
Voluntary Standards for Sustainable Food Systems: Challenges and Opportunities

A Workshop of the FAO/UNEP Programme on Sustainable Food Systems
10-11 June 2013

Agenda

The FAO/UNEP joint programme is catalysing partnerships among United Nations agencies, other international agencies, governments, industry and civil society whose activities, together, can promote the necessary transition to sustainability.

An Agri-food Task Force (ATF) on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) has been established, comprised of representatives of Member States, United Nations agencies, the private sector and civil society, and clusters of activities are being designed in response to stakeholders' stated needs. In order to provide the members of the ATF with information for preparing the work of the various activity clusters, the FAO-UNEP Programme is organizing workshops on various technical issues.

As a topic in relation with all the activity clusters, a first workshop on voluntary standards for sustainability (VSS) will be organized on 10–11 June 2013 (one day and half), in the Iran room, at FAO headquarters, Rome. The aim of the workshop is to examine various types of standards and labels and to build upon lessons learned from concrete examples to identify issues and challenges to be addressed, discuss their potential contribution to improve sustainability of food systems, and propose measures in order to improve their effectiveness.

The workshop will try to answer five crucial questions that could facilitate the uptake and scaling-up of VSS: (1) how to make them work for farmers and small food producers; (2) how can VSS be used to enable green trade opportunities, particularly in agri-food products not currently using VSS; (3) how to make them work for consumers globally; (4) how to make it work for the private sector; and (5) what is the role for public actors.

Monday, 10 June 2013

09.30 – 10.00 Opening remarks
 FAO: Ren Wang, Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
 UNEP: Fanny Demassieux, Resource Efficiency Subprogramme Coordinator & Head, Responsible Consumption Unit, Division of

- Technology, Industry and Economics, United Nations Environment Programme
- 10.00 – 11.30 **SESSION 1: OVERVIEW OF VSS**
Chair: Roberto Azofeifa
- What are voluntary sustainability standards?
 - Definitions and meanings, diversity of standards
 - Targets and contribution to sustainable consumption and production
 - Comparison and assessments of voluntary sustainability standards through examples from partner projects
- 10.00 – 10.15 Nexus between private and public food standards: main issues and perspectives (Pilar Santacoloma, FAO, Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division).
- 10.15 – 10.30 Lessons from the past and the emergence of international guidelines on sustainability assessment of food and agriculture systems (Nadia El-Hage Scialabba, FAO, Department of Natural Resources)
- 10.30 – 10.45 Common metrics of sustainable food systems: issues and current developments in the livestock sector (Pierre Gerber, FAO, Livestock Information, Sector Analysis and Policy Branch)
- 10.45 – 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 – 11.45 Questions and Answers
- 11.45 – 13.00 **SESSION 2: LESSONS FROM THE FIRLD: PROJECTS RELATED TO FOOD VOLUNTARY STANDARDS**
Chair: Li Xiande
- Success stories, challenges and areas needing specific actions that should be undertaken at various levels
- 11.45 – 12.15 Lessons learned from field projects on voluntary standards (Pilar Santacoloma, Allison Loconto, Nadia Scialabba, Carmen Bullon, Emilie Vandecandelaere, Cora Dankers and Anne Sophie Poisot, FAO).
- 12.15 – 12.30 Stories behind quality labels around the Mediterranean countries (Annarita Antonelli, International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, CIHEAM-IAMB)
- 12.30 – 13.00 Questions and Answers
- 13.00 – 14.30 Lunch
- 14.30 – 15.30 **SESSION 3: HOW TO MAKE SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS WORK FOR FARMERS AND SMALL FOOD PRODUCERS**
Chair: Sávio Mendonça
- How to make voluntary standards inclusive and efficient (ensuring social and economic sustainability) for smallholders? What is needed to facilitate the implementation of these tools, especially how to make

- them accessible to farmers and small-scale food producers, including possibilities to facilitate mutual recognition of schemes?
- 14.40 – 14.45 Voluntary standards: impacting smallholders' market participation (Allison Loconto, FAO, Agribusiness Economist, Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division).
- 14.45 – 15.00 Geographical indications as a tool for sustainable food systems: importance of territorial approach (Emilie Vandecandelaere, FAO, Economic and Social Development Department. Food Safety Unit)
- 15.00 – 15.30 Questions and Answers
- 15.30 – 17.15 **SESSION 4: WHAT INTEREST AND ROLE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR**
Chair: Sávio Mendonça
- What are the incentives for the private sector stakeholders to come on board. Examples of use of these tools by private sector or initiatives by private sector to optimise their use
- 15.30 – 15.45 FAO's vision on how to engage the private sector (Annamaria Pastore, FAO, Office of Communications, Partnership and Advocacy).
- 15.45 – 16.00 Development and use of FAO guidelines of eco labelling of fish and aquaculture certification (Iddya Karunasagar, FAO, Products, Trade and Marketing Service)
- 16.00 – 16.15 Survey on (private) voluntary standards in the livestock sector (Irene Hoffmann, FAO, Animal Genetic Resources Branch)
- 16.15 – 16.30 Coffee break
- 16.30 – 16.45 Sustainable nutrition and consumer communication (Anne Roulin, Nestlé)
- 16.45 – 17.15 Questions and Answers
- 17.15 – 18.15 **SESSION 5: WHAT INTEREST AND ROLE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR**
Chair: Krishna Kumar Singh
- How to ensure the provision of reliable and valuable information to consumers in relation to the voluntary standards?
 - How to increase consumers' awareness and trust in voluntary standards and labels to foster more sustainable food consumption patterns?
- 17.15 – 17.30 PDOs' role in reassuring consumers: the "Parmigiano Reggiano Terremotato" (PR-T) case (Corrado Finardi, Coldiretti).
- 17.30 – 17.45 Voluntary standards and eco-labels as Information tools for consumers (Alexandre Meybeck, FAO, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department)
- 17.45 – 18.15 Questions and Answers

Tuesday, 11 June 2013

- 9.30 – 10.45 **SESSION 6: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC ACTORS?**
 Chair: Unati Speirs
- Which role public (international and national) actors can potentially play in improving governance (two main of its principles transparency and participation) in the standards setting process
 - What can public actors do to improve impacts of voluntary standards? The enabling conditions necessary to allow voluntary sustainability standards to work and to facilitate stakeholders' engagement
- 9.30 – 9.45 How can voluntary sustainability standards play a role in South–South food commodity supply chains? The case of the rice sector (James Lomax, UNEP).
- 9.45 – 10.00 Ongoing experiences in Costa Rica: the Ecological Blue Flag Program (Roberto Azofeifa, Ministry of Agriculture, Costa Rica)
- 10.00 – 10.15 Sustainable public procurement and sustainability standards: challenges and strategies (Norma Tregurtha, ISEAL)
- 10.15 – 10.30 Roles of public actors in the voluntary standards (Dominique Barjolle, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL and Emilie Vandecandelaere, FAO)
- 10.30 – 10.45 Questions and Answers
- 10.45 – 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 – 12.30 Discussions on priority actions for sustainable food systems
 Chair: Erizal Jamal
- 12.30 – 12.45 Conclusions