

SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA FOR BIOENERGY



THE PROMISES OF A GLOBAL APPROACH

ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY

Establishing common minimum criteria for sustainability is one of the strategies to ensure that bioenergy is produced in a responsible manner, and is often thought to be the most suitable instrument for the development of sustainable bioenergy systems.

CONTROLLING THE GLOBAL VALUE CHAIN

This international standard has been developed to serve many different feedstocks (e.g. forests, agricultural crops), bioenergy products (e.g. relatively unprocessed forest residues, ethanol, biodiesel, electricity), and to apply to whole or segments of the supply chain (e.g. production system, chain of custody from growers to energy consumers).

PROMOTING THE SMARTER SUPPLY CHAIN OF THE FUTURE

Bio-energy supply chains continue to become more global and complex, involving more actors across different regions. This international standard aims at building a new vision of supply chain for bio-energy informed, interconnected and intelligent. A Smart Supply Chain will require more collaboration on monitoring sustainability aspects, harmonised information flow and integrated processes to improve visibility among partners and reduce risk.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO MANAGE INFORMATION FLOW



Provides guidance to economic operators identifying areas for continual improvement in the sustainability of bio-energy.



Enhance B2B communication by establishing a common language for businesses to describe sustainability aspects of bioenergy. The standard defines which information is to be provided and the disclosure of information is systematically up to the economic operator.



Purchasers can use this International Standard to compare sustainability information from suppliers to help identify bioenergy processes and products that meet their requirements.

EXTERNAL VERIFICATION AND AUDITING MECHANISM

The data, information sources and assumptions provided along the supply chain will not define if a process or a product is sustainable or not. No statement or communication about the sustainability of bioenergy processes or products can be made based solely on the use of this International Standard.

Other standards, certification initiatives and government agencies can use this International Standard as a source of information regarding sustainability for verification, evaluation and audits.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS



The standard required all the economic operator of the value chain to provide information on direct effects of its process(es). Direct effects are defined in the standard as measurable environmental, social and economic effects under the direct control of the economic operator and caused by the bio-energy process. Other impacts of bio-energy production, often referred to as indirect effects, remain challenging to quantify and link to a specific economic operator or a given timeframe.



Among those are the indirect land use change impacts of bio-energy, also known as ILUC, and the carbon emissions due to land-use changes around the world induced by the expansion of biomass production in response to the increased global demand for bio-energy.



This standard does not address indirect effects as no consensus was found internationally on how to report them. Developing a legal approach to address the potential consequences of land-use change in a comprehensive manner would probably be needed in the coming year.

CONCLUSION

The application of sustainability principle, criteria and indicators is a young 'science'. Experience is limited regarding how some indicators and criteria can be formulated, monitored and assessed.

This International standard, published in September 2015, provides a useful framework to gather international experience on how to improve sustainability of bioenergy development.

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