



Chapter

Quality and Sustainability Standards

Introduction



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Labels and acronyms such as organic, MSC and FSC show that products come from sustainable sources. Many of these schemes are now recognised around the world. Their number is steadily increasing with standards for products, manufacturing processes, forest management, biomass cultivation and adaptation to climate change. However, this diversity is confusing, especially as some of the standards vary considerably in scope.

Nowadays, it is hard to imagine the food industry without standards. Their main purpose is to ensure food quality and safety. One of the factors which has contributed to their development is growing public awareness; another is the increasingly globalisation of the food sector, which puts more pressure on governments, the food industry and producers to take action.

The certification and standards systems which have developed in recent decades are a useful tool in embedding sustainability in supply and value chains. Governments are increasingly using this tool to implement their own policies, thus creating synergies between public and private initiatives.

However, government institutions, industry and consumers are now confronted with a plethora of standards which deal with the environmental and economic dimensions of production to varying extents. With so many schemes available, their individual quality and added value are often difficult to assess. GIZ is therefore developing comprehensive information tools to promote comparability between existing standards and to facilitate benchmarking. We also advise our partners on ways of improving existing standards, thus helping to prevent even more schemes from being introduced into the market.

Our advisory services focus on quality assurance and the thematic enhancement of existing schemes. This includes recognition of private codes of practice in the implementation of statutory provisions (i.e. co-regulation). For example, we support the development of guidelines which aim to ensure that the standards systems put in place are of good quality. We have also developed a module to support the adaptation of agriculture to climate change. We advise governments on developing and organising a national system of testing and inspection laboratories in the field of food safety and quality assurance. And we advise producers and the food processing industry on international food safety and quality standards.



We also produce information materials which offer deeper insights into various topics of relevance to quality and sustainability standards. Our contact person will be pleased to assist you further.

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