



Brown and Wilmanns Environmental, LLC

# Standards, Labels, Certifications, and Seals

**An Overview**

Mike Brown, PhD  
Brown and Wilmanns Environmental, LLC

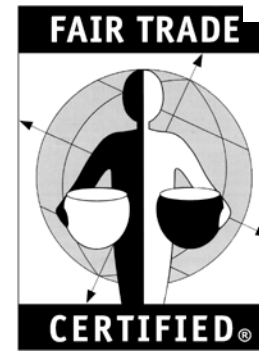
May 2011

# TOWER OF ECO BABEL





\*Meets the Humane Farm Animal Care Program standards, which include nutritious diet without antibiotics, or hormones; animals raised with shelter, resting areas, sufficient space and the ability to engage in natural behaviors.



ULE ISR 880



## Types of Labels

- Single attribute, single-criteria
  - Recycled content
  - Energy Efficient
  - Organic
- Single issue, multi-criteria
  - Forestry management
  - Sustainable agriculture
  - Sustainable fishery
  - Fair trade
- Multi-issue, multi-criteria
  - Green product
  - Green business

# Label Sponsors

- **NGO**
  - Green Seal
  - Pharos Project (building materials)
- **For Profit**
  - Scientific Certification Systems
    - Sustainable Choice, Home Depot EcoOptions
  - Good Housekeeping
    - Green Good Housekeeping Seal
- **Govt**
  - USEPA Design for the Environment
  - USEPA/USDoE Energy Star

# Label Attributes

- Criteria setting process
  - Expertise
  - Internal/external
  - Review
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Updating
- Verification, auditing
  - Independence
  - Review
- Transparency

# Standards for Setting Standards

- ISO and other standard setting bodies
- Federal government process
- DIY
- Crowd sourcing

# Product Life Cycle

- Value chain through end-of-useful-life
  - Raw materials origins
    - Farm/forest/marine/wellhead
  - Raw material processing
  - Packaging
    - Marketing collateral
  - Manufacturing
    - Ancillary materials (cleaners, lubricants)
  - Transportation
  - Distribution warehousing
  - Retailing
  - Product use
    - Maintenance and repair
  - End-of-useful-life disposition



# What Makes for a “Good” Eco-Label?

- “What is a sustainable product?”
  - Attributes vs life cycle assessment
    - Attributes may miss important issues
      - Recovered, remanufactured products and energy
    - LCA may cover more issues but data may be uncertain
      - Industrial systems vs bio-based systems
- What’s good may be who and what you like
  - FSC and SFI
  - LEED, Green Globes, and NAHB
- Stringency and ability to meet criteria

# Using Eco-Labels

- Corporate purchasing (office, maintenance, equipment, construction, etc.)
  - Cost-effective way to get environmental value
  - Include certifications in specifications
    - Energy Star appliances
    - DfE cleaning supplies
    - Greenguard furniture
    - FCS lumber
  - Request that suppliers get certified
- Products
  - Research label rather than individual products
  - Customer education
  - Minimize potential for consumer confusion

## Final Thoughts

- Preference
  - Multi-criteria
  - Single issue, multi-criteria
  - Single issue, single criteria
- Multi-criteria
  - Corporate responsibility
  - “Safe enough” is not green
  - Materials matter
  - Carbon footprints
  - Life cycle assessment
- “Sustainable” products – still no free lunch

# Questions?

[mike@bw-environmental.com](mailto:mike@bw-environmental.com)

[eric@bw-environmental.com](mailto:eric@bw-environmental.com)

805-898-0980



**Brown and Wilmanns** Environmental, LLC