The 10YFP Programme on Consumer Information

www.unep.org/10yfp/consumer

The 10YFP Consumer Information Programme (CIP) serves as a global platform to support the provision of quality information on goods and services, and the identification and implementation of the most effective strategies to engage consumers in sustainable consumption. It empowers and raises the profile of relevant policies, strategies, projects as well as initiatives and partnerships, building synergies and cooperation between different stakeholders to leverage resources towards mutual goals.

Objectives of the Programme

1) Improving availability, accessibility and quality of consumer information to create a basis for the provision of credible information.
2) Driving change in government and business to ensure that the framework conditions are provided to support best practices in relation to consumer information.
3) Enhancing communication to drive behavioural change and ensure the transition from being informed to taking action.

What is Consumer Information for Sustainable Consumption?

Consumer information encompasses tools such as ecolabels, voluntary standards, marketing claims and life cycle approaches which provide information on the impacts of goods and services over their lifetime, including the end-of-life. These tools aim to guide consumers in their daily purchasing decisions so that they can make informed choices for sustainable goods and services.

What is the 10YFP?

The 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) is a concrete and operational outcome of Rio+20. The 10YFP is a global framework that enhances international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards SCP in both developed and developing countries. It provides capacity building and technical & financial assistance to developing countries, and encourages innovation and cooperation among all countries and stakeholders. The 10YFP has five initial programs, and the CIP programme is the second to be launched, after the SPP Programme. UNEP serves as the Secretariat of the 10YFP and administers the Trust Fund.

Why a 10YFP Programme on Consumer Information?

Research indicates that the demand for sustainable goods and services is high and growing, but consumers often remain unable to make informed choices. The main reasons for this include the lack of transparency, complete information, and the proliferation of labels and standards, which complicate the comparison of information when purchasing goods and services*.

Empowering consumers, businesses, retailers and governments

The 10YFP Consumer Information Programme (CIP) facilitates access to practical and comprehensive information to guide and support consumers’ choices for sustainable products through the provision of accessible, reliable and verifiable information based on a life cycle approach. To achieve this objective, the CIP is engaging a wide range of stakeholders including consumer associations, businesses, retailers and governments in a consultative process for joint action. This includes the following:

- **Consumers** to ensure that relevant, transparent and reliable information on the sustainability of goods and services is provided to facilitate purchasing decisions.
- **Businesses** to use consumer information tools to identify and reduce the negative impacts of their goods and services on the environment and workers over their entire supply chain.
- **Retailers** to voluntarily commit themselves to promoting more sustainable products, providing better information to consumers and reducing environmental and social impacts over their supply chains.
- **Governments** to stimulate the development of operating markets for sustainable products, and the use of information tools including labels and other incentives that can foster sustainable consumption.

By exchanging and learning from each other, businesses, retailers and governments can scale up effective practices to address today’s environmental, social and economic challenges.

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**Work areas of the Consumer Information Programme**

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<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>(1) Improve availability, accessibility and quality of consumer information</th>
<th>(2) Drive Change in Business and Government</th>
<th>(3) Enhance Communication to Drive Behavioural Change</th>
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<td>WORK AREAS</td>
<td>(1a) Improve availability, accessibility and credibility of consumer information through principles &amp; guidelines</td>
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<td>(3a) Stimulate inter-operability of consumer information tools</td>
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<td>(1b) Address data gaps and quality</td>
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<td>(1c) Improve methodologies of key sustainability impact indicators</td>
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**Life Cycle Approach to Enhance the Quality of Information**

Life cycle approach is crucial to developing reliable information considering environmental, social and economic impacts along the life cycle of goods and services. It implies the understanding that materials are extracted from the earth, converted into process materials, combined with other materials to make parts, assembled into a finished product, shipped to customers who use the products and finally, the products are disposed of in some fashion. Along that value chain, energy and other natural, social and economic resources are used, waste generated, and the related impacts, both positive and negative, are distributed across societies to varying degrees around the globe.
The number of ecolabels and voluntary standards is growing across the globe in all sectors. This proliferation has resulted in a drive for greater collaboration between stakeholders to help reduce confusion within industry and consumers. In past years, efforts have been initiated to increase collaboration among the different labels schemes, including harmonization of labels, which promotes the convergence toward uniform sustainability criteria and improved interoperability of information. This, in turn, supports the use of information based on the same metrics and structure for sustainability criteria that can be tailored to specific countries and users groups.

Structure of the 10YFP Consumer Information Programme

The CIP is co-led by Germany through the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety; Indonesia, through the Ministry of Environment; and Consumers International.

A Multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) – comprising governments and institutions – oversees the programme’s coordination and implementation. As of June 20th 2014 members of the MAC include: Governments: Burkina Faso, France, Jordan, Peru and the United Kingdom; Inter-governmental organizations: European Commission; International organizations: International Network of Product Sustainability Initiatives (INPSI), International Trade Centre (ITC) and UNEP/SETAC Life cycle Initiative (LCI); NGOs, Networks and Private Sector: AKATU Institute, Caribbean Consumer Council, Centro Tecnológico para la Sustentabilidad, Consumer Education Trust (CONSENT), Green Purchasing Network (GPN, Japan), International POP Elimination Network (IPEN), ISEAL, Pick and Pay and Sustainability Consortium.

In addition to the MAC members, more than 30 partners across the world have joined the Programme as of June 20th 2014. They will contribute, participate and benefit from various activities of the programme, including workshops, trainings, policy tools, information sharing on best practices and lessons learned.

Harmonization of Ecolabels and Interoperability of Information

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Why should I join?
- Access a broad network of organizations and individuals working together on providing quality and effective consumer information.
- Share your experiences and/or resources and learn from others.
- Scale up and replicate best practices in your country and region.
- Apply for financial support for consumer information activities in developing countries through the 10YFP Trust Fund.

How can I get involved?
The 10YFP Consumer Information Programme (CIP) is open to organizations and individual experts interested in joining a collaborative platform to support activities that relate to consumer information and the objectives of the CIP. Download the application form today at www.unep.org/10yfp/consumer

Contact us: 10YFP CIP Coordinating Desk
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Register your consumer information activities and get the latest news on the CIP at the Global SCP Clearinghouse: http://www.scpclearinghouse.org

New Communication Channels and Smart Technologies
Consumers‘ habits in today’s world have changed. They are purchasing online, relying on reviews given by other consumers, and using smartphone applications including bar code applications to access sustainability information of products. Using new channels for effective communication is key to reaching consumers and achieving a market transformation towards sustainable consumption. The CIP will evaluate emerging communication channels with the aim of understanding the conditions for success and potential for scaling up effective practices.

Understanding Purchasing Decisions
Customers are facing complex purchasing decisions on a daily basis. They are offered various choices to fulfill the same function, and have to factor in many criteria, including the quality of the products, marketing claims, labels and financial considerations. At the same time, consumers are greatly influenced by other people and social norms. Better understanding how consumers are making decisions is crucial in designing effective policy in the area of consumer information. Behavioural science will assist in understanding what moves a consumer from being informed to taking action. This will be an important consideration in designing and implementing more impactful information strategies and will be a feature of the programme.

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