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Activities

In order to implement its mission, TSPN:

- Develops and strengthens partnerships across bi-lateral, multi-lateral, private sector, non-profit, and developing countries' stakeholders working in the field of sustainability standards
- Establishes working groups in the joint research and development of assessment tools on selected topics
- Shares experiences and insights about how the evolution of social, environmental and food safety standards may affect the competitiveness of developing countries
- Draws upon lessons learned from previous implementation experiences
- Promotes the Network's expressivity through the development of opinions regarding standards-relevant topics
- Identifies 'good and innovative practices' and translates these findings into strategic guidelines
- Manages and shares knowledge and experiences via its:
 - a. annual international conference with a standards related topic and includes a member meeting
 - b. monthly newsletter with standards-related issues, member activities & upcoming events
 - c. homepage www.tradestandards.org

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Finding common ground for more
effective development assistance
in the field of sustainability standards





Transforming markets

Over the past decade, a tremendous transformation has taken place in the markets for commodities, consumer goods, agricultural products, and in particular, food. These markets have been characterized by strong demands for high-value and differentiated products, the rising concerns about food safety, social and environmental practices and increased competition and market requirements. While traditional trade restrictions (e.g. tariffs and quotas) are being reduced in many instances, the landscape of these markets is increasingly influenced by rapidly emerging private voluntary standards (PVS). Not only do these private voluntary standards provide a sustainability guideline for producers in (developing) countries and offer them the possibility to access new markets, they also deliver an assurance to the consumers that the product they buy is produced in a sustainable way.

Against this background, more and more private enterprises use PVS or even develop their own standards. For such companies, the participation in PVS is not only an issue of reputation but also serves as a management tool to further integrate sustainability and transparency into their supply chains.

However, standards can also pose compliance and conformity challenges, higher transaction costs and in certain instances, may limit market access, e.g. by means of high quality demands. Within the framework of transforming markets, developing country governments, producers, processors and other stakeholders engaged in supply chains are increasingly seeking assistance to better respond to the challenges and opportunities associated with emerging and existing standards.

*Integrating developing
country producers into
value chains.*

Who we are

The TSPN is an international network that was established in 2005. Our diverse membership base includes multilateral agencies, bilateral organizations, research institutes, technical assistance providers, standards-setting bodies, NGOs and other practitioner organizations in developing countries. Each member brings its respective experiences, skills, and developing country partners. A full listing of TSPN members can be found at: www.tradestandards.org

Our mission is to improve the effectiveness of initiatives that support the capacity and participation of developing countries in the development and implementation of trade-related voluntary, social, environmental, and food safety standards and associated measures that focus on the agri-food, forestry, fishery and manufacturing sectors.

