

# The green claims initiative and the Environmental Footprint

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# The info jungle

Number of ecolabels worldwide

430 → 457  
2013 2020

4%

Growth of brands with stated commitment to sustainability in 2014

7%

Growth of brands that state this on labels & packaging

1%

Growth of brands without sustainability commitment

29% of food and drink sales carry an environmental label

53% of non-food and drink sales carry an environmental label

DE, FR, IT, PL, SE, 2017

Product groups: wine, apples, coffee, olive oil, cheese, dried pasta, processed meat, bottled water, dog food, laundry care, footwear, jackets & coats, shirts & blouses, decorative paint, televisions

47%

Growth of assets under green funds in last three years

€5,000 - €2million

Cost of methods/ initiatives used

95%

of consumers say that buying "green" products is the right thing to do

74%

Businesses use more than two methods to measure environmental performance

56%

of consultation respondents encountered misleading claims

4% filed a complaint

# Council Conclusions – 10/2019

***WELCOMES the piloting of the EU Environmental Footprint methodology and URGES the Commission to explore whether it can be used as one of the methodologies in developing criteria for product policy measures, e.g. EU ecolabel, Ecodesign and EU Green Public Procurement; WELCOMES all initiatives to support the communication of environmental impacts based on the Environmental Footprint pilot and in time eventually the establishment of a mandatory scheme for environmental claims***

# European Green Deal – 12/2019

*Reliable, comparable and verifiable information also plays an important part in enabling buyers to make more sustainable decisions and reduces the risk of 'green washing'. Companies making 'green claims' should substantiate these against a standard methodology to assess their impact on the environment.*

# Circular economy action plan – 3/2020

*The Commission will propose that companies substantiate their environmental claims using **Product and Organisation Environmental Footprint methods**. The Commission will test the integration of these methods in the EU Ecolabel and include more systematically durability, recyclability and recycled content in the EU Ecolabel criteria.*

*The review of the Ecodesign Directive as well as further work on specific product groups, under the Ecodesign framework or in the context of other instruments, will build, where appropriate, on criteria and rules established under the EU Ecolabel Regulation, the Product Environmental Footprint approach and the EU GPP criteria.*













# Features of the EF methods

- **Avoid trade-offs** between different value chain steps and between different environmental impacts (life cycle approach)
- **Tested** between 2013-18 with more than 250 leading stakeholders and more than 2000 stakeholders following the process
- **Based on international** best practice approaches BUT
  - **Reproducible**: methodological choices taken in method/ product- and sector-specific rules (PEFCRs/ OEFSRs) – this also leads to **simplification**
  - **Materiality-driven**: focus on the processes that are driving the environmental impact of a product/ organisation
  - **Comparable**: when PEFCRs exist, specific products' performance is comparable to a benchmark (average environmental performance)
  - **Reliable**: best practice methodological solutions discussed with experts and stakeholders, minimum verification requirements included in the method
  - **Agreed**: methodological choices taken based on input from experts (business, academia, public administrations, NGOs)
  - **Less cost**: Where secondary impact data is used, available for free to PEFCR/ OEFSR users



# PEFCRs/ OEFSRs

## Finalised PEFCRs

	Batteries and accumulators		Liquid household detergents
	Decorative paints		Metal sheets
	Hot & cold water pipe systems		Photovoltaic electricity generation
	Intermediate paper products		Thermal insulation
	IT equipment		T-shirts
	Leather		Uninterrupted power supply

	Beer		Pet food
	Dairy products		Pasta
	Feed		Wine
	Packed water		Olive oil (pending)

## Finalised OEFSRs








Retail sector



Copper sector

## Ongoing PEFCR development

	Apparel
	Cut flowers and potted plants
	Flexible packaging
	Synthetic turf
	Marine fish



European  
Commission

# Policy context and links





# Consultation activities



## 2018-19

- Targeted consultation (224 people respondents)
- Public consultation (291 people)
  - section on EF of the consultation on the product policy framework for CE
- Stakeholder workshop (88)
- Final conference (456)

## 2020

- Feedback on the roadmap (20 July – 31 August, 193 responses)
- [Open public consultation](#) – ends 3 December
  - Questions for the general public
  - Questions for experts
  - Stakeholder workshop

# Policy options

- **Baseline:** No modification to the Recommendation and no further action.  
Current PEFCRs/OEFSRs remain valid until their expiry.
- **Updating** the EC Recommendation with results from 2013-18 pilot phase; include recommendations on how to communicate results, how to develop PEFCRs/ OEFSRs...
- **Voluntary Environmental Footprint scheme:**  
legislation establishing a voluntary framework based on the PEF and OEF methods – existing methods/ initiatives are not affected



# Policy options

- **Legislation on green claims:**

requiring companies **making green claims** to substantiate them based on the Product and Organisation Environmental Footprint methods (PEF/ OEF).

Substantiation via PEF category rules/ OEF sector rules (if existing) or the PEF/ OEF method (if no product- or sector-specific rules)

- Only claims covered by the method or product-/ sector-specific rules (e.g. claims on climate change covered, repairability not covered)

- **Links to other initiatives:**

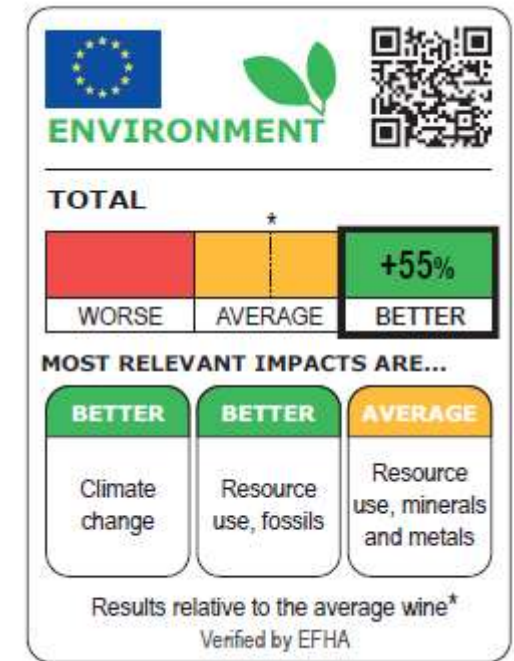
- Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, consumer law
- Non-financial reporting directive

# Policy options

- Setting up an appropriate **verification/ certification** system
- Setting up an **enforcement** system  
(ex ante/ ex post + who enforces?)
- **Life cycle data** governance: EU database vs  
network of databases/ dataspace

# Policy options

- **Communicating Environmental Footprint profiles**
  - establish principles
  - minimum information content  
(e.g. always communicate overall performance)
  - common EU format (label/logo/reporting format)
- **Elements to be communicated**
  - Based on PEFCRs or on PEF
  - Based on OEFSRs or on OEF



# Next steps

- Gathering stakeholder input
- Analysing policy options (impact assessment)
- Proposal in Q2 of 2021





[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/PEFCR\\_OEFSR.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/PEFCR_OEFSR.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/ef\\_transition.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/smgp/ef_transition.htm)

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/wikis/display/EUENVFP/>



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