ENVIRONMENTAL LABELLING: WHO PAYS ATTENTION?

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EU ECOLABEL

Simple logo: the “Eurodaisy”
- voluntary Type I label
- applies throughout EU

Two objectives:

1. “Benchmarking” – to guide and encourage development of environmentally sound products

2. Consumer Information – objective identification of products and services whose environmental performance goes beyond compliance with regulations

but it has been “upstaged” by other labels notably the “Nordic Swan”
AGGREGATION OF CRITERIA FOR ECOLABELLING

Impact 1

Technology 1

Criterion 1

Impact 2

Technology 2

Criterion 2
Motivation for Carbon Labelling

• January 2007: Initiatives by major retailers

• Advised to standardise “carbon footprinting” first (Summer 2007)

• Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) plus
  British Standards Institution (BSI) plus
  Carbon Trust
  combined to produce a standard approach, mandatory for labels on consumer products

• Accompanied by Guidance on Reduction and Communication
“PAS” – Publicly Available Specification

• PAS 2050 was published on 29 October, 2008.

• Accompanied by Guidance on Reduction and Communication

• Revised specification published in September 2011
Guide to PAS 2050

Three levels of verification:

a) Independent third party certification... by a certification body accredited by an internationally recognised accreditation body (e.g. UK Accreditation Service, UKAS).

b) Other party verification... by a non-accredited third party to demonstrate compliance with recognised standards.

c) Self-certification, to BS/EN/ISO 14021
Independent certification is highly encouraged when companies want to communicate the carbon footprint publicly (and is mandatory if you want to be recognised by the Carbon Trust).

What does this mean in practice?
No more cowboy consultants
Key PAS requirements

• **Scope of emissions**
  – All GHGs specified by IPCC 2007 (Phys.Sci., Ch 2, Table 2.14)

• **GHG assessment basis**
  – 100 year GWP for specified emissions

• **Extent of the life cycle**
  – Whole life cycle (process-based, attributional), including use phase
    • Use phase requires use profile to be established and made available

• **Boundaries**
  – Establishes boundary criteria for the assessment
  – Where available, Product Category Rules (ISO 14025) to be used

• **Offsetting**
  – Does not allow offsets to be included in the assessment
Types of Life Cycle Assessment

ATTRIBUTIONAL
- “Accounting”
- Description of existing system with all activities leading up to product or service

CONSEQUENTIAL
- “Change-oriented”
- Considers possible consequences of changes in demand or product system;
  e.g. consequential land-use change
Brazil is now the largest exporter of beef.
- Beef exports come from established pasture land in Southern Brazil.
- On a strictly attributional basis, the “carbon footprint” is 25-30kgs carbon dioxide per kg.
  (cf. about 20kgs for European pasture-fed beef)

*but*
- The expansion in production which has enabled the growth in exports has come almost completely from the Northern States (the “Legal Amazonas”)
- The amortised carbon releases for land converted to pasture from forest raise the “carbon footprint” for this beef to 800+ kgs per kg....
BRAZILIAN BEEF PRODUCTION – SCHEMATIC

Annual beef production vs. Time

- Total
- Established pasture land
- Domestic Consumption
BUSINESS IMPACT

Take-up by major retailers
   e.g. Tesco - ???

and some suppliers
   e.g. Pepsico (inc. Walker’s crisps)

Response by suppliers, notably food and beverages:
   e.g. New Zealand
       Thailand

Influence on other organisations:
   e.g. Wal-Mart
       The Sustainability Consortium
But has it directly affected consumer purchasing?

See:


See also: