

Aren't labels just greenwashing?

Absolutely not. By involving consumers and other stakeholders from the bio-based industries, 3-CO will make sure to identify and select relevant certification criteria and that information presented on the labels is both verified and of value for consumers and the environment.

Limitations and challenges of current certification schemes

- Existing LCS mostly use indicators and criteria that have been developed for traditional feedstocks (e.g., wood) and their applications.
- Limited market volumes hamper the LCS development for novel BBPs.
- Bio-based feedstocks vary in quality depending on climate conditions and other (a)biotic factors.
- In comparison to conventional products, value chains of BBPs are often long due to numerous intermediate processing steps. Consequently, more effort is required to monitor the entire supply chain and obtain transparency.
- EU regulations often do not apply to feedstocks that originate from outside the EU.



Project Coordinator

VTT

Partners



Duration

01 Feb 2023 – 31 Jan 2026



Budget

2,870,000 €



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Concise Consumer Communication through Robust Labels for Bio-based Systems



Our Everyday Choices Matter

Consumers play an essential role in the successful transition to a circular bio-based economy. With each purchase consumers choose to support either bio-based sustainable alternatives or fossil-based industries. To make smart, informed and conscious buying decisions, they often rely on labels and certification schemes (LCS). However, consumers often overlook labels or mistakenly perceive LCS as not very credible or even greenwashing.

Improving Consumer Communication Through Credible and Informative Labels and Certification Schemes

The 3-CO project will support consumers' purchasing decisions towards more sustainable products by improving the communication of LCS towards consumers. To make purchasing of bio-based products (BBPs) more appealing, 3-CO will establish a supportive framework that equally addresses LCS owners, certification bodies and policy makers. To reach these goals, 3-CO will provide:

- Actionable guidelines for LCS owners (including **label design guidelines**) that reflect consumers' and other stakeholders' needs and outline relevant criteria,
- Smart digital solutions to support better-informed decision-making processes of consumers,
- Policy recommendations on deploying social measures.



Our ambition

To develop and improve LCS for the bioeconomy, 3-CO aims to provide a science-based supportive framework based on the **assessment of current LCS**. This includes analysis of the environmental, social and economic aspects as well as feasibility and effectiveness. 3-CO selected BBP value chains of ten different consumer goods that will help to understand existing LCS for the bioeconomy. These were selected based on specific criteria, including current and future market size, contribution to the bioeconomy and potential environmental and social impact.

Case Studies



Textiles

- Baby Clothing
- T-Shirts
- Mattresses



Beauty Care

- Shampoo
- Cosmetics (make-up, etc.)



Household Goods

- Biodegradable Plant Pots
- Bio-based PET/PEF bottles



Housing

- Wooden Houses (CLT or wooden frame houses)
- Furniture



Bio-based Plastic Toys

Green Purchasing Decisions

Assessment

Output

Assessment of Current LCS

Label Design Guidelines

Assessment of Consumer Behaviour

Digital Solutions

Assessment of Social Measures

Recommendations for Social Measures

Workshops, online consultation, surveys, focus group discussions and interviews – How you can participate

Be smart and speak up – Support us as a consumer!

3-CO relies on intensive involvement and interaction with consumers and consumer associations. Frequent and open exchange will allow 3-CO to **assess consumers' purchasing behaviour**. To support our quest for sustainable solutions, 3-CO invites consumers to participate in various test groups for the **digital solutions** developed in the project and make sure they are easy to use and helpful. You are also invited to participate in focus group discussions in four different countries (Poland, Finland, Spain, Netherlands). Make your voice heard and engage in the 3-CO surveys and questionnaires!

Join us as a certification body or industry stakeholder

To determine the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of LCS for novel BBPs, it is important to distinguish and understand the different costs and benefits. 3-CO invites certification bodies, LCS owners, auditors and certification users from different bio-based industries to share their perspective and make sure developed solutions are feasible and useful for all stakeholders along the entire value chain.

In line with EU Policy – The relevance of policy makers

Industries deeply rely on a supportive EU policy framework to foster actual change. To make sure that consumer-based labelling for BBPs align with EU policies, 3-CO invites policy makers at EU, national and regional level to join the dialogue and merge forces. 3-CO further aims to support policy makers by **assessing** and **recommending social measures** that foster social engagement, innovation, and innovative governance.

