Ecolabelling: Defining the True Meaning of Green

Representing Life Cycle-based Type 1 Ecolabels Worldwide
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As concerns about climate change, toxicity and waste increase, those making responsible purchasing decisions need products with genuine environmental benefit.

Life cycle-based ecolabels offer a viable market solution
What Are Life Cycle-based Ecolabels?
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- Leadership ecolabels
- Classified as Type 1 by International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14024:2018
- Awarded to environmentally preferable products and services
- Based on life cycle considerations
What Are Life Cycle-based Ecolabels?
How Are Ecolabels Different?
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A life cycle ecolabel indicates that a product or service has been certified against a science-based standard specific to its category.
How are Ecolabels Different?

Criteria and product categories can differ, reflecting regional variables, but all life cycle-based standards address multiple environmental and health attributes and most have requirements for issues such as toxicity, air quality, energy use, recyclability, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carcinogens and other areas of concern.
How are Ecolabels Different?

Standard criteria must:

• be developed in a transparent process open to the public
• address multiple key environmental and health impacts over the product life cycle
• be attainable, verifiable and measurable
• consider the performance of the product
• be published and available for inspection by anyone
• be updated regularly to represent environmental leadership
How are Ecolabels Different?

Type 1 ecolabels are licensed for use only after a product or service is proven to meet the standard.

The ecolabel must:

• be voluntary, not regulatory
• be open and equitably applied to all potential applicants
• be awarded by an independent and unbiased third party
How Do Ecolabels Benefit Providers?
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• **DIFFERENTIATION** | the ecolabel has a market advantage

• **CREDIBILITY** | the ecolabel provides a genuine environmental benefit

• **VALIDATION** | the ecolabel proves environmental claims

• **RIGOUR** | the ecolabel requires performance testing

• **ACCESSIBILITY** | the ecolabel is recognised by a worldwide market

• **RELEVANCE** | the ecolabel focuses on all relevant environmental issues

• **INSPIRATION** | the ecolabel promotes more sustainable consumption
What is the Global Ecolabelling Network?
What is the Global Ecolabelling Network?

The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) protects health and the environment by developing, promoting and supporting the world’s leading ecolabels.

It is a network of ecolabel organisations that define what green really means, linking a world of environmentally preferable products and services.
What is the Global Ecolabelling Network?
What is GEN?

GEN was founded in 1994 to foster cooperation, information exchange and standards harmonisation among members, associates, affiliates and other ecolabelling programmes.

Members are actively involved with the UN Environment Programme initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals.
How Do GEN Members Operate?
How Do GEN Members Operate?

- Set and publish life cycle-based environmental standards or criteria
- Certify products and services that meet the standards
- Provide information, advice and technical assistance to organisations developing ecolabelling programmes
- Disseminate information to the public
- Represent the interests of ecolabelling at various international meetings and events
How Do GEN Members Operate?

Signatories of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) can negotiate joint specific activities that rest on mutual recognition of each other’s programmes.

GEN members also collaborate on Common Core Criteria which speeds standard development, improves quality and expands the market for similar products.
GENICES

The GEN Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System is a peer review process that benchmarks members as a basis for mutual trust and confidence.

GENICES enables sharing of information among qualified GEN members.
GENICES

• Helps new programmes start more quickly
• Facilitates ecolabelling of products that have been certified elsewhere
• Makes international ecolabelling more cost-effective
• Facilitates exports of environmentally preferable products
• Addresses and allays concerns about trade barriers
World Ecolabel Day
World Ecolabel Day

More than 50 countries around the world celebrate World Ecolabel Day in October.

It’s a day to focus on ecolabel products and services that are proven to be environmentally preferable and performance tested, to ensure the best products for the health of people and the planet.
World Ecolabel Day

Consumers, companies and communities worldwide celebrate this event by discovering the ecolabels available in their countries, buying and using third-party certified products and services.
To contact GEN member organisations, discover the product and service categories that carry their ecolabels, and learn more about the Global Ecolabelling Network visit globalecolabelling.net.

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