Ecolabelling initiatives.

Summary of key issues for African Ecolabelling initiatives based on the presentations & discussions of the Regional Expert Meeting

Standards & Certification	Communication	Capacity Building	Markets	Institutional support	Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for standards harmonisation across the region – ARSO is in the process of working on this. • Developing national standards and then harmonisation to regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the benefits, existing support and lessons learnt from existing initiatives to stakeholders. • Provide consumers and businesses with opportunities for information sharing and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong need for additional capacity building in the region at all levels in all sectors • A useful model is for capacity building to stem from pilot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecolabelling is not a trade barrier if prepared for it, but will be if not. • Effective and appropriate marketing strategies are essential for the success of any eco-label. • Support in accessing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Ecolabelling scheme needs long-term political commitment & government support • This can be based on the role of Ecolabelling in addressing existing priorities and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential to secure long-term financial support from relevant institutions for the proposed activities within the African Ecolabelling scheme. • Continued funding would rely on regular

Standards & Certification	Communication	Capacity Building	Markets	Institutional support	Funding
<p>level helps to build confidence and build capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of local certification and inspection capacity for standards is a critical bottleneck Reliance upon both foreign standards and certifying bodies is a major constraint Ways to reduce the high cost of certification in all sectors need to be addressed. Efforts needed to increase availability of good African-based certification bodies. 	<p>networking on Ecolabelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure continuity by building up knowledge & capacity over time Provide window for communication and access to African expertise and best practice 	<p>projects as practical learning ground.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is significant capacity within the region that could be linked up to existing and new programmes 	<p>international markets is also required, particularly for SMEs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private sector value chains are beneficial in accessing markets A domestic market could strengthen Ecolabelling initiatives in international markets, but each market has different dynamics to consider. Can take time to respond to new ecolabels – need to be well 	<p>policies for the region – particularly the MDGs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional capacity building is crucial in every aspect – done step-by-step with a clear focus Institutional setting requires – owner, decision maker and operational 	<p>reviews of measured economic, environmental, and social benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited individual budgets of different initiatives can be leveraged by synergising projects and sharing resources for overall better value

3.3 Conclusions & Recommendations of the Expert Meeting

The Regional Expert Meeting on the African Ecolabelling Scheme that was held from 11-13 June at the United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia adopted the following 10 points of conclusion and recommendation after deliberating on the Regional Assessment report prepared by the consultants and based on the outcomes from the parallel working groups deliberation.

1. The development of an African Ecolabelling scheme would make significant contribution to improved access to increasingly sophisticated markets while also enhancing the Region's ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
2. The political ownership & guidance of the African Union (AU) in the development and regional implementation of the Regional Ecolabelling mechanism is vital for the success of the initiative
3. The development of the African Ecolabelling Scheme has to be responsive to the priorities of the AU/NEPAD initiatives
4. Effort needs to be made in order to establish the Regional Ecolabelling Scheme as part of the Regions' development agenda by working through existing structures of the AU such as AMCEN, CAMI & CAMT
5. In view of the various existing ecolabelling initiatives that are operating in the region, the initial focus of the regional scheme has to be on adaptation, validation, harmonization and facilitation of existing Ecolabelling initiatives with the possibility of initiating new ones for specific product areas as required
6. Existing global and regional coordination mechanisms such as the Marrakech Taskforce on Cooperation with Africa and the UN ITMA cluster in support of AU/NEPAD need to be used to promote partnerships
7. The mechanism needs to ensure the active engagement and participation of business communities, consumer organizations and other relevant stakeholders
8. Existing capacities on standardization, certification and cleaner production need to be enhanced and effectively utilized in order to provide cost effective support programmes for the effective implementation of the mechanism
9. It is proposed to establish a African Working Group in which those institutions that are active in ecolabelling activities in the region could participate and contribute to the further development of the scheme
10. The AU in partnership with UNEP and UNECA is called upon to provide the required strategic leadership and guidance for the further development and implementation of the mechanism (based on their respective comparative advantages)

3.4 Some issues of considerations

The Regional Expert Meeting also identified some of the practical issues that need to be considered in the development of the African Ecolabelling Scheme which include the following.

1. The aim of the proposed African Ecolabelling scheme should be to facilitate the regional cooperation process so that Africa can benefit from Ecolabelling and contain potential challenges.
2. The African Ecolabelling scheme will be lead by international policy and market demands rather than domestic ones. In Europe, Ecolabelling is not a development policy instrument but a standard setting instrument. There is a need to recognize that most of the Ecolabelling projects in Africa are development issues.
3. The African Ecolabelling scheme will need strong management agencies to ensure all aspects are optimally designed and operated as well as a strong institutional setting to ensure long-term success.
4. The strategy for the development of such a scheme would be optimised if developed on a sectoral basis rather than as an overall initiative for all sectors.
5. The initiatives already in place were dictated by the market conditions. It will be necessary to evaluate

the effectiveness of existing sectoral initiatives and develop sectoral strategies to facilitate uptake on a regional level.

6. There is a need to provide technical assistance for manufacturers and service providers who will seek certification to ensure they can reach compliance with established criteria.
7. There is a need to contribute to the design of Ecolabelling programmes and accompanying private and public policies that respond to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and developing country needs and conditions, including 'phased approaches' to the introduction of standards, technical equivalence agreements and lower-cost conformity assessment and certification services.
8. Partnerships with environmental technology centres as well as cleaner production institutions will help build special programmes for Ecolabelling capacity building. They could be tailored toward local specific needs as well as potential collaboration.



