India & Sustainability Standards
Through the lens of the Indian PSS Platform

Briefing for the UN Event
27 Sept. 2017

Dr. Manish Pande
Quality Council of India
TECHNICAL REGULATIONS are mandatory requirements of the government, which are meant to fulfil certain legitimate objectives such as to protect human health, safety and environment; prevent deceptive trade practices as well as ensure national security.

The difference between a standard and a technical regulation lies in compliance.

While conformity with STANDARDS IS VOLUNTARY, technical regulations are by nature mandatory.

Private Standards are standards designed and owned by non-governmental entities, which could be

- either for profit (businesses) or not-for-profit organizations - (FAO)
- Private Standards developed by coalitions of private sector frequently referred to as 'private voluntary standards'.

- Strong technical, quality, market relevance
- Developed by broad range of technical experts – GLOBALG.A.P., FSC, MSC …
Private Standards serve different objectives:

**Mandatory Standards**
- Foster trade and economic growth
- Encourage competition
- Protect consumers against unsafe or substandard products

**Private Standards**
- Develop markets for socially or environmentally responsible products
- Promote other social and environmental objectives
- Compensate for the lack of local or national regulatory capacity

WHY PRIVATE STANDARD
PSS is increasingly used to demonstrate compliance to regulation in India (Food Regulatory Authority/ Ayush CoPP (WHO)/ Yoga - Recruitments)

**COMPLIANCE ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA**

- **Government**
- **Regulators**
- **Scheme Owner**
  - Voluntary Standards
  - SO/ABs/CABs
- **Manufacturers/Supply Chains/service providers**
- **Consumers/Citizen**

Key Areas:
- Health, Safety, National Security
- Quality, Competitiveness, Global Trade

Voluntary Standards:
- SO/ABs/CABs

Scheme Owner:
- Food Regulatory Authority
- Ayush CoPP (WHO)
- Yoga

Health, Safety, National Security:
- Government Regulators

Quality, Competitiveness, Global Trade:
- Scheme Owner
- Voluntary Standards
- SO/ABs/CABs
- Consumers/Citizen
Challenges associated with PSS in India

- **Technical Barrier to Trade**
- **Compliance difficulty**
  - readiness
  - alien concepts
  - foreign contexts
  - complex interpretation
  - long term investment
  - no interoperability among PSS
- **Lack of harmonization**
- **No access to funds and unclear timelines** to encourage PSS adoption
- **Fear of losing focus on domestic market** while eyeing exports

- **HOW TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES AT HAND!!!**
United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards

• UNFSS inaugurated by a UN launching conference, 21 Mar. 2013 in Geneva

• Meeting attended by over 200 delegates from some 50 UN member countries, representing governments, the private sector, academia and civil society.

• The decisions taken at this conference – based on recommendations arising from a comprehensive consultative process – are reflected in the UNFSS work program for the next few years.

• The only inter-governmental (and multi-stakeholder) forum that deals with generic and strategic issues of PSS in a consistent and pro-active way;

• Capitalizes on the strengths and specialization of each of the five UN organizations that partner on UNFSS.
PSS Platform under UNFSS Platform: Characteristics

demand driven
diverse
solutions oriented
collaborative
deliberative
harmonising
ISSUES RAISED DURING THE MSC

- **Common understanding**: Immense harmonization of knowledge required; multilateral bodies/stakeholders are unaware of technical regulations, PSS, SDGs, and interlinkages.

- **Breaking silos**: Global institutions and Standard owners need to co-create knowledge through multi-stakeholder process.

- **Greater legitimacy**: National PSS Platforms must be officially recognized and entered into a formal agreement by UNFSS. National Platforms too need to be interacting with each other.

- **Holistic agenda-setting**: Global South must be involved in agenda setting at multilateral bodies.

- **Effective Development Cooperation**: Based on solidarity and need – w/o conditions.
PSS PLATFORM – Focus Area of Intervention

- Identify Product Categories
- Scheme Approval/Endorsements & Certification
- Facilitation of trade
- Priority Product Groups
- GAP – IndGAP, SGAP, GGAP
- As Per National Best Practices
- Review Key Developments
- Scheme Standards
- National Interpretations - NI
- Platform
- Industry, NGOs, Instt., etc
- GAP – IndGAP, SGAP, GGAP
- As Per National Best Practices
- Review Key Developments
- Scheme Standards
- National Interpretations - NI
- Platform
- Industry, NGOs, Instt., etc
- GAP – IndGAP, SGAP, GGAP
- As Per National Best Practices
- Review Key Developments
- Scheme Standards
- National Interpretations - NI
- Platform
- Industry, NGOs, Instt., etc
Structure

Steering Committee

Multi-Stakeholder Committee

Sectoral Committees
(Agri-Food, Forest, Textile, etc.)

Subsidiary bodies

Secretariat
International Outreach & Cooperation

Good Agricultural Practices for SAARC (Regional VSS)

Study on PSS in Priority Product Groups

Statement on PSS in Developing Countries

The India Story
Impact of Private Sustainability Standards on Market Access and Sustainable Development

Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
The Way Forward –

The National Platform is “created and owned by national stakeholders and demand driven”

Objectives:

a. Generate a national dialogue between main stakeholder groups on policy approaches;
b. to conduct in-depth research at various levels;
c. to provide support to national capacity-building efforts

- If VSS/PSS become market demand - developing countries face challenge esp. SMEs – there is a need to
  - Impact studies and challenges for SMEs
  - Information dissemination
  - build capacity, funding, incentives,
  - handholding support
- Where PSS give scope for national interpretation (NI) or benchmarking like GG, go for it to reduce cost
- Find a way of having a voice like FSC/GGAP allows since it affects us although made in developed world.
- There needs to be an action plan presented to the Government
- Every economy must identify a single body for PSS
- Maturity model approach for other economies as long term strategy
- Scheme development by QCI, scheme endorsement system by NABCB etc.
- Seeking voice for Indian stakeholders in VSS
For more info:

(manish.pande@qcin.org)