



Invitation to

Event Series on the Limits and Potential of Voluntary Sustainability Initiatives

Inaugural event

13 November 2017, 11am - 16pm

at the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Hiroshimastraße 28, 10785 Berlin

House 2, Room 1.02

Goal: Recommended steps for civil society organizations on the effectiveness and future of sustainability initiatives as well as the development of concrete demands to be directed at corporate and political actors

For over 25 years global manufacturing has been accompanied by voluntary Corporate Social Responsibility measures. These are supposed to ensure that outsourced elements of the production process are carried out in accordance with sustainable corporate principle and not at the cost of people or the environment. Guiding Principles set out by the United Nations established a corporate duty of human rights due diligence (HRDD). But incidents like the Rana Plaza collapse, which killed more than 1,100 people, show that there is a gap between these principles and reality. The sewing facilities at Rana Plaza had been assessed several times by certification companies, including TÜV Rheinland. And this case is not a once-off: cocoa growing, cotton processing and the harvesting of tea and oranges all make clear that human rights violations and severe poverty persist in many industries which make use of certification.

This inaugural event will provide an overview of the limits and the potential of voluntary sustainability initiatives.



Program:

11:00 Welcome: FES roundtable

11:30 How do voluntary initiatives contribute to an improvement of social and ecological standards and which role does government regulation play in this regard?

Nele Kampffmeyer (Öko-Institut) presents the results of the project on the contribution of social standards

12:00 How effective are international framework agreements and what role do international trade unions play in sustainability initiatives?

Peter Rossman (IUF) addresses current framework agreements, the role of trade unions in international sustainability initiatives and their effectiveness

12:30 How do CSR strategies feed into global goods procurement and corporate buying policies?

Nora Lohmeyer (FU Berlin) presents results of the Garment Supply Chain Governance Project

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Beyond voluntary standards: Liability for auditors or how to respond to misleading or unduly flattering social audits?

Carolijn Terwindt (ECCHR) presents study on different approaches to the liability of social auditors in the textile industry

14:30 Price pressure and sustainability

Peter d'Angremond (Max Havelaar) presents a study on price setting in the banana trade and its knock-on effects

15:00 Effectiveness of sustainability initiatives: discussion and a look ahead to the upcoming series of events

Franziska Humbert (Oxfam) sets out the issues planned for 2018:

- 1) *Local trade unions*
- 2) *Living wages/income*
- 3) *Business model and prices*
- 4) *Monitoring in the post-certification era*
- 5) *Beyond voluntary standards: how to regulate corporate liability?*

Moderated by: Carolijn Terwindt (ECCHR) and Sandra Dusch Silva (CIR)

Language: English