

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Members of U.S. SubTAG3 to ISO TC 207 SC3
FROM: James L. Connaughton
RE: Status Report and Upcoming Meetings in Stockholm
DATE: May 23, 2000

I. **Highlights**

- ISO Technical Report (Type 2) 14025 on Eco-Profile Labeling and ISO 14021 on Self-Declared Environmental Claims have been published. These documents may be purchased through NSF (details below) or through other sellers of standards.
- U.S. TAG agreed to ballot ISO 14020, 14021, and 14024 for adoption as ANSI US national consensus standards.
- The U.S. Federal Trade Commission has not yet made a decision whether to allow a “safe harbor” from enforcement under FTC’s green marketing guides for organizations that conform their environmental marketing claims to ISO 14021.
- TC 207 SC3 and the Work Group on Eco-Profile Labeling will meet in Stockholm during the week of June 12 to 18: issues include disbanding Work Group 2 which developed ISO 14021 and the future of Work Group 4 which developed TR 14025.
- Sub-TAG3 met in Dallas on March 21, 2000 to discuss status and review plans for the Stockholm meetings.
- Sub-TAG3 administrator, NSF International, has set up a website to facilitate communication among Sub-TAG3 and access to documents.

II. **Document Status and Stockholm Meeting Issues**

- A. *ISO 14020 – General principles of all labels and declarations:* This standard was published in 1998. A U.S. proposal to make an amendment to the standard to correct an error is currently out for ballot. The U.S. submitted its approval without comment last week.
- B. *ISO 14021 – Self-declared environmental claims:* This standard was published in late 1999. As of last summer, a number of countries have adopted the standard as national enforcement policy. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission met with U.S. Experts to SC3/WG2 to discuss how the standard compares to the FTC’s green marketing guidelines. The FTC is considering the creation of a “safe harbor” that will provide parties who

conform to ISO 14021 assurance against enforcement. Documents that the experts provided to the FTC are available on the new Sub-TAG3 website (see below). A U.K consumer's organization has conducted a detailed evaluation of ISO 14021. The study is very supportive of the standard, noted that reference to and use of the standard is still limited, and analyzed a number of claims in the marketplace for conformity to the standard. In Stockholm, Jim Connaughton will attempt to poll where other countries stand in adopting 14021 as regulation or enforcement policy. SC3 will also decide whether to disband WG2 now that its work is complete.

- C. *ISO 14024 -- Eco-labeling practitioner program practices:* This standard was published in 1999. No action in Stockholm is expected, although it is possible that SC3 may decide to disband WG1 as well.

- D. *ISO TR 14025 -- Technical Report on eco-profile labeling:* This document was published last month. The document was approved by a majority with just a one-vote margin. The Stockholm meetings will address three subjects: First, the SC3 Secretary, over the expressed concerns of Austria, the U.S. and other countries has invited SC3 to decide whether the document should be immediately be reopened for further revision, be reopened for conversion to an international standard, or whether no further action should be taken at this time. The U.S. has procedural concerns with this question being placed on the agenda in the absence of a New Work Item Proposal from a member country seeking revision of the document. Aside from the procedural concern, the U.S. Sub-TAG agreed that it is premature to reopen the document at this time, given that it was published just last month and its purpose was to identify issues which emerging eco-profile schemes should explore before any decision about the need for and feasibility of international standardization could be made. Second, Working Group 4 is scheduled to meet to discuss comments that accompanied the approval ballot. While such a meeting would have been necessary had the document failed, the U.S. and other countries have raised questions about the usefulness of such a meeting. Those who voted in favor of the document did so on the grounds that the language as it currently stands was acceptable. Third, WG4 will conduct a workshop that will examine how eco-profile labeling is evolving and addressing concepts discussed in the Technical Report since our last meeting. Germany, Canada, Denmark, Sweden and Denmark are expected to make presentations. The U.S. EPA had offered to make a presentation on their FRED program (which provide environmental guidance on federal purchasing decisions), but as of this writing it is not clear whether they will be able to pull the presentation together in time for Stockholm.

III. **Stockholm Experts and Observers**

Sub-TAG3 approved the following as experts to the Stockholm meetings:

Jim Connaughton
Sergio F. Galeano
Jason Morrison
Julie A. Winters

The following have been listed as observers:

Joe Cascio
William D'Alessandro
B. Tod Delaney
Sergio F. Galeano
Dorothy Gusler
Jason Hart
Jason Morrison
Paul Scicchitano
Julie A. Winters

IV. **U.S. Adoption of 14020 Series of Standards**

During the Dallas meetings, the U.S. TAG gave the go-ahead to process the ISO environmental labeling standards as ANSI US national consensus standards. The standards eligible for this process are ISO 14020, ISO 14021, and ISO 14024. This will be a paper process seeking approval of the documents for this purpose by mail. The advantage of U.S. adoption is that it will insure against duplicative, overlapping, or competing standards being developed in the U.S.

V. **Sub-TAG 3 Website and Availability of Standards**

Mary Hyatt Ford, of NSF International, graciously offered to setup a simple web-site that will facilitate electronic distribution of Sub-TAG3 announcements, working documents, and other postings, including TC 207/SC3 meeting information. The site will include documents from the recent past and future U.S. and international documents. NSF will provide e-mail notification of site updates to Sub-TAG 3 members. The following documents will be available on the site shortly:

- Business Papers for the 10th Meeting of ISO/TC 207/SC 3, Stockholm, June 2000
- Agenda for the Type III practitioner workshop
- Letter from John Lawrance - stating that SC 3/WG 2 does not need to meet in Stockholm
- Registration and Information for the 9th Meeting of ISO/TC 207/SC 3, Stockholm, June 2000
- Section-by-Section Comparison of the FTC Green Marketing Guidelines and FDIS 14021

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- FTC Green Marketing Fact Sheet
- Country Roundup on 14021
- Draft Amendment ISO 14020:1998/DAM 1 and Result of Voting on NWIP
- Letter from John Lawrence regarding June 3, 1999 SC3/WG2 meeting in Seoul.
- Announcement of recently published ISO 14000 documents
 - ISO/TR 14025:2000 – Environmental labels and declarations – Type III environmental declarations
 - ISO 14021:1999 – Environmental labels and declarations – Self-declared Environmental Claims (Type II environmental labeling)

If you would like a copy of any of the published standards, you must purchase them separately. They are copyrighted documents, and their purchase supports the work of the standards organizations that sell them. You may obtain copies from NSF International by contacting CSS Info at 800.699.9277 or www.cssinfo.com/nsfgate.html. You can also obtain them from other organizations such as ANSI.

To access the SubTAG 3 website you must enter the following URL in your web browser: www.nsf.org/standards/subtag3. No password is needed to access the main website and links to status updates or general information. However, a password is provided to SubTAG 3 members for accessing more detailed and/or SubTAG-specific documents.

If you have questions or need further information about substantive issues and developments, please feel free to contact me (202-736-8364; jconnaug@sidley.com). For further information about administrative matters and the website, please contact Hyatt Ford (734.827.6826; ford@nsf.org).