ISO work on sustainability standards
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Launch of the second UNFSS report on Voluntary Sustainability Standards and the Role of the Government

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Workshop organized by the German Development Institute
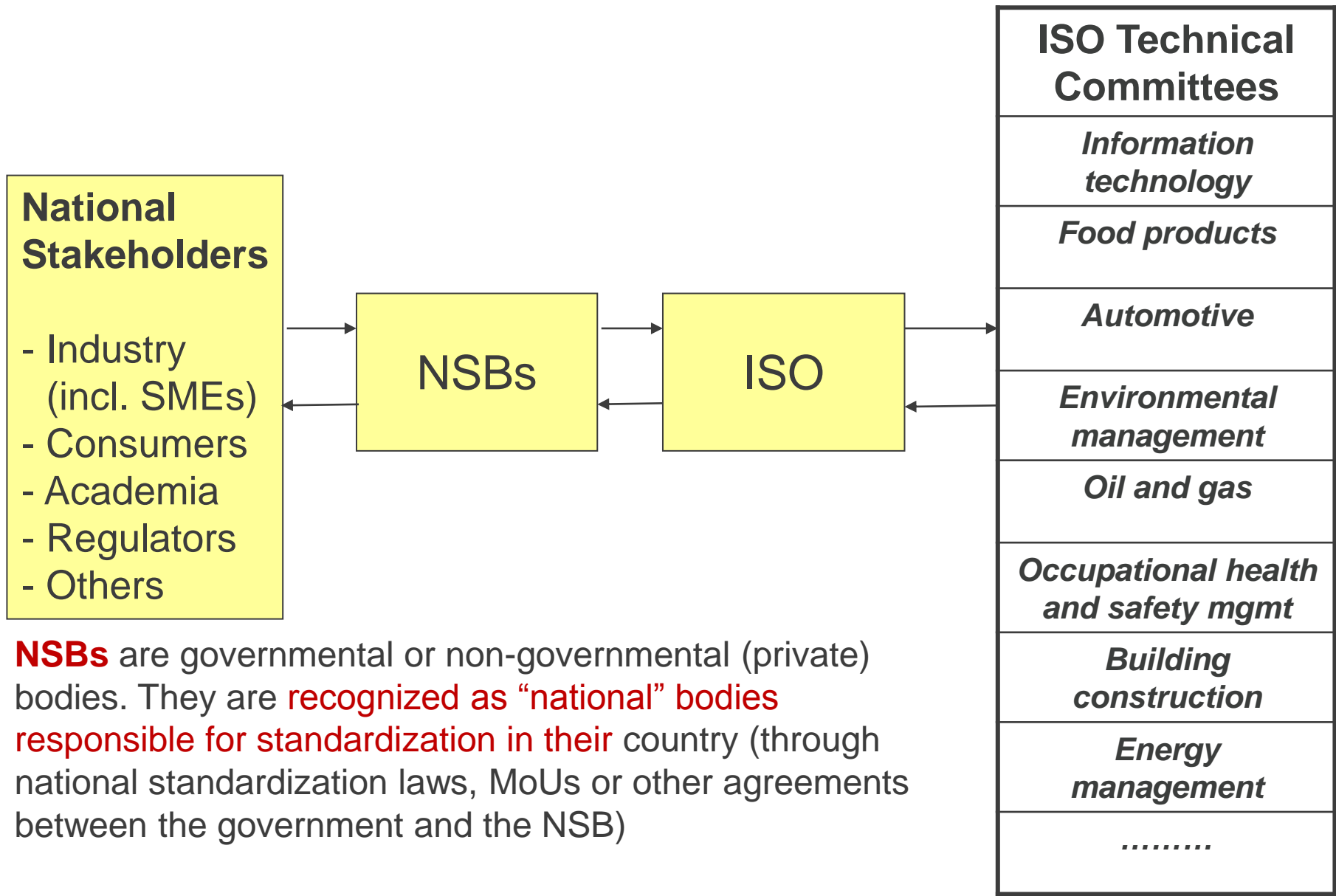
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Contents

- International standardization in ISO

- Use of ISO standards in public policy

- ISO's work on sustainability & the SDGs

- Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS)

- Potential for synergies with ISO?

- Possible next steps

ISO – A brief overview

- System of **national standards bodies** (NSBs – each body representing the stakeholder in its country)

- Total # of members: 163 NSBs (representing 163 countries)

- Total # of members from developing countries: 122 (75%)

- Around 650 international and regional organizations contributing to ISO's standards development

- Currently **over 21'000 valid ISO standards** on a wide range of subject fields

- Over **4'500 ongoing standards projects**

- Standards development time on average **less than 3 years**

- Standards development process: Based on WTO/TBT Code of Good Practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards (+ 6 principles of the TBT Committee)
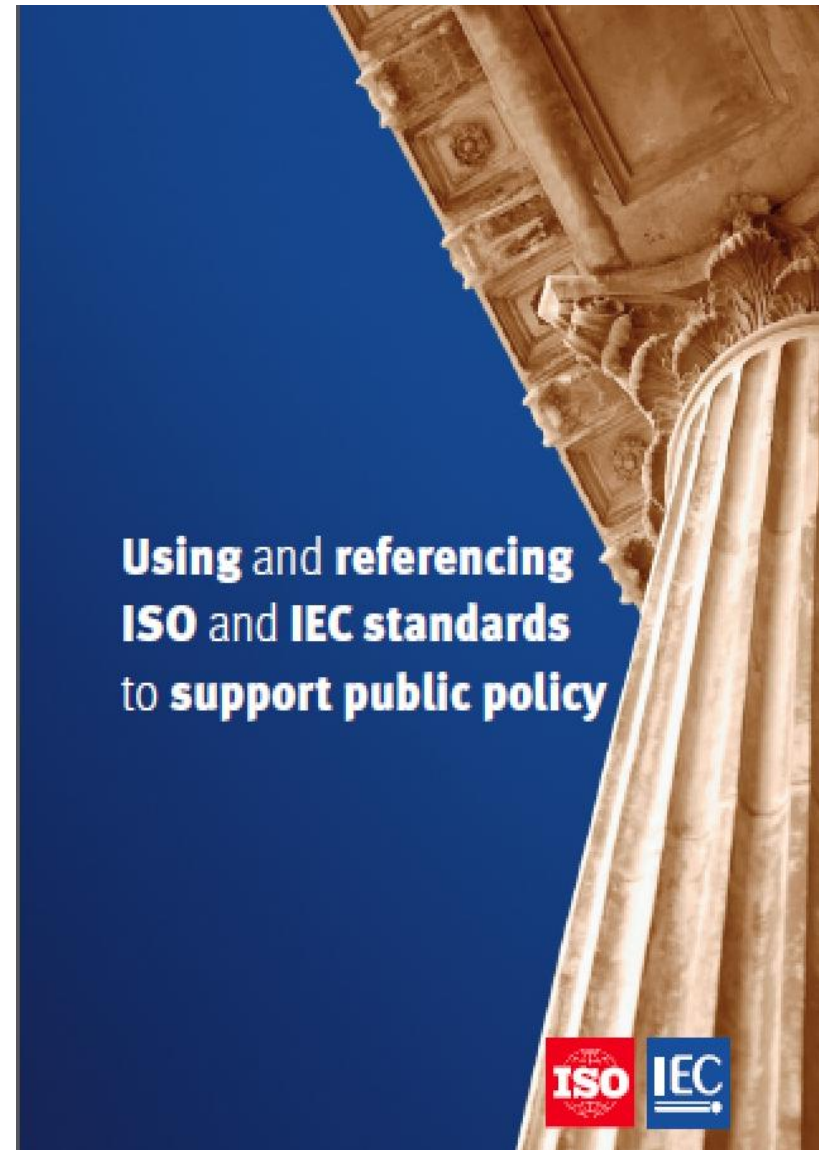
National Standards Bodies (NSBs) – The organizational basis of ISO

National Stakeholders

- Industry (incl. SMEs)
- Consumers
- Academia
- Regulators
- Others

NSBs → ISO

ISO Technical Committees

Information technology
Food products
Automotive
Environmental management
Oil and gas
Occupational health and safety mgmt
Building construction
Energy management
………

NSBs are governmental or non-governmental (private) bodies. They are recognized as "national" bodies responsible for standardization in their country (through national standardization laws, MoUs or other agreements between the government and the NSB)

Use of ISO standards in public policy

- Wide-scale consensus basis:

  High level of LEGITIMACY to meet public interests

- Use of ISO standards for regulation directly or through national adoption

- ISO standards are an important resource for public policy (e.g. safety, health, environment)

Using and **referencing** **ISO** and **IEC standards** to **support public policy**

Sustainable Development Goals

End hunger

- ISO 22000 *Food safety management*
- ISO 4002 *Equipment for sowing and planting*
- ISO 4197 *Equipment for working the soil*
- ISO 6880 *Machinery for agriculture*
- ISO 20635 *Infant formula and adult nutritionals*
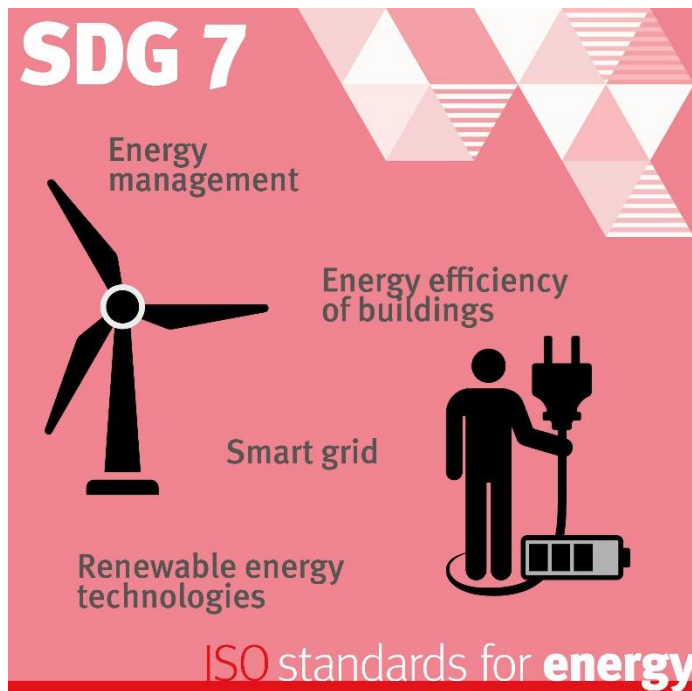- ISO 1871 *Food and feed products*

Good health

- ISO 11137 *Sterilization of health care products*
- ISO 8828 *Implants for surgery*
- ISO 18615 *Traditional Chinese medicine*
- ISO/IEEE 11073 *Health informatics -- Point-of-care medical device communication*
- TS 13131 *Telehealth services*
- IWA 18 *Framework for integrated community-based life-long health and care services for aged societies*

Water and sanitation

SDG 6 — ISO standards for water

- ISO 14046 *Water footprint*
- ISO 15839 *Water quality*
- ISO 20325 *Service activities relating to drinking water supply and wastewater systems*
- ISO 24516-1 *Drinking water distribution networks*
- ISO 24518 *Crisis management of water utilities*
- ISO 24526 *Water efficiency management systems*
- IWA 24 *Non-sewered sanitation systems – General safety and performance requirements for design and testing*

Sustainable energy

- ISO 50001 *Energy management systems*
- ISO 9553 *Solar energy*
- TR 10217 *Solar energy -- Water heating systems*
- ISO 13065 *Sustainability criteria for bioenergy*
- ISO 17743 *Energy savings*
- ISO 20619 *Calculation methods for energy savings*

Resilient infrastructure, innovation

- TR 37150 *Smart community infrastructures -- Review of existing activities relevant to metrics*
- ISO 37154 *Smart community infrastructures -- Best practice guidelines for transportation*
- ISO 21542 *Building construction -- Accessibility and usability of the built environment*
- ISO 50501 *Innovation management system*
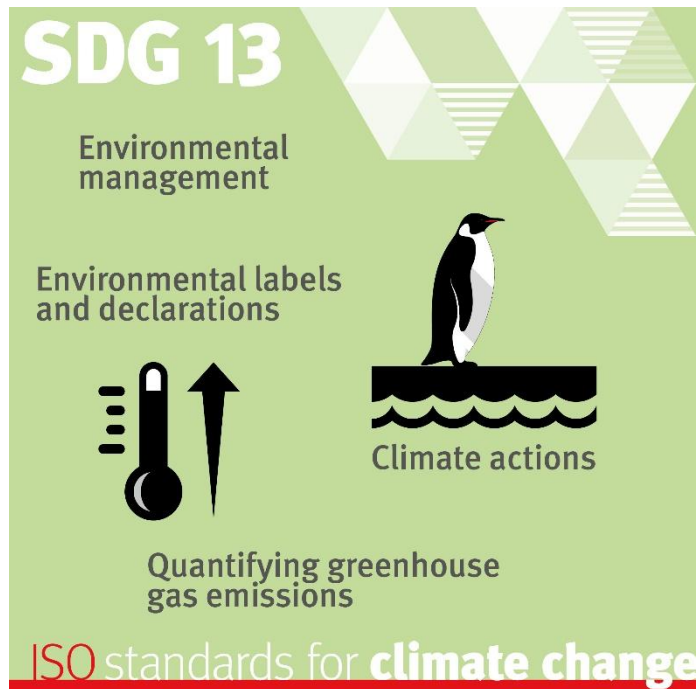
Social responsibility

- ISO 26000 *Guidance on social responsibility*
- ISO 37001 *Anti-bribery management systems*
- ISO 20400 *Sustainable procurement*
- ISO 45001 *Occupational health and safety management systems*
- IWA 9 *Framework for managing sustainable development in business districts*

Sustainable communities

SDG 11

City indicators

Smart community infrastructures

Intelligent transport systems

Disaster management

ISO standards for **smart cities**

- ISO 37101 *Sustainable development of communities -- Management systems*

- ISO 37104 *Guide to establishing strategies for smart cities and communities*

- ISO 37120 *Sustainable development of communities -- Indicators for city services and quality of life*

- ISO 10711 *Intelligent Transport Systems*

Climate change

- ISO 14001 *Environmental management systems*
- ISO 14044 *Life cycle assessment*
- ISO 14064 *Greenhouse gases*
- TS 14067 *Carbon footprint of products*
- ISO 14080 *Framework and principles for methodologies on climate actions*
- ISO Guide 82 *Guidelines for addressing sustainability in standards*

Sustainable use of oceans

- ISO 29400 *Ships and marine technology -- Offshore wind energy*
- ISO 21070 *Marine environment protection*
- ISO 35101 *Petroleum and natural gas industries -- Arctic operations*
- ISO 12878 *Environmental monitoring of the impacts from marine finfish farms*
- ISO 19900 *General requirements for offshore structures*

Use of terrestrial ecosystems

SDG 15

Environmental product evaluation

Chain of custody of wood products

Soil quality

Sustainable machinery for agriculture and forestry

ISO standards for **biodiversity**

- ISO 14055 *Combating land degradation and desertification*
- ISO 38200 *Chain of custody of wood and wood-based products*
- ISO 23611 *Soil quality -- Sampling of soil invertebrates*
- ISO 15952 *Effects of pollutants on juvenile land snails*
- ISO 22030 *Soil quality -- Biological methods*
- ISO 11850 *Machinery for forestry -- General safety requirements*

Voluntary sustainability standards – Some numbers

- New UNFSS Flagship-report (2016): **Over 400 VSS**

- International Trade Centre: It is estimated that there are "somewhere **between 450 and several thousand VSS**" (source: "Introduction to voluntary sustainability standards", presentation, ITC, 2016)

A very complex landscape!

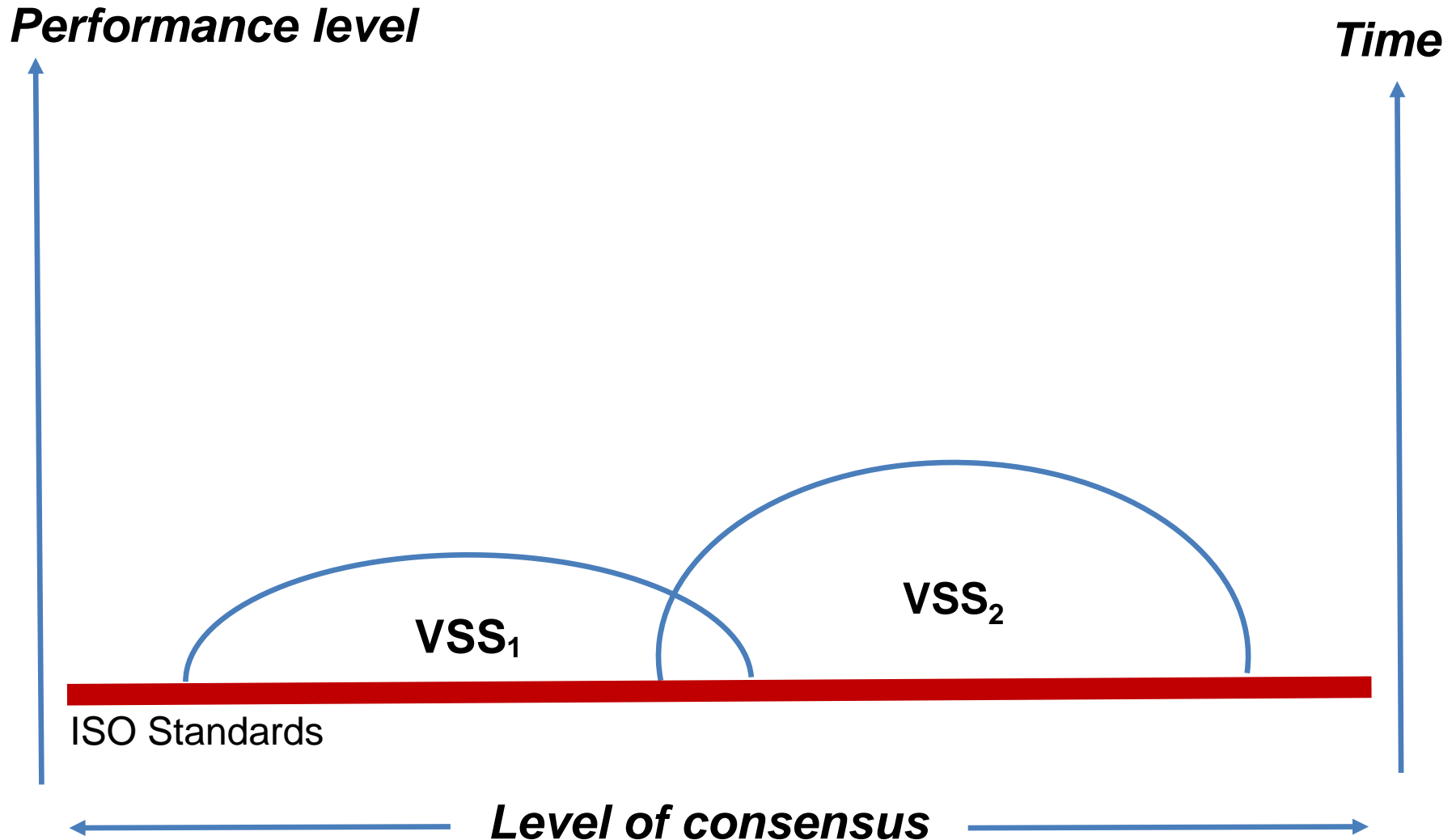# Concerns about some VSS (the "negative" side)

- Lack of openness/transparency/inclusiveness in their development

- Accreditation and certification are often very closely connected with standardization → Risk of self-assessment and lack of credibility

- Scientific basis is sometimes not secured

- Multiple and overlapping schemes can lead to confusion in markets

- Investment needs and multiple certifications increase costs for producers and consumers

- Potential for the exclusion of small producers from market access

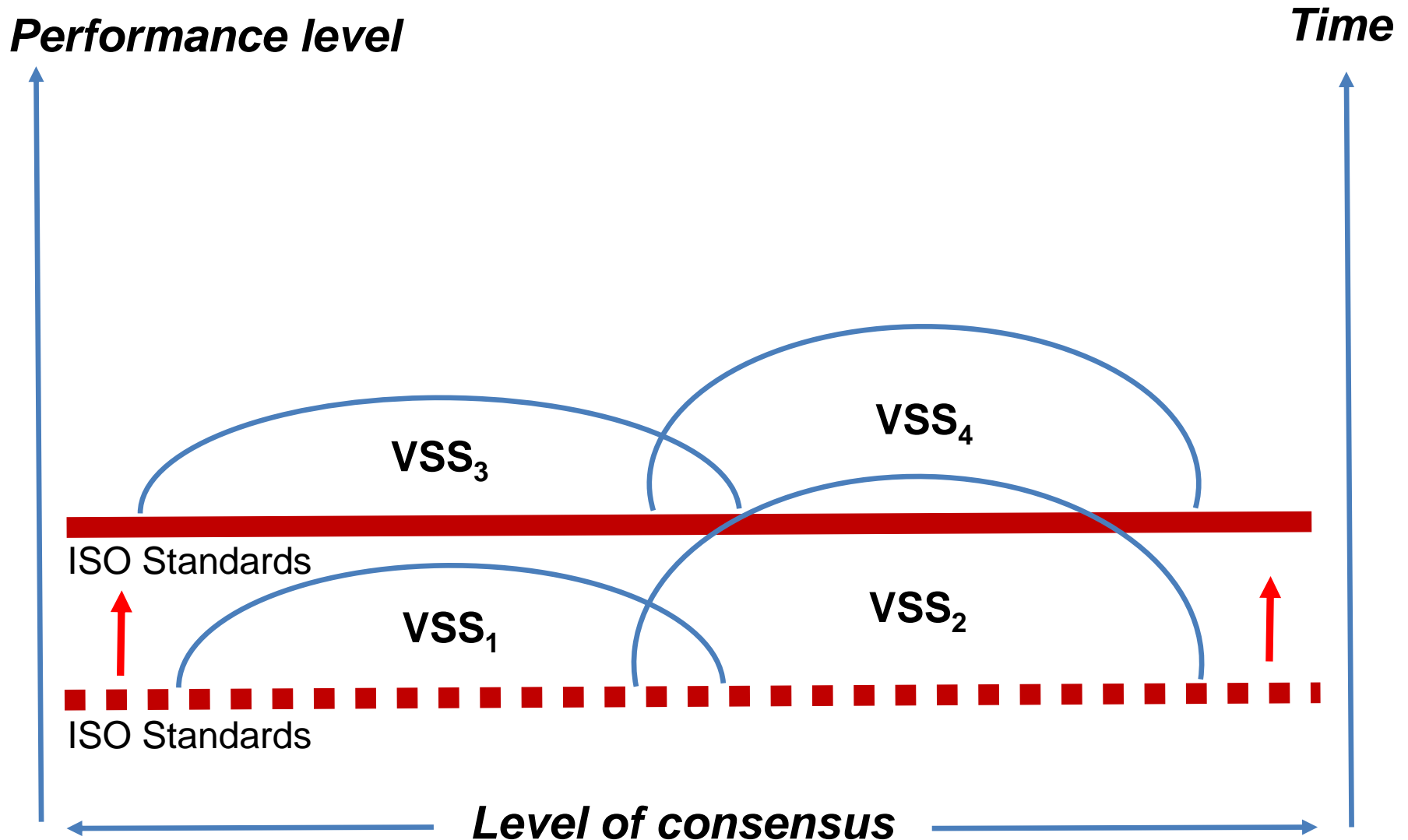# VSS as sustainability drivers (the "positive" side)

- Many VSS support sustainability objectives (economic, social/labour, ecological)

- Some aim to apply openness, transparency and inclusiveness in their development

- "Coalitions of the willing" that aim at driving business practices beyond the current levels

- Such standards can establish higher sustainability performance

- They may not yet be acceptable for a wider consensus (e.g. in ISO), but can possibly be mainstreamed and become accepted good practice over time

Potential for synergies with ISO ?

Improved sustainability performance over time by integrating higher levels of some leading VSS with ISO standards

Outcomes

- Some VSS set higher sustainability performance levels but represent a limited consensus with a limited user base

- By integrating with some leading VSS, ISO standards can contribute to mainstreaming and further disseminating advanced practices that have been pioneered by some leading VSS

- This synergy can result in a wider dissemination of positive sustainability practices and improved overall sustainability performance

- Sustainable production and trade could be stimulated (including for SMEs)

Possible next steps

- There is a need for more dialogue between VSS and the international standardization system

- A multi-stakeholder dialogue should be launched including relevant bodies involved in public, international and private standards-setting and standards and trade issues (e.g. UNFSS, WTO, ISO, ITC, Codex Alimentarius, OIE, ISEAL Alliance etc.) and other players from the field of VSS systems

- ISO welcomes the initiation of such a dialogue, better coordination and cooperation