

ECOLABELING IN UKRAINE

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In the contemporary market there numerous products are imprinted as “environmentally friendly”, “ecologically clean” or, at least, with prefix eco- and bio- on them. By means of such methods, the producers posit goods as more preferable and safe for consumer’s health. Though the labeling and public informing is widely spread throughout the developed countries, tendencies of this process are only at the very first stages in Ukraine. This process considered to be very favorable and important for both consumers and producers. Ecolabeling is the information that producers give to the consumers for motivating them to buy their products, and due to this they posit themselves to be the leaders at the area of environmental protection.

The ecolabeling process has started since 1998 as the result of the consultations for enterprises, consumers and public environmental organizations. It is controlled by the ISO 14 021 and the practical applications of the international management systems nowadays (Dmitriev). The ISO standard has the definition of the term product, and it includes the services, materials, technical and program providing as the final supply for the consumers.

The ecolabeling can be adopted by the enterprise or service on the voluntary basis. Though, weighing all the positive moments and benefits of it, our country needs a foundation of the national labeling system for all products on the market.

According to the article by Gerasimova, the possibility to select the product among its analogues and substitutes is among the general demands for the ecolabeling. It also covers any claim about environmental nature of what is being offered at the point of sale (“Green Claim Code”). Under the Code, the claim should “be clear, accurate, and capable of being supported by scientific evidence, relevant to that particular product or service, and clear about what aspect it refers to, significant in terms of the overall impact during the product life cycle, open, explicit about symbols, written in plain language, legal, decent, honest and truthful.”

Though the ecolabeling has the recommendation and volunteer character, the label confirms that the product is really recommended by the international legislation. The product can be labeled by the independent side: the labeling organization, private company or the government organization, and get the license for production; although, the producers have the right to be self-labeled. Another thing is that the trust for these labels should be proved by the reports of the companies about the changes they applied to make their production safer, cleaner and environmentally friendly.

“Green Claim Code” advises the labels to be truthful and precise. It means that the producer have to be ready to give the necessary information to prove his products’ imprints. The exaggeration of information’ meaning is completely prohibited. The usage of the words and terms like sustainable development, green, harmless, wasteless, environmentally friendly, for Earth, nature, environment should be avoided (“Ecolabeling”). The analysis of the contemporary situation of the ecolabeling shows that the great amount of labels breaks that rules, and an example of uncontrolled labeling process can be observed. In most cases it is not supported by actual actions for the environment and health care from the enterprises.

The specific German ecolabeling imprint Green Dot on a piece of product signals that the manufacturer of the packaging has paid a license fee for the collection, sorting, and recycling of the wastes (Joan Sylvain, [Evale Colleen](#)). Ukraine can develop its own label to sing the products’ energy efficiency, recycling possibility, or other options. Thus, the creation of the national ecolabel sign will improve the situation of the global resource overuse problem and stimulate the enterprises to be environmentally friendly, even getting benefits from this (Liga Business Inform).

The main problems with ecolabeling are connected with its uncontrolled usage; though, the most trustworthy have to be the products, certified by the third side, in most cases the non-governmental organization. In Ukraine the ecological non-governmental organization *Zhyva Planeta (Living Planet)* gives the certificates for products (Berzina).

The certified products may be somewhat costly than the ordinary ones. But the consumers would eagerly buy the products even with surplus, if they will know about their safety. So, Todd Shenk in his article about the techniques of ad firms specifies that the social marketing and promotion should be used by environmental organization to make the consumers to pay the price surplus for the safer and wasteless products. Moreover, under the research described in the article by Berzina, people are ready to buy costly products in case of their true and proved safety.

The benefits of the producers are not so obvious for their stimulation, but later it can be resulted in the preference given by consumers and public. The strong side of it could be the reputation promotion among the partners, and gaining the approval and support from government for raising standards in the environmental management.

The great share of the products in the market is imprinted as “environmentally friendly”, “ecologically clean”, and safe for health. Some of them are certified by non-government organizations and this is reliable method. But very often the enterprises sign the goods and services by themselves. While doing this, they should at least show the reports of their activities for improving the environmental management.

The consumer might agree to pay the price surplus for the prove that the products are safe and not harmful for environment. The benefits could be achieved for both sides. Thus, the producer improves his image, states himself as the leader and gets the public and government support. Though the first steps in the applying of the ecolabeling has being started, in most cases the rules are not fulfilled and the ecolabeling process is uncontrolled. The solution for this problem should be the foundation of the national ecolabeling system.

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