



Standardization in research and innovation projects

Success story: **environment**

ECOLABEL:

Development of a novel ECO-LABELing EU-harmonized methodology for cost-effective, safer and greener road products and infrastructures is a 3 year FP7 project (October 2013 to September 2016) to develop a novel eco-labelling methodology for cost-effective, safer and greener road products and infrastructures. The project concept arises from the necessity for a new, green, holistic and EU-harmonised eco-labelling methodology integrating a Life Cycle Engineering (LCE) approach. It will cover environmental indicators along with the economic, technical and social aspects for the assessment of future and existing road infrastructures, as well as their construction materials such as asphalt mixtures and cement-based materials.

<http://www.ecolabelproject.eu>

THE PROJECT

The EU eco-label (<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/>) identifies products and services that contribute to sustainability because they have demonstrated a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle. There are already more than 17,000 EU eco-labelled products on the market, but there are no references for road products and infrastructures.

The new methodology, together with a guide for road eco-labelling and a multi-criteria software tool, to be developed by the ECOLABEL project, will define eco-labels and provide recommendations to improve the label achieved. This will support and motivate relevant stakeholders and industry to include greener, more cost-effective and safer technologies in their road construction, maintenance and renewal projects.

WHY STANDARDS? A SOLUTION FOR MARKET UPTAKE

The project is based on the assessment of the road itself and its components (materials/products). Standardization will play a key role during the road's lifetime because construction products are covered by harmonized standards (*) and other supporting standards (i.e. test methods). Since standardization is a recognized tool in the construction products industry, ECOLABEL will also use current standards and developments in active standardization projects to define the state of the art in the field of road construction and eco-labelling.

(*) harmonized standards are European Standards (ENs) which provide solutions for compliance with a legal provision, in the case of construction products, thus to Council Directive 89/106/EEC for construction products (CPD) and Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 for construction products (CPR).

“The ECOLABEL project will aim to be an international reference in terms of labelling and certification systems applied in infrastructures thanks to the new multi-criteria methodology of integrating more effective, competitive, safer and environmental-friendly road products and infrastructures.”

HOW WILL THE STANDARD BE DEVELOPED?

The project started in October 2013. As a first step, the consortium has elaborated a report which includes relevant ongoing standardization activities and a standardization roadmap identifying the potential future lines of action for standardization (i.e. identifying the most relevant Technical Committees (TCs), standards and projects).

In a next step, relevant TCs (i.e. CEN/TC 227 and CEN/TC 350) will be contacted in relation to possible standardization actions following on from the research activities in the project. The results of the project could lead to a standardization document such as a CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA) or another type of pre-standard.

Standardization activities will be led by AENOR, the Spanish National Standards Body, who will provide technical expertise and assist partners to produce and implement a roadmap to standardize the project outcomes. In addition, the project will establish research collaboration links with the US Federal Highways Administration in line with the EU strategy for international cooperation.

BENEFITS OF LINKING WITH STANDARDIZATION

The construction sector is very dependent on the public sector as the main purchaser. Since standards constitute the basis both for regulation and public procurement, they play a key role to facilitate the market implementation of the ECOLABEL results.

The standardization activities will be divided into three main steps: definition of the state of the art, collection of standardization inputs from research activities developed by the partners and the implementation of the standardization roadmap to maximise the deployment of the project outcomes.

LONG-TERM EXPECTED IMPACT

The methodology developed by the ECOLABEL project aims to become a reference in the analysis and labelling of roads. Through the implementation strategies such as smart and green public procurement, the new or renovated road infrastructures after ECOLABEL will be more cost-effective, green and safer.

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Standardization activities in the ECOLABEL project are considered to be an enabling factor for the practical application of the project results in the market, improving their relevance and exploitability, as well as a means for further dissemination of the project outcomes to relevant stakeholders.

Fernando Utrilla, Head of Research and Innovation, AENOR

www.cencenelec.eu/research



Every project is different. The CEN-CENELEC Research Helpdesk can provide you with advice on how to include standardization in your project. Please feel free to contact us!

Email: research@cencenelec.eu
Tel. +32 2 550 08 11
Avenue Marnix, 17 - B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

www.losteid.be

