

International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment

Call for Papers for a Special Issue: The Future of Ecolabels



One of the relevant market failures that may limit consumers' choice in favour of green products is represented by the so-called 'information asymmetries' in transactions, in different phases of the value chain, when economic agents do not have information about the environmental benefits enabled by their purchasing decisions. In particular, if it is costly and time consuming for consumers to acquire that information, this asymmetry may lead to greener products not being purchased on the market. This problem is especially caused by misleading claims on environmental performance of products on the final market, which clearly prevents consumers from fully deploying their potential in terms of green product demand.

Ecolabels, as voluntary environmental and consumer policy instrument, are conceived to overcome this problem and they build an integral part of the European framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). They interact with and complement other instruments, such as energy labelling, ecodesign and green public procurement by setting high environmental standards to encourage the market to develop more sustainable products. The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), which is an association of leading ecolabelling organizations worldwide, boosts 31 member organizations in 51 territories and countries with more than 300,000 certified products worldwide¹. However, ecolabels have been facing severe challenges in implementing high sustainability standards in the globalized and widely ramified value chains. As the products are seldom produced solely for national markets and the industry requires internationally harmonized standards to promote trade and commerce, there is an imminent need of strengthening the cooperation among ecolabels worldwide. Apart from a coherent international positioning of ecolabels and undertaking Mutual Recognition Agreements, it is important that ecolabels address the global challenges together by developing common criteria as well as mutual verification and certification mechanisms.

Against this background, the German Environment Agency (UBA), the Oeko-Institute, adelphi consult GmbH and Institute for Research on Energy and Environmental Economics and Policy (IEFE) of Bocconi University are promoting and launching the present call for contributions. The call aims to identify and describe the key challenges facing ecolabels, such as defining criteria to deal with critical raw materials, chain-of-custody and traceability of raw material value chains, integration of social criteria and human rights aspects in ecolabels, addressing issues of product durability and obsolescence and implementing a harmonized performance and impact measurement system for ecolabels.

¹ GEN Annual Report 2015, available at: <https://www.globalecolabelling.net/assets/Uploads/GEN-AR-2015-art-FINAL.pdf>; accessed on 10.08.2017

Therefore, the special issue intends to gather contributions concerning theoretical background, practical implementation and lessons learned about Ecolabels applied in both policies and corporate strategies. Specifically, guest editors encourage submissions of original research articles that report significant research contributions and industry and/or company case-studies covering topics including, but not limited to:

- integration of supply chain management and critical raw materials into ecolabels
- integration of social aspects and human rights aspects into ecolabels
- integration of aspects of circular economy into ecolabels
- performance measurement of ecolabels
- integration of footprint approaches into ecolabels
- innovative consumer research to promote ecolabel products

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Guidelines for submission:

All submitted papers must contain only original work, which has not been published by, has been submitted to or is currently under review for any other journal.

Detailed author guidelines are available at the following link:

<http://www.springer.com/environment/journal/11367>

Manuscripts should be submitted via this link:

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/jlca/default.aspx>

Key Dates

Call for papers issued March 2018

Full paper submission deadline: **June 30th, 2018**

Final decision notification: **October 15th, 2018**

Publication: **March, 2019**

The Journal

The [International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment](#) (Int J Life Cycle Assess) is the first journal devoted entirely to Life Cycle Assessment and closely related methods. LCA has become a recognized instrument to assess the ecological burdens and impacts throughout the consecutive and interlinked stages of a product system, from raw material acquisition or generation from natural resources, through production and use to final disposal. The Int J Life Cycle Assess is a forum for scientists developing LCA and LCM (Life Cycle Management); LCA and LCM practitioners; managers concerned with environmental aspects of products; governmental environmental agencies responsible for product quality; scientific and industrial societies involved in LCA development, and ecological institutions and bodies.



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