The external entity (or entities) would not perform any inherently governmental functions such as procurement policy, procurement decisions, or strategic implementation decisions.

V. Request for Comments

EPA is seeking public input on the draft Guidelines and the concept of assessing non-governmental standards and ecolabels for voluntary use in Federal procurement. Recognizing that implementation of these draft Guidelines will call for additional stakeholder engagement and assessment processes, EPA also welcomes comment on the overall approach, including the potential pilot project. In particular:

1. How might the Guidelines benefit the broader marketplace?
2. Are there any draft Guidelines that should be removed or modified? Are there gaps in the draft Guidelines that could be addressed by a new Guideline(s)?
3. Are the designations of “baseline” and “leadership” in the draft Guidelines understandable? Can the designations be easily implemented? Do they appropriately reflect varying approaches in the marketplace today?
4. How should the leadership Guidelines be applied to standards and ecolabels in different product categories (e.g., different weightings in an overall conformity assessment scheme)?
5. What processes, approaches, measures, and mechanisms should be used to determine conformance with the Guidelines, if they are finalized and implemented?
6. Under what circumstances and under what authorities, if any, should the Federal Government require a particular type of conformity assessment to provide adequate confidence that the products have met a particular environmental performance standard or ecolabel?
7. Are there alternatives to the pilot project that EPA should consider?
8. If EPA were to move forward with a pilot project to test the proposed standards and ecolabels assessment approach, which product categories should be prioritized?
9. What challenges need to be addressed/resolved in implementing the proposed Guidelines in order to be a transparent, fair, and consistent process?

List of Subjects

Environmental protection, government procurement, standards, ecolabels, Guidelines.