

EU Environmental Telegramme

SCP - Environmental Footprint (EF) - Green Claims

18. September 2020

Short	SCP, PEF, OEF, CFP, WFP, EPD, GPP, LCA
Long	Sustainable Consumption & Production SCP - PEF und OEF: Product und Organisation Environmental Footprint, Carbon Footprint CFP, Water Footprint WFP, Environmental Product Declaration EPD, Green Public Procurement GPP, Life Cycle Assessment LCA
Docs	SCP - Environmental Footprint - EC communication COM(2013) 196 v. 9.4.2013 „Single Market for Green Products“, OJ L 124 v. 4.5.2013 EC recommendation on PEFs and OEFs 2013/179/EU from 9.4.2013
Status	After five pilot years 2013 to 2018: EC workshop 23.-25. April 2018 with finished PEFCRs (CRs = category rules) for 20 product groups and OEFCRs for 2 sectors: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/PEFCR_OEFSR_en.htm ; <i>Roadmap until 31.8.2020 for feedback:</i> https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12511-Environmental-claims-based-on-environmental-footprint-methods <i>Consultation until 3.12.2020:</i> https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12511-Environmental-claims-based-on-environmental-footprint-methods/public-consultation
Content	The Commission intends to propose a legislative act on substantiating green claims in Q2 2021, which means PEF/OEF would be used to substantiate green claims on products in a mandatory manner
WKO position: new system heavy burden for SMEs - watch efficiency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general: EU framework for methodology on PEF and OEF on voluntary basis in a harmonised matter may be useful - mandatory system not first choice, different P(O)EFCRs in Member States to be avoided - therefore WKO proposing to consider option 1 (update of PEFs and OEFs) or 2 (voluntary legal framework), currently not option 3 (legal framework establishing obligation for claims by PEF/OEF) because of costs and effort for SMEs and fitness of the PEF/OEF system for such an obligation Digital Product Factsheet (Env. Council, Dec. 2017) not acceptable, undermining business secrets as a kind of pre-PEF by making sensible data public on material composition of products; business secrets are to be protected; furthermore red tape and effort way too high, added value for final consumers not evident 4-5 relevant PEF or OEF indicators b2b thinkable rather than b2c, less adequate is one condensed artificial indicator (f.e. traffic light system hardly science-based but thinkable) Main purpose of PEF/OEF from WKO point of view: comparison of same product or company in a timeline (rather than comparison of similar products or companies with an benchmark product or company) Benchmarks not really comparable, effort very high: 5 years of hard work and substantial financial effort of EU institutions, EU business sectors for 21 PEFCRs and 2 OEFCRs indicating how much work will be left to do for thousands of product categories and hundreds of company/organisation categories - very long way to achieve a complete picture Possible use of methodologies for PEF/OEF for Ecolabel or EMAS; hardly suitable for public procurement; prevention of unfair commercial practices (green claims) thinkable - but effort for SMEs have to be in the focus Pre-judgement against producers/suppliers to place misleading claims about their products is not based on sufficient evidence (3 of 10 consumers believe in misleading claims - this is far from proving misleading claims) and should not be in the focus of PEF/OEF Added value of footprints for SMEs not clear: the ultimate target group, SMEs, consider EF as too much resource intensive, complex and expensive, more SME tools would be necessary focused on b2b purposes Relationship to existing instruments (EMAS, ISO, EU Ecolabel and national labels) unclear Water Footprint not suitable to indicate sensible complexity of aquatic environment Carbon Footprint less complex than PEF or OEF, but not the one and only relevant impact category EPD and PEF: intended further harmonisation of these two standards useful 	
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