
Global Standard Setting-Scheme for Products Derived from Natural Resources (NRS)

Project

Duration

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The discussion paper "Options to develop a Global Standard-Setting Scheme for products derived from Natural Resources (NRS)" developed by Ecologic with support of WWF and FSC outlines different options to design an international standard whose implementation would equitably, transparently and measurably reduce the key social and environmental impacts of extraction or production of products derived from natural resources. The current discussions and activities on how best to implement sustainable bioenergy standards are seen as a window of opportunity for the development of a respective Global Standard-Setting Scheme. The discussion paper is available for download.

The world's natural resources face increasing pressure due to rapid population and economic growth. Ensuring sustainable use of natural resources will require on the one hand a reduction in resource use, and on the other the development of sustainability benchmarks that consider social and environmental aspects in the management of natural resources and their derived products.

Against the background of the rapid growth and proliferation in the range of environmental and social standard-setting schemes for different natural resources, this paper looks at the potentials, but also the challenges, of combining those different approaches under one Global Standard-Setting Scheme. Since these standards are generally voluntary processes, and have a common need to agree on principles, criteria and (measurable) indicators for the key environmental and social issues, such a global scheme could build on similarities and synergies between these different standards. The international discussions on the introduction of sustainability standards for bioenergy could be a promoter for the development of a respective Global Standard-Setting Scheme. Since globally grown bioenergy feedstocks cover a wide range of products which are not necessarily used exclusively for energy purposes, the discussion on standards for these products bears potentials for an even broader approach which would integrate a wide range of products derived from natural resources into one system.

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