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### Highlights

- Ecolabeling supports the process of achieving sustainable production and consumption.
- Consumer environmental awareness helps reduce negative impacts on the environment.
- Environmental labeling influences consumer purchasing decisions.
- AHP will assess the impact of ecolabeling on sustainable production and consumption

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## Keywords

Sustainable production; Sustainable consumption; Eco-labelling

## JEL classification

M11; M31; L2

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## Impact of eco-labelling on the implementation of sustainable production and consumption

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### 1. Introduction

The high economic growth observed in recent years has triggered a global increase in consumption, which in turn has had a damaging effect on the natural environment. Should the economy continue to expand at its current rate and if irresponsible consumption and production patterns are maintained, the natural environment is expected to deteriorate further (Tanfique et al., 2014). Due to the increasingly adverse impact of mass manufacturing and consumption, developing foreground knowledge on product quality with a view to reducing the volume of resources used throughout the product life cycle has become an issue of paramount importance (Chiniese et al., 2001; Van Der Werf and Sakon, 2015).

The key challenge is to develop a system that educates consumers on the impact of products upon the natural environment throughout their entire life cycle, but which at the same time can also provide producers with the opportunity to inform consumers about the advantages of their products. One such solution is eco-labelling, which is considered one of the key consumer educational tools for environmentally-friendly products (Brodow and Lewis, 2010; Bertrandias et al., 2017; Di Martino et al., 2019).

Until now eco-labelling has been identified as a one-way communication tool notifying consumers of a product's ecological impact. The benefits for an enterprise have not been analyzed. However, the growing popularity of eco-labelling over the years must be seen in the context of

the advantages that it may bring to both enterprises and consumers (Wang et al., 2015). In recent decades eco-labels have become a strategic means of communication for environment-friendly products (Bougherara and Comber, 2009; Cleutene, 2010; Song et al., 2019). Their positive impact as a means of drawing consumers' attention to the identity of organic products has been noticed by companies and organizations (Joshi and Rahman, 2015; Sommer and Wiustenhagen, 2006). From a company's point of view, eco-labels are expected to promote organic products and give them a competitive advantage. In the case of the consumer, eco-labelling is designed to reduce any uncertainty they may have regarding the environmental impact of products as well as to help consumers choose those products that cause less ecological damage throughout their whole life cycle (Murah et al., 2018). Therefore, in the present article eco-labelling is assumed to play an important role in accomplishing both sustainable production and sustainable consumption. An eco-label is a "new" kind of environmental policy instrument that stresses the role played by information in communicating a product's impact upon the environment in terms of its production, distribution, consumption and/or disposal (recycling), namely the entire product life cycle (Fan et al., 2019). While eco-labelling has been much discussed in the literature, in our own work we have focused on the task of filling an important research gap, namely providing an assessment of this tool's significance in the implementation of sustainable production and sustainable consumption. For many years eco-labelling in its myriad

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