ECOMARK AFRICA
Rebranding African Goods and Services to promote intra-Africa and international trade

African Ecolabelling Standards (AESs) in Application

Supported by:
- DAHO (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH)
- Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

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1. **Introduction**

The Ecomark Africa Program (EMA) is one of the programs of the African Organization for Standardization (ORAN / ARSO) as part of a certification scheme, known as the Africa Conformity Assessment Program (ACAP), which defines the rules and procedures for certification for the implementation of African standards (ARS).

EMA aims to improve intra-African trade through certification of goods and services in accordance with African Eco-Labeling Standards (AES). In accordance with socio-economic and environmental requirements, the Ecolabel Certificate is awarded to products and services according to a maturity model - bronze, silver, gold and platinum (Figure 1).

![Certification following a maturity model](image)

Figure 1: Certification following a maturity model

2. **Mandate of the programme**

i) Promote the marketing of sustainable products in Africa to regional and international markets

ii) Certification of goods and services in accordance with eco-labeling standards

iii) Support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their contribution to sustainable development objectives through eco-label certification related to the maturity model.

3. **Intervention sector**

The Ecomark Africa program is currently focused on four sectors (agriculture, fisheries / aquaculture, forestry and tourism). The pilot program is sponsored by the German government...
The countries participating in the program had demonstrated a leading level in the adoption and implementation of African sustainability standards prior to the commencement of the project at the national level in March 2018.

4. Achievements

The main achievements of the Ecomark Africa pilot program are summarized as follows:

i. The Eco Mark Africa (EMA) ownership transfer was registered under ARSO in the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) on 06 November 2017 and registered in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on 30 August 2018.

ii. Capacity Building for producers/service providers, auditors, consultants and labs on the six sustainability standards (agriculture, fisheries, Aquaculture (Tilapia & Catfish), forestry and tourism sectors) and the ACAP has been completed in ten countries (Cameroun, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe) in Africa.

iii. Assessments of Certification Bodies for capacity to audit and certify on the African sustainability standards under ACAP has been carried out in five African Countries with Kenya and Zimbabwe satisfying the requirements of the scheme while the others (Cameroun and Ghana) are working on the identified non conformities.

iv. Auditing and Certification of Products and services (Agriculture, Aquaculture and Tourism) in seven companies based in Kenya, Rwanda and Ghana have been finalized and will be awarded the EMA label. Another audit on the forest industry is planned in Zimbabwe during the month of February 2019.

In order to celebrate these achievements, ARSO with the support of GIZ has organized for the launch of Ecomark Africa (EMA) and the award of the first EMA certificates on the 8th of March 2019 at the Inter-Continental Hotel-Nairobi.

v. Benchmarking of agriculture sustainability standard against Fairtrade Africa.

5. Other impacts of the pilot project

Through various sensitization workshops and conferences to create awareness and make Africa understand that it is time to apply tailor made harmonized standards and certification scheme for Africa. Other stakeholders expressed interest to join the programme, e.g. Zambia expressed interest through the COMESA Business Council after participating in the key stakeholders meeting and subsequent training. Uganda has expressed interest after capacity building have started. Initially, these two countries were not among the pilot countries.

Other partners (NEPAD) become interested in supporting the certification of products complying with the African Ecolabelling standards because they realized that EMA certification is potentially enhancing the access to international and regional markets for African Producers by rebranding their products & services as environmentally friendly. Currently NEPAD is support capacity building of nine aquaculture firms and certification of three (3) aquaculture firms in Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia. Support from other donors is welcome for certification in other sectors.