

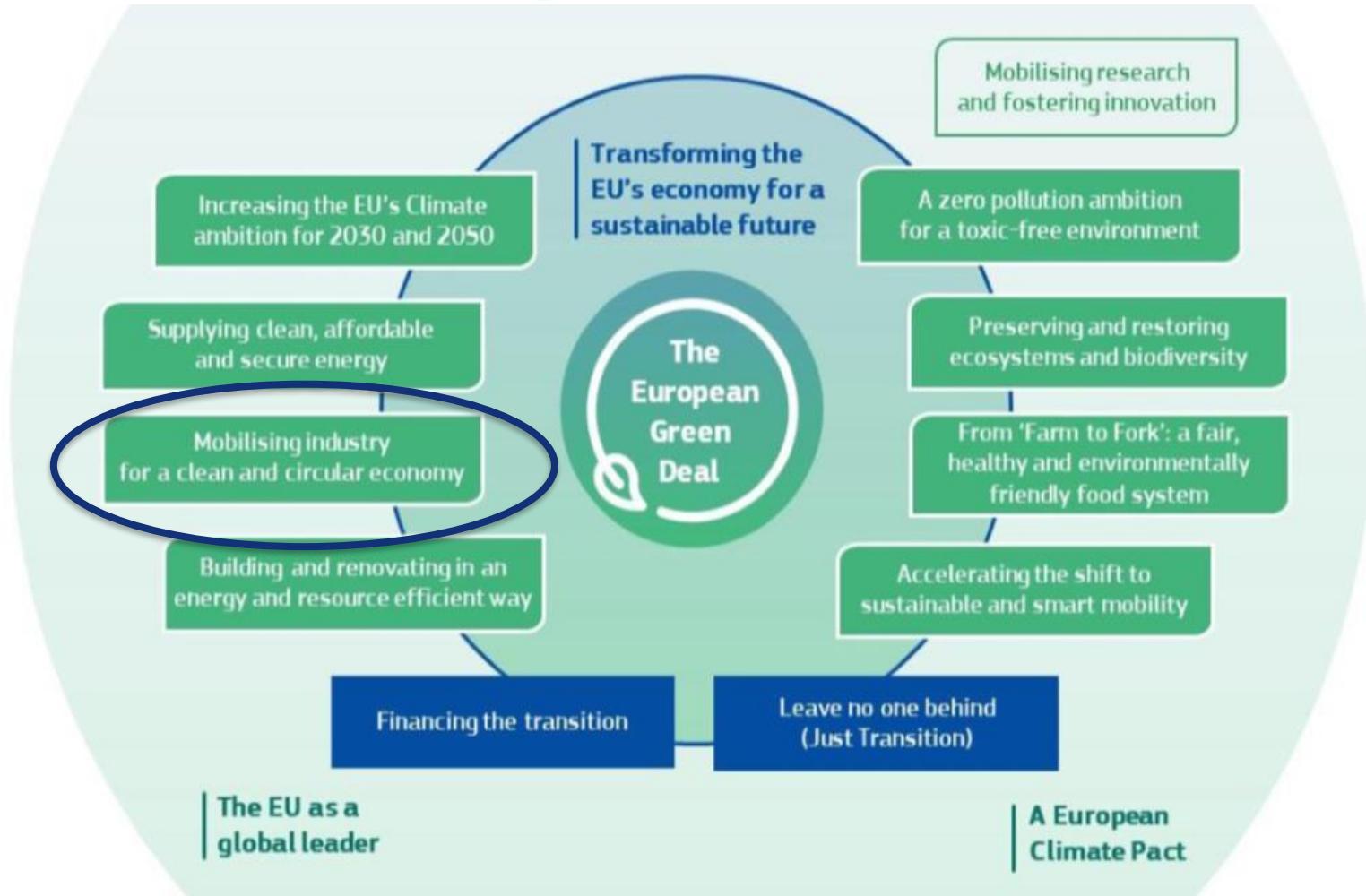


# **Green Public Procurement and Ecolabelling in the EU under the Circular Economy**

***Online international seminar (Japan)  
26 November 2020***

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DG-Environment/Unit B1**

# The European Green Deal



# The Circular Economy Action Plan (2020)



- Make **sustainable products** the norm in the EU
- **Empower** consumers and public buyers
- **Focus also on key product value chains:** electronics and ICT; batteries and vehicles; packaging; plastics; textiles; construction and buildings; food; water and nutrients
- Ensure **less waste**
- Make circularity work for **people, regions and cities**
- **Lead global efforts** on circular economy

## 2. A sustainable product policy framework

### 2.1 Designing sustainable products:

- The review of the Ecodesign Directive as well as further work on specific product groups (...) will build on criteria and rules established under the **EU Ecolabel** regulation, the Product Environmental Footprint approach and the **EU GPP** criteria.

### 2.2. Empowering consumers and public buyers:

- The Commission will test the integration of the PEF/OEF methods in the **EU Ecolabel** and include more systematically durability, recyclability and recycled content in the EU Ecolabel criteria.
- The Commission will propose minimum mandatory **GPP** criteria and targets in sectoral legislation and phase in compulsory reporting to monitor **GPP** uptake without creating unjustified administrative burden.

# The EU Ecolabel

- A **voluntary scheme** aiming at promoting products and services with a lower environmental impact
- Established in **1992** (revised in 2000 and 2010)
- Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel
- The **official European Ecolabel** managed by the European Commission and Member States' Competent Bodies
- The only **EU wide ISO 14024 Type 1 Ecolabel** – (one label for all pan-European or global marketing activities).

# The EU Ecolabel



- **Scope:** any goods or services supplied for distribution, consumption or use on the EU Community market for which EU Ecolabel criteria have been established. Not for medicinal products for human use, for veterinary use, nor any type of medical device.
- **Pass/fail system; multi-criteria and life-cycle based approach.**
- **Reliable:** independent third party verified criteria by national competent bodies.



## COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL New Consumer Agenda - Strengthening consumer resilience for sustainable recovery

*"Uptake and awareness of the **EU Ecolabel** could be fostered through communication actions and partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including retailers, aiming to promote the EU Ecolabel also on e-marketplaces.*

*The **EU Ecolabel** would, moreover, be extended to retail financial products in line with the 2018 Sustainable Finance Action Plan, allowing consumers to rely on a trusted and credible label when investing in green financial products."*

# The EU Ecolabel criteria

- Addresses **10-20%** env. best products on the market
- Cover the **main environmental impacts** of the product and their technical performance
- Are **revised regularly** (av. 6 years) to follow technological evolution
- Determined on **scientific basis** considering the whole life cycle of products
- Include **health, safety, social and ethical aspects**, where appropriate
- Substitution of **hazardous substances** with safer ones
- Support **durability, reusability, recyclability and recycled content** of products
- Guarantee compliance with **existing EU legislation**
- Include **fitness for use** requirements.



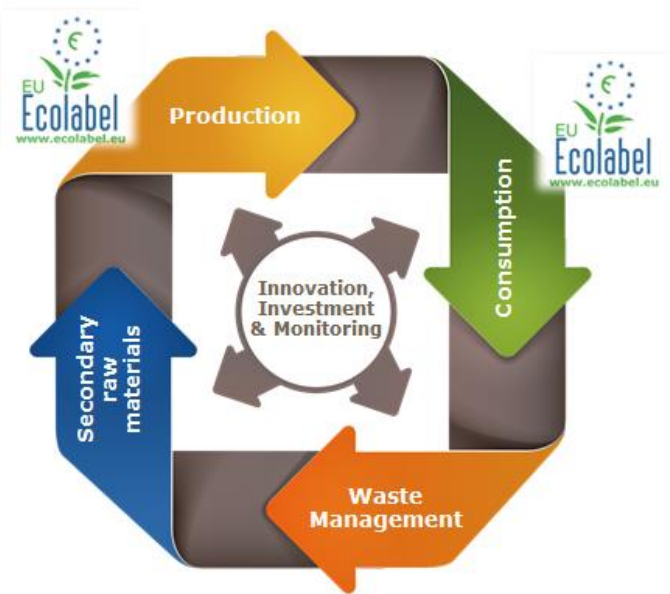
# EU Ecolabel criteria development

- **Actors:** the Joint Research Center/EC (leader), DG Environment/EC, the EU Ecolabelling Board (competent bodies and stakeholders)
- **Annex I of the Regulation:** Procedure for the development and revision of EU Ecolabel criteria
  - Standard procedure
  - Shortened procedure
    - Where criteria were already developed by other ISO 14024 type I ecolabelling schemes or for non substantial revision of the criteria.
- **Duration:** av. 18-24 months.

# EU Ecolabel criteria development

## Steps followed:

- Assessment of a request for a new product group
- EC decision after EUEB consultation
- Preparation of draft criteria with an associated technical report (by the JRC/EC)
- At least 2 working group meetings for consultation of stakeholder (JRC/EC)
- Vote by the Regulatory Committee
- Adoption of a Commission Decision (legal document) and provision of a User Manual/webinars.



# EU Ecolabel = a tool for the transition to the Circular Economy

- **Production:** EU Ecolabel products are durable, easy to dismantle, repair, reuse and recycle. Packaging is limited.
- **Consumption:** A reliable ecolabel, easy to recognise, enables consumers to make conscious choices, without compromising on the quality.
- **Waste management:** Waste reduction, high quality recyclates.
- **From waste to resources (secondary raw materials):** Saving resources, sustainable sourcing, reduction of hazardous substances.
- **Plastics:** Reduced packaging, minimum recycled content, design for recycling, management of plastic waste, no added microplastics to detergents/cosmetics.

## The EU Ecolabel: some figures

- **24 good and service groups**
- **1,757 licences**
- **75,796 different goods and services available on the European market.**

Most licences and products for:

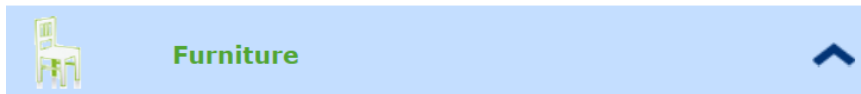
**indoor paints and varnishes, tissue paper and tissue products, hard coverings, textiles, hard surface cleaning products and tourist accommodations.**

Countries with most licences and products:

**Spain, Italy, and France.**

(\* ) data as of September 2020

# Example of EU Ecolabel criteria: Furniture



|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Current criteria</b>               | <a href="#">Commission Decision of 28 July 2016</a>  |
| <b>Validity</b>                       | <b>28 July 2022</b>  |
| <b>Application pack / User manual</b> | <a href="#">User Manual</a> (Parts A, B, C, D and E)<br><a href="#">User Manual</a> (Part C) - Application form (writable PDF file)<br><a href="#">User Manual</a> (Part D) - Declarations (writable PDF file)<br><a href="#">User Manual</a> (Part E) - Checklist (writable PDF file) |
| <b>Revision</b>                       | Not started  |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>                  | <a href="#">Technical report</a>   |
| <b>Criteria in a nutshell</b>         | <a href="#">Furniture</a>  |

1. Product description
2. General requirements for hazardous substances and mixtures
3. Wood, cork, bamboo and rattan
4. Plastics
5. Metals
6. Upholstery covering material
7. Upholstery padding material
8. Glass: use of heavy metals
9. Final product requirements
10. Consumer information
11. Information appearing on the EU Ecolabel.

<https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/products-groups-and-criteria.html>

# Newly established and upcoming EU Ecolabel criteria

- Printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products (revision – Nov 2020)
- Electronic displays (revision – Nov 2020)
- Hard covering products (revision – Febr 2021)
- **Retail financial products (new – 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2021)**
- **Cosmetic products and animal care products (revised – 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2021)**
- **Absorbent Hygiene Products (tbc)**
- **Growing media, soil improvers and mulch (tbc)**

# How to apply for the EU Ecolabel?

- Contact the relevant competent body
- Register the product/service in ECAT
- Submit application + pay fees
- Assessment of the application by the Competent Body (2-3 months)
- Application approval and licence (contract)

## Fees:

[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/eu-ecolabel\\_fees.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/eu-ecolabel_fees.pdf)

## ECAT:

<http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/>





## Benefits for applicants

- **Contributes to improve the image of the company:** recognizes efforts to make sustainable products/services
- **Contributes to growth of the company and job creation**
- Certifies that the product/service is **among the most environmentally-friendly in its class**
- Increases the **visibility of the product** on the market (the **EU Ecolabel logo** is recognised throughout Europe by millions of EU consumers)
- Support for **marketing activities**, also undertaken by the EC and the national Competent Bodies.
- **Featuring** of the products and company on the EU Ecolabel official catalogue (<http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/>)
- Easier access to GPP (Green Public Procurement).





## Benefits for consumers

- It is a **reliable third-party** certified label that can be trusted (covers all main environmental, health, social issues)
- **Transparent** process for criteria establishment
- A **logo** easy to recognize
- It helps making **informed choices**.
- Allows to empower consumers to **choose green products** thus stirring the market of sustainable products in a circular economy.

Recognition: (Eurobarometer)

# EU Ecolabel and international

- Products or services manufactured **outside of the EU**, to be placed on the EU market, may be awarded the EU Ecolabel.
- The application shall be submitted **to a Competent Body** in any of the Member States in which the product is/has been placed on the market.
- Cooperation with **other ISO 14024 type 1 ecolabels** (eg. during criteria revision).
- EU Ecolabel is member of the **Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN)**.

# What is EU Green Public Procurement?

- Public authorities are **major consumers** in Europe. By using their purchasing power to choose goods and services with lower impacts on the environment, they can make an important contribution to **sustainable consumption and production**.
- Communication (COM (2008) 400) "[Public procurement for a better environment](#)": process whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, services and works **with a reduced environmental impact** throughout their life cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured.
- GPP is **voluntary** (with some exception).

# GPP criteria: two levels of criteria

- **GPP criteria** are developed to facilitate the inclusion of green requirements in public tender documents
- **Procuring authorities** may choose, according to their needs and ambition level, to include all or only certain requirements in their tender documents

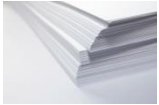
## Core criteria:

- Aim at addressing the key environmental impacts
- Require minimum additional verification effort or cost increases.

## Comprehensive criteria:

- Aim at purchasing the best environmental products available on the market
- Possibly requiring additional verification efforts or a slight increase in cost compared to other products with the same functionality.

# EU GPP Criteria



**Copying and graphic paper**



**Cleaning products and services**



**Computer and Monitors**



**Office Buildings**



**Road transport**



**Furniture**



**Electricity**



**Food & Catering services**



**Textiles**



**Public space maintenance**

# EU GPP Criteria



**Road lighting and traffic signals**



**Waste water infrastructures**



**Flushing Toilets & Urinals**



**Imaging Equipment**



**Road design, construction and maintenance**



**Data centres**



**Sanitary tapware**



**EEE Health care sector**



**Paints and Varnishes**



**Water based heaters**

# Criteria under development/revision

- Computers and monitors
- Road transport



**How to participate to the ongoing work?**

→ [http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/product\\_bureau/projects.html](http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/product_bureau/projects.html)

# GPP support tools

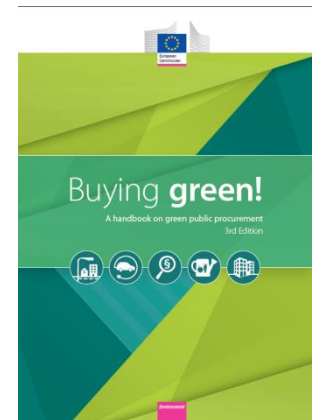
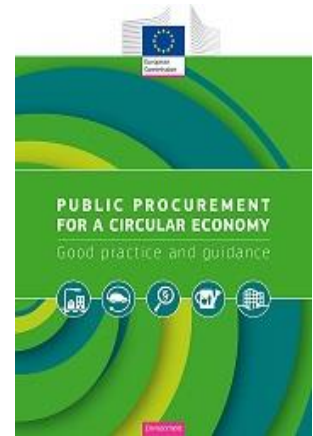
## ***GPP website of the European Commission:***

- *Full sets of EU GPP criteria and background reports in 20+ languages*
- Buying Green Handbook
- Updated GPP Training Toolkit
- Circular Procurement brochure
- More than 150 GPP Examples
- News and upcoming events

***General Help desk: [gpp-helpdesk@iclei.org](mailto:gpp-helpdesk@iclei.org)***

***GPP Newsletter (please sign up!)***

Exchange Platform - <https://procurement-forum.eu/>





# Other GPP projects

## **GPP training activities**

- 14 training programmes, in national language, 16 hours each, 11 EU countries. 33 training sessions carried out – 23 remaining.

## **LCA and PEF in GPP study**

- Ongoing study on “ Life cycle assessment and the environmental footprint methods in the context of the public procurement directives” (Apr 20 – Jan 21 – likely to be prolonged).



# Work on the definition of mandatory GPP criteria

## The new Circular Economy Action Plan

### 2. A Sustainable Product Policy Framework,

#### 2.2. Empowering consumers and public buyers

The Commission will propose minimum mandatory **green public procurement (GPP)** criteria and targets in sectoral legislation and phase in compulsory reporting to monitor the uptake of **Green Public Procurement (GPP)** without creating unjustified administrative burden for public buyers

> As of 2021

Ongoing preparation of a **new regulation on batteries**, including an article on mandatory GPP criteria.

# Ecolabelling and public procurement

## Under the 2014 Directives (Art 43):

Authorities can require a specific label as means of proof provided that all the following conditions are met:

- the requirements (criteria) must be linked to the subject matter and appropriate to define characteristics of the works, supplies or services that are the subject matter of the contract;
- be based on objectively verifiable and non-discriminatory criteria;
- open and transparent adoption procedure;
- the label must be accessible to all interested parties;
- label requirements are set by a third party over which the economic operator applying for the label cannot exercise a decisive influence.

# Synergies between GPP and EU Ecolabel criteria

- Ecolabels are essential tools in GPP
- Developing coherence between EU Ecolabel and GPP criteria:
  - Both are developed by the JRC, in parallel, in order to align requirements*  
Eg. recycled content, single-use products
- Development by the JRC/EC of EU Ecolabel – GPP Manuals for contracting authorities on how to use EU Ecolabel criteria for GPP
- Collection and sharing of best practices.

# Manuals for contracting authorities - use of EU Ecolabel criteria for GPP

For criteria of interest for GPP for which EU Ecolabel criteria are available but not GPP ones

## Ongoing

- **Printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bag products**
- **Hard covering products**

## Upcoming

- **Absorbent hygiene products.**

# Organisations using EU Ecolabel for GPP - Few examples

- **The European Commission:** all office paper purchased by the EC, office supplies, cleaning products of EC-premises bear the EU Ecolabel
- **Italian public administration:** obligation to buy « green » in areas where specific decrees, setting the minimum environmental criteria, have been published
- **The City of Copenhagen:** committed to buy ecolabelled products (Nordic Swan Ecolabel and EU Ecolabel) when available. Public announcements in advance to the call for tender.



# Thank you!

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[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/what\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/what_en.htm)