

Eco-Innovation activities in key countries beyond Europe

“Top Runner” Program (Agency for Natural Resources and Energy), Japan

www.eecj.or.jp/top_runner/index.html

“Top Runner Programme has been very effective in the promotion of energy efficiency and manufacturers highly support the programme (OECD Environment Working Papers). The energy efficiency improvement gains exceeded initial expectations”.

The Top Runner Program sets energy efficiency targets for currently 23 product groups (ranging from vehicles to household electric appliances) at industry-level, based on the value of the most energy-efficient products on the market at the respective time as benchmark. This new standard must be met by manufacturers in four to eight years. Products that reach this standard receive the “Top Runner Label”. The ones that fail can be “named and shamed” publicly. In the future, the coverage in terms of the number of product items will be further expanded, and the Top Runner standards will be reviewed.

Support instruments: Top Runner Program supports the market by setting standards, labeling products and providing an overview of the products on the market. For the development of standards, Committees with industry, academic, consumer and government representatives come together in different working groups. They measure the energy consumption efficiency of all products currently on the market and determine the most up-to-date maximum efficiency value. Energy-efficiency in products is usually perceived as a competitive advantage. A collection of supportive policy instruments have developed around the Top Runner program.

Target groups: The programme focuses on industries and manufacturers – national companies but also importers. Product groups in the range of the programme are chosen along the following criteria: used in large quantity in Japan; consumption of considerable amounts of energy while in use; requirement of particular efforts to improve their energy consumption efficiency.

The **Top Runner** program programme focuses on stimulating the supply side of eco-innovation and supports the diffusion of eco-innovation. The obligation of compliance rests with manufacturers and importers, not retailers of product users. The programme focuses on technological innovation in energy efficiency of machinery, household devices and vehicles.

Technical details:

- National program
- Established in 1999 and acts according to the Energy Conservation Law of 1979.
- Managed by the agency for Natural Resources and Energy, Japan.



Boosting Eco-Innovation through Cooperation In Research and Dissemination



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