



The newsletter of the UNEP Project
 “Enabling developing countries to seize
 eco-labeling opportunities”

January—December 2009

About the project



The “Enabling developing countries to seize eco-label opportunities” project is implemented by UNEP and co-funded by the European Commission and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. It has the objective of promoting eco-labelling in Brazil, China, India, Kenya, Mexico and South Africa. Through technical assistance and capacity building for a wide range of national stakeholders, the project helps SMEs in these

countries get their products awarded with the European eco-label”, selected for this project through market assessment studies, and works with governments to promote eco-labels through supporting policy tools and measures. Eco-labels are voluntary market-based tools that provide third-party certified information about environmental credentials of product and services. They use Life Cycle thinking to assess the significant environmental impacts caused by products or

services throughout their lifespan. Eco-labels are increasingly popular in European and other western countries, both among institutional buyers, business to business and household consumers, and have the objective of promoting the production and consumption of greener products.

Due to the lack of information, expertise, technology, and resources, emerging countries have not seized the opportunities that eco-labels can provide; consequently often perceiving them as trade barriers when trying to export non-certified products into developed countries where these measurements are required. Having this problem in focus and the need to enhance the development, trade and environmental linkages, the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Branch of the

Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP/DTIE) has launched this four-year project. The industries selected for this project are television manufacturing in China, textile in India and South Africa, footwear in Mexico, Kenya and Ethiopia and pulp and paper in Brazil.

The project also aims at developing a roadmap in the direction of greater collaboration among eco-labeling schemes. This should contribute to increasing reliability of eco-labels as a marketing instrument and supporting efforts towards the simplification of the ‘eco-labeling universe’, which will eventually benefit both producers and consumers.

In this issue, you will find major updates about the project from the year 2009.

Eco-labels are voluntary market-based multi-criteria third-party certified information tools



Our project partners and associates



The project is carried out with funding from the European Union and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany) in cooperation with InWent

Eco-labelling workshop in Coimbatore, 27 July 2009



India, as one of the participating countries of the project, has an active textile industry that has taken a lot of interest in the project. Following the recommendations made at the national workshop in July 2008 and the Textile Industry Conference in January 2009,

where UNEP presented its work on eco-labelling, CUTS International, the project national coordinator in India, in collaboration with South India Textile Research Association (SITRA) organized an additional workshop in Coimbatore on 27 July 2009. Since the project aims at

supporting Indian textile industries in attaining the EU Eco-label for their products, Tirupur, with its mostly SME-based textile cluster, provided a convenient location to reach out directly to companies.

The workshop brought together 30-40 participants from industry/research laboratories, as well as media. Bas de Leeuw of UNEP chaired the meeting and presented a ‘setting the scene’ speech on the project, in particular, focusing on the training and technical assistance programme that will be launched in India in 2010. He also presented the EU Flower and moderated a summarizing ‘question and answer’ group session. Participants

demonstrated much interest, especially for specific information on price, procedures, expected market share, differences with other labels, etc. In addition, there were speakers from textile associations and national laboratories associated with the manufacturing of textiles.

The meeting delivered the needed visibility for the project, and gave the opportunity to ‘test’ the information needs well before the ‘train the trainers’ workshop held in Bonn, September 2009.



Training of Trainers ‘Eco-labelling: what it is and how to do it’ InWEnt, HQ Bonn, Germany, 14-17 September 2009

The Training of Trainers was a key activity of the project that set the stage for capacity-building and technical assistance in the project target countries China, India, Kenya/Ethiopia, South Africa, Brazil and Mexico. The event took place in Bonn, Germany on 14 – 17 September 2009 at the premises of the InWEnt HQ and gathered national and international experts from the participating countries.

The objectives of the training were to improve the understanding of the eco-labelling concept, its rationale, policy and operational set-up and key factors for its effectiveness on the example of the EU eco-label. The course of the training was divided into 4 core Modules: (1) theory of eco-labelling with an introduction to the EU flower, including the EU policy institutional context; (2) technical requirements for each product category selected by countries for the project; (3) eco-

marketing; and (4) role of government and civil society in promoting eco-labelling. The training applied an interactive approach including practical exercises based on role play as well as an additional session, where case studies were reviewed and companies shared their experiences regarding their products’ certification with the EU Flower. These companies were two textile manufacturers: Thong Thai Textile from Thailand and RJ Knitwear Limited from India – both from developing countries, which was particularly interesting to the training participants in view of similarity of context and challenges. Moreover, a representative from SONY Europe talked about their example of eco-labelling a TV, thus providing the perspective of a market leader and multinational company. The trainers involved in the event were experts of international recognition that move the eco-

labelling process in the world including John Polak, a former chairman of the Global Eco-labelling Network, Ben Casper, head of the EU Eco-labelling at the EC, and other technical experts who participate in the criteria development and marketing of the eco-label in Europe. Together they produced a training package containing all the useful information to anyone interested in the subject. It also contains a trainer’s kit with tips on how to prepare a similar training event. The kit will later be adapted to an e-learning tool and made available as a self-learning course on InWEnt e-learning platform. InWEnt is the global capacity-building institution affiliated with the German government and is specialized in vocational training for specialists from developing countries.

The trainees are now expected to adapt the material to their own industry and country

specifics and deliver similar trainings directly to industries and governments. They should be able to assess the technical adaptation required by industries, assist companies in the target countries to handle the application process for the certification with the European Union eco-label and successfully market such products. Finally government representatives in the target countries will receive technical assistance on how to promote eco-labels with supporting policies.

The training package is available [here](#)

4th Steering Committee Meeting, 18 September 2009

Straight after the 'training of trainers' workshop, on September 18 2009 the 4th Steering Committee meeting took place at the InWent headquarters. The meeting served the purpose of updating everyone with the project progress both from UNEP's global perspective and at national levels by each project partners. The main issue discussed concerned the preparation of the

national trainings and issues to be followed up after the 'training of trainers'. Each project partner presented their approaches and ideas. Participants also discussed the roadmap towards greater cooperation among eco-labelling schemes. It was clarified that an expert paper needs to be produced as an output of this activity on why cooperation between different

eco-labelling schemes is needed and how and by whom it can be achieved. The process of strengthening cooperation among project partners, national eco-labelling schemes and others may be used as a case study to demonstrate the value of the process and draw the lessons. The minutes of the meeting can be found [here](#)



Participants engaged in various interactive activities at the Training of Trainers workshop

National highlights

Brazil

Regional Workshop on Eco-labeling, 4 December, Brasilia

The Secretary of Foreign Trade (SECEX) of the Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade (MDIC), the national coordinator of the UNEP eco-labelling project in Brazil, together with the Ministry of Environment (MMA) organized the regional multistakeholder meeting on eco-labelling on 4 December, 2009. It was attended by close to 100 participants from Brazil and representatives of the MERCOSUR region. The workshop's main objective was to expand the awareness to government officials, private sector business people and civil society about the importance of eco-labelling as a market instrument to raise the competitiveness of products of the country and Mercosur in the world's most demanding markets, such as the European Union.

The SECEX's intention is to create additional roads in

Brazil towards eco-labelling, by taking stock of the experience gained through the UNEP eco-labelling project. Initially, the aim is to develop expertise in Brazilian paper companies to comply with the EU Eco-label criteria for copy and graphic papers. In the workshop, the need to involve other sectors of the Brazilian industry in the process was stressed and emphasized for benefits of the Brazilian products in strategic markets. It was decided to form a national working group on eco-labeling that is coordinated by the Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The group is responsible for strengthening Brazil's own Eco-labelling Programme, identifying all the initiatives in Brazil related to eco-labeling and creating linkages under the umbrella of the Brazil's Eco-labeling Programme. In addition, a Regional Working Group on Eco-labeling will be created

under the coordination of Brazil's Ministry of Environment and representatives of Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile, under the SGT-6 (Working Group n° 6 of MERCOSUR that is responsible for considering environment issues in MERCOSUR).

The procurement law

Ministry of Environment (MMA) and the Ministry of Planning and Budget (MPOG) are in the process of revising the current law on public procurement (Lei n° 8.666/93) so as to include sustainability criteria in procurement of goods, services and public works. The Bill (PL No. 32/2007) is being considered by the Brazilian parliament and recommends that government agencies should acquire, preferably, goods and services environmentally sustainable or which cause less environmental impact.



Mexico

Within the UNEP Sustainable Public Procurement project implemented in Mexico, footwear sector was identified as one of the target industries under the five year programme. The Mexican Institute for Standardization and Certification is currently

developing the national eco-labelling scheme based on Type I label, which is expected to be launched in 2010 covering the following product groups: leather, printing paper, wooden furniture and cleaning products.



Annual Meeting of the Global Eco-labelling Network 17- 19 November 2009, Kobe Japan



The Japanese eco-label ‘Ecomark’ celebrated its 25th anniversary



Upcoming events:

National training workshops on eco-labelling, January-March 2010, Mexico, India, Brazil, South Africa, Kenya/ Ethiopia and China

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The Global Eco-labelling Network (GEN) is an international non-profit association composed of ISO Type I eco-labelling programmes from around the world. It was established in 1994 with the aim of promoting the use of eco-labelling and free movement of environmentally preferable products and services. GEN, currently consisting of 28 members, fosters cooperation between eco-labelling schemes and provides assistance with the development of eco-labels based on international standards.

GEN’s 15th annual general meeting took place in Kobe, Japan on 17-19 November

hosted by the Japan Environment Association, which is running the Japanese eco-labelling scheme ‘Ecomark’. The scheme celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. The meeting reviewed recent developments of eco-labels in Asian countries, focusing on good practices and lessons learned. Moreover, a program development workshop for GEN’s future was a part of the agenda to discuss effective ways of fundraising to promote GEN’s leading role to improve, promote and develop eco-labelling. Ms. Liazzat Rabbiosi of UNEP

participated in the meeting where the key objective of the project, ‘the Roadmap towards greater cooperation and mutual recognition between different eco-labelling schemes’, was presented and discussed. The outcomes of the group discussions on the Roadmap will be included in the discussion paper for developing a rational baseline on cooperation and mutual recognition with State-of-the-Art examples.

Next steps

From January to March 2010 a series of national workshops will take place in Mexico, India, South Africa, Brazil, Kenya/Ethiopia and China. In each country at least one workshop will be organized for company representatives to expand their knowledge of eco-labelling and technical adaptation required to meet the eco-label criteria for selected product category, marketing of the eco-labelled products and for governments to explain how they can

promote the use and effectiveness of eco-labelling with other supporting measures. The trainings will be organized by national partner-organizations and conducted by the national experts who attended the training of trainers. If you are interested in attending any of the national workshops, please contact us for further information

Following the workshops, companies, which will have

attended the trainings, will be invited to submit a short business proposal demonstrating their potential for getting the EU certification. On the basis of these proposals, up to 3 companies will be selected to receive technical and financial assistance in getting their products certified with the EU Flower through the UNEP project.

International partners and associates

- Capacity Building International (InWEnt)
- The Federal Environmental Agency, Germany (UBA)
- The Global Eco-labelling Network (GEN)

National partners and associates

- Foreign Trade Secretariat, Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade (SECEX) - Brazil
- Sino-Japan Friendship Environmental Protection Centre (EDC) - China
- Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) - India
- National Cleaner Production Centre (KNPCPC) - Kenya
- National Institute for Standards and Certification (INMC) – Mexico
- Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) through its National Cleaner Production Centre (SA NCPC) - South Africa