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**Quasi-private standards:**  
**potentialities to meet the criticisms of International**  
**Environmental Law?**

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## **Abstract**

The thesis starts from the observation that the traditional international environmental law fails to answer the issues it intended to address. The traditional treaty-making processes and interstates negotiations have received criticism regarding several aspects, for instance its slowness, its lack of effectiveness and an inefficient implementation. Considering these problems, this leads us to wonder whether there are some viable and effective alternatives to this traditional method.

Besides this traditional way to deal with the environmental challenges, changes in the way the world is ruled has occurred: new and unusual mechanisms and new state actors. Scholars have developed new approaches to grasp these changes, which are part of the thinking about what is called global governance.

The private or quasi-private standards are an example in the area of the environment of the various kinds of mechanisms that one can find in the changing landscape of law. The International Organization for Standardization is the most recognized and accepted general international standards-setting organisation. Examining its structure, composition, working method, the emergence of concerns for the environment and the kind of instruments it produces allows us to perceive the hybrid nature of the organisation and its standards.

Through the analysis of the various uses of the standard, mainly the environmental management system, one can see whether these instruments can be efficient or not. A question arising is however the question of legitimacy. Since it is developed by a non-governmental body, it does not offer the same guarantee of legitimacy as the interstates negotiations.

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