

Energy Efficiency: Still a Long way to go

This is a summary of the results of a project on identification of key differences in Harmonization of products status on energy efficiency and labeling criteria, in India and Sri Lanka. The project was conducted by VOICE (Voluntary organization in interest of consumer education) and SLEMA, under the Sari/e Small Grants programme, and, funded by USAID.

Products studied in the VOICE-SLEMA survey

- Compact Florescent Lamps
- Domestic refrigerators
- Air Conditioners
- Ceiling Fans
- Ballasts

While products like refrigerators are silent on the amount of energy they consume, other products like Compact Florescent Lamps (CFL) sell solely on the premise that they bring the soaring energy bills down. Yet, very few CFL lamps have any kind of energy-efficiency label on them. A recent Consumer VOICE survey finds India lagging behind its neighbour Sri Lanka when it comes to energy efficiency of products.

India faces a near-doubling of energy demand over the next 30 years, which domestic supply will be unlikely to match. Thus saving energy is going to be a major concern not just with the government but also with individual users and consumers. One way of meeting the deficit energy demand is to save energy by going about switching off fans and lights in one's home, and the other way is to get the market to deliver products that are high on energy efficiency. With international brands selling their refrigerators, air conditioners and televisions in India, and with multi-million dollar advertising campaigns for such products, one would take it that achieving energy efficiency standards should not be very difficult, but as one VOICE survey finds out, electronic goods manufactures in India are still cagey about reveling energy Efficiency performance of their products to consumers.

VOICE has been working with USAID in India to promote energy efficiency standards and labeling programmes on most efficient use of energy in the South Asia region.

According to a survey carried out by VOICE, in

association with Sri Lanka Energy Managers Association (SLEMA), there are many brands of the energy-efficient CFL lamps in the market, but the energy efficiency information on their label is lacking. This was also the case for other products like ceiling fans, magnetic ballasts, and air conditioners.

Out of 10 ceilings fans purchased for survey proposes by VOICE, only four had labeled their power consumption, while only one had the ISI standardisation mark on it.

Out of 15 magnetic ballasts investigated, only 3 had declared their Watt-Loss.

None of the refrigerators surveyed by VOICE had mentioned its power consumption in its brochure/pamphlet, even while it is a Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) requirement.

With a product like a CFL lamp, which sells entirely on its low-energy consumption USP, it was surprising to find that of the 16 brands surveyed, only 2 had energy-efficiency labels on them, that too not the Indian energy-efficiency label.

India lags behind Sri Lanka in energy labeling

None of the products available in India surveyed by VOICE, except one brand of ceiling fan, two brands of CFLs and three brands of Ballasts, had any standardization mark (like the ISI) or any energy label marking on them. Sri Lanka is streets ahead of India in terms of labeling. Most of their popular ballasts and CFLs had energy labels on them. Here is a comparison of how products in India perform vis-à-vis those in Sri Lankan.

India	Sri Lanka
Only 4 out of 10 brands declared their power input (energy consumption)	3 out of 4 brands declared power input.
Power input varies from 50 to 78 W for the same size (48") of ceiling fans.	Power input varies from 70 to 81 W for the same size (56") of ceiling fans.
Only 1 brand had Standard (ISI) mark. Important information like air delivery, service value, rated speed and power factor not mentioned on most of the fans.	Majority of Sri Lankan brands of ceiling fans do not declare this critical information either.
CFL lamps No brand of the 14 brands surveyed has an energy-efficiency mark.	11 out of 17 Sri Lankan CFLs have energy labels.
MRP not mentioned on 3 CFLs.	Country of manufacture not declared.
Important information like luminous flux, colour temp., current, life warrantee not mentioned on most CFLs.	Srilankan CFLs also do not declare this information.