

# Reliability

## Build your claims on a reliable basis

- Accurate and scientifically true
- Robust and consistent
- Substantiated data and assumptions



## What are common obstacles for **Reliability** in an e-commerce setting?

Sustainability claims are widely made without **provision of verification**



Challenges for consumers to manage information in **various forms** and from **different sources**



**Confusion** over which information can be **trusted** and who is **responsible** for their provision



Minimum criteria for **quality of sustainability information** are missing

## Real-life example of a common obstacle



Tom wants to purchase a sustainably produced new t-shirt. Several marketplaces advertise their products as “sustainable”. However, he cannot find evidence for these claims... what information can be trusted?

## How to ensure **Reliability** in an e-commerce setting?



E-Commerce platforms must take responsibility for the information that is published on their websites, including claims that are made by sellers. Many consumers do not distinguish between the platform and the sellers/marketplaces. To build trust with consumers the platforms must ensure a certain quality level for all sustainability information that is published directly by them or via third parties and therefore provide guidance to their sellers.

Ambitious, third-party verified labels can be useful tool in this regard. However, to ensure reliability, it is crucial that platforms regularly verify (e.g. monthly) that labelled products have valid certifications, and that the provided information is up to date. Descriptive sustainability information should either be substantiated or follow a quality assurance process. Therefore, sellers must be obliged to follow widely accepted anti-greenwashing guidance when providing sustainability information. Additionally, platforms must enable customers and other third parties to validate provided information and ask for sources.

Website: <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/consumer-information-scp>

Contact: [ciscp@un.org](mailto:ciscp@un.org)



**One planet**  
inform with care

# The Dos and Don'ts for **Reliability** in an E-Commerce Setting



## DO

- **Apply the fundamental principles** of the [Guidelines](#)<sup>1</sup> as the minimum standard for sustainability information and provide them as **guidance** to suppliers/sellers
- **Verify** eco labelled products **by comparing your product database** with those of the **certifying organizations**
- Approach **eco label license holders** to submit **common/standard product identification codes (e.g. GTIN)** to you as well as to the certifying organizations
- Demand the **license numbers** (if existing) of database entries of the **labelling body** for displayed ecolabels
- Go **beyond labelling** and provide **descriptive substantiated information**



## DON'T

- Do **not** display ecolabels without **verifying** that the respective product has a valid certification
- Do **not** let sellers decide what they want to publish without **checking** the evidence of their claims

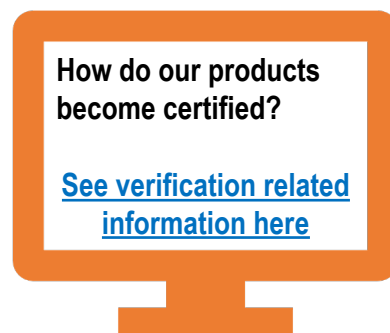
## Good Practice Example



**Only display credible third-party verified labels!**



**In case of the EU Ecolabel: check whether products can be identified in the EU Ecolabel Catalogue (ECAT)!**



**Provide a verification and background information via crosslinks to the source of information!**

Website: <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/consumer-information-scp>

Contact: [ciscp@un.org](mailto:ciscp@un.org)

<sup>1</sup> Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information (UNEP and ITC 2017), [link](#)



**One planet**  
inform with care