Certification and Verification in the Artisan Sector
Programs and Proposals for Impact and Scale
Panelists

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Moderated by: Karen Gibbs
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What are the key questions and considerations for creating new or evaluating existing certification systems?
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Scope

What does the certification do and not do?

Lack of recognition/awareness and confusion around what “sustainable fishing” entails
Transparency

Is information clearly communicated and publicly available?

From Consumer Reports’ www.greenerchoices.org
Accessibility

How do you create a system that is accessible to a range of businesses?
Governance

How do you ensure third-party independence when the certification agency is supported by brands?

Handles compliance and audits for Fair Trade USA, MSC, FSC, and more…
• Financial independence
• Fee-for-service independent of volume
• Conflict of interest policy and structure

The New York Times
The groups claim that the certification panel, far from being independent of the industry it supposedly oversees, as required by F.T.C. guidelines, is in fact a body created by and dominated by timber companies. S.F.I. officials deny the allegations.

Compliance

How do you create a compliance system that is trustworthy?

• Self Assessment
• Peer visit
• Monitoring audit
• What happens to those found in violation?
Monitoring

How do you create a monitoring system that is not too costly or onerous?

- Self Assessment: every 2 years, audit every 2-6 years depending on the risk category, peer visits every 2-6 years depending on the risk category
- 12 fee-based professional agencies perform analysis
- Audited annually
- Logo and labels are free with certification
- Audits performed every three years by an independent agency
- Application with fee, document request and onsite audit, evaluation audits in year 0, 3, 6, and surveillance audit year 1-2 and 4-5

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304299304577349731690704306.html
Fee Structure

Audit Fees every six years of estimated $3,000 +, and nominal fees every three years

Annual membership fees to the CCIC and a one-time licensing fee, based on the company's gross annual sales, required for use of the trademarked logo ($500 to $4,500).

http://www.greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/label.cfm?LabelID=239
Consumer Value

Measurable/observable return on investment or personal benefits

Consumer education, brand awareness and outreach are key

Point of sale signage reinforces certification message
Consumers seem to be most familiar with seals sponsored by federal agencies and that represent frequently purchased items

- Energy Star (87%), Recycling (89%) and USDA Organic (62%)

Consumers seem to be least familiar with seals sponsored by non-governmental organizations and infrequent purchase

- Cruelty-free/Leaping Bunny (11%), Marine Stewardship Council (11%) and Forest Stewardship Council (6%)

Consumer Awareness

Consumers seem to be least familiar with seals sponsored by non-governmental organizations and infrequent purchase

- Cruelty-free/Leaping Bunny (11%), Marine Stewardship Council (11%) and Forest Stewardship Council (6%)

- Only 37% of companies who are certified license and use the logo
- Competing, less strict standards
- Major cosmetic producers are not eligible for certification
- Competing Standards: Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Rainforest Alliance
- Reluctance towards use (Home Depot & IKEA)
- Infrequency of purchase