

E-LEARNING COURSE:

INTRODUCTION TO STANDARDS AND SUSTAINABILITY



SUMMARY

This course introduces participants to the concepts of standards and sustainability, focusing on voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) and the various ways in which enterprises can approach them. Looking at the advantages of sustainability from a business perspective, the course analyses the benefits and costs for enterprises to become certified to VSS, stressing the fact that certification involves taking part in an ongoing process and not just making a one-time commitment.



NOTE:

Participants to this course should already have a basic understanding of voluntary sustainability standards (VSS), as well as the certification process to them. This material is covered in the SME Trade Academy course: "Introduction to Standards and Sustainability", [which is available here](#).

TARGET AUDIENCE

This course is primarily aimed at staff members and managers working in SMEs.



AT THE END OF THIS COURSE, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Identify the roles of standards and sustainability in business, particularly with regards to international trade;
- Grasp the various characteristics of VSS relevant to enterprises, such as geographic, product and sustainability scopes; and
- Assess the different costs and benefits involved in becoming certified to a VSS.



COURSE REGISTRATION

In order to register for this course, [please go to the ITC course catalog](#).

SAMPLE COURSE SLIDES

Lecture 3: Conducting a Self-Assessment

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The steps of the certification process

- 1 Ability assessment
- 2 Application for certification or verification
- 3 Initial audit
- 4 Potential need for corrective action
- 5 Certificate granting
- 6 Surveillance audits

The process for an enterprise to become certified to a standard involves several steps. Let's review some of the basic concepts (this is not an exhaustive list!).

Click on each concept to learn more

Lecture 4 of Module 1 - Introduction to Standards and Sustainability of this e-learning series explained in detail the workings of certification to voluntary sustainability standards and other voluntary initiatives.

Lecture 4

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Lecture 1: Addressing Sustainability in Supply Chains

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The trend towards sustainability in sourcing

Manufacturers and buyers around the world are increasingly opting to source from "sustainable" producers, and this trend is likely to continue over the next 5 years. Consider these examples in the area of raw materials.

For the overall market situation, see the latest "The State of Sustainable Markets: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2015" document, which provides insight into the market data of VSS-certified production selected VSS, published by ITC-FBL-IBSD. In the case of cocoa, for instance, 2 million hectares (on average) out of 10 million hectares of total cocoa-growing area were VSS-certified (four surveyed VSS).

Similarly, today, consumers are willing to pay more for products and services from companies committed to greater sustainability. Have a look, for instance, at the Nielsen Global Sustainability Report 2015.

Mars aims to source 100% of its cocoa from sustainable sources by 2020.

Unilever aims to source 100% of its agricultural raw materials in a sustainable manner by 2020.

By August 2020, IKEA aims to source 100% of its wood, paper and cardboard from more sustainable sources.

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COURSE STRUCTURE

- Lecture 1: What are Standards?
- Lecture 2: Voluntary Standards
- Lecture 3: The Differences between Voluntary Sustainability Standards
- Lecture 4: How does Certification Work?
- Lecture 5: The Benefits and Costs of Certification
- Case Study Exercise



CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Participants who meet the course requirements will receive a Certificate of Achievement issued in electronic format. This certificate will be verifiable via the SME Trade Academy.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

For detailed information on the SME Trade Academy and to view the full catalogue of courses available, please visit our website.



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