

About Nordic Swan Ecolabelled

Panels and mouldings for interior use



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Consultation

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Addresses

In 1989, the Nordic Council of Ministers decided to introduce a voluntary official ecolabel, the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. These organisations/companies operate the Nordic Ecolabelling system on behalf of their own country's government. For more information, see the websites:

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What is a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panel and moulding for interior use?

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels and mouldings for interior use have a reduced environmental and climate impact throughout their lifecycle – and strict requirements for recycled materials, chemicals and quality promote circular economy.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels and mouldings fulfil all requirements for materials in Nordic Ecolabelling criteria for buildings, renovations, floors, and furniture and fitments.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels and mouldings for interior use:

- Are made of a high proportion of renewable and/or recycled materials*.
- Wood-based panels consist of timber that is legally harvested and certified under a traceability system. Furthermore, at least 70% of the timber is sourced from certified forestry.
- Meet strict requirements for chemicals used in production and for surface treatment. This means, for example, that antibacterial substances and halogenated flame retardants cannot be added.
- Meet strict requirements for emissions of formaldehyde and organic solvents. This is positive for the indoor environment.
- Have reduced climate impact which is achieved by meeting strict requirements for energy consumption.
- Are of good quality and properties are documented. This means that the panels and mouldings comply with harmonised standards in accordance with the Construction Products Regulation (EU/305/2011) or voluntary CE marking according to ETA. It also means that acoustic panels meet strict requirements for sound absorption.

** Except from cement-based panels which only consist of a low proportion of fibres.*

1 Summary

The Nordic Ecolabelling criteria for panels and mouldings for interior use have been revised to generation 7. The structure of the criteria has been changed and panels for external use have been moved to new separate criteria and therefore not part of this revision.

Some of the requirements for panels made from renewable raw materials have been pre-consulted from October-December 2022, and relevant feedback have been implemented into the final proposal for criteria for panels and moulding for interior use. The final proposal now also covers panels and moulding for interior use made from non-renewable materials.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels and mouldings for interior use have reduced environmental and climate impact throughout the lifecycle through procurement of controlled renewable and mineral raw materials and reduced energy consumption. Environmental impact is also reduced using chemicals that meet strict requirements and do not lead to high emission of formaldehyde and organic

solvents. Good quality and a longer product life have direct positive effect on the environmental impact. Recycling of panels also minimises negative impacts on the environment when the products has reached its end of life.

The extraction of both renewable and mineral raw materials can have major effects, especially on biodiversity and on the landscape, and the requirement for the use of certified virgin renewable materials and documented recycled materials has been tightened in the draft of the new criteria. New requirement has been introduced for responsible sourcing of mineral raw materials such as gypsum, volcanic rocks, silica, and sand.

Energy-efficient production of products is important to reduce the impact on the environment and the climate. Requirements concerning energy consumption have therefore been tightened and divided up per individual type of panel such as MDF, OSB, HPL, gypsum plasterboard or cement-based panels. The manufacturing of cement and mineral wool, which is used in cement-based panels and acoustic panels, uses significant quantities of energy and is a large source of carbon dioxide emissions. Specific energy requirements have therefore been introduced in the production of these two raw materials. Reducing the impact from these raw materials help to reduce the impact that cement and mineral wool has in the lifecycle of a cement-based- or acoustic panel.

The adhesives usually used in the production of wood-based panels and CLT/glulam contain formaldehyde. Formaldehyde is a toxic chemical substance that Nordic Ecolabelling wishes to limit in the working environment and, not least, the indoor climate. The requirement for emissions of formaldehyde have therefore been tightened for laminate panels, HPL and compact laminate. New innovation-requirements also encourage the use of adhesives that are not based on urea-formaldehyde.

The criteria have also been updated from a circular economy point of view, new requirements for high share of renewable raw materials in different types of materials have been introduces. Manufactures of panels must also offer a system for taking back old used panels, faulted products or panels not used in the construction process.

The criteria have been expanded to include cross laminated timber (CLT) and glued laminated timber (glulam) as these products are very similar to wood-based panels. As in the previous version of the criteria, Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products must meet the requirements of the Construction Products Regulation (EU/305/2011) in relation to the documentation of the properties and functions with which the product is marketed.

For a full description of the changes in the revised generation 7, see the table chapter in section 6.

2 Environmental impact of panel and mouldings for interior use

Nordic Ecolabelling assesses environmental impacts throughout the product's life cycle. This chapter provides a description of the specific environmental impacts of

panels, an RPS analysis and how the product group relates to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, to the circular economy and to biodiversity.

2.1 Environmental impact

This product group consist of many different types of panels with different types of engineering properties manufactured from different types of material. These panels can be used for construction applications such as walls, subflooring and sheathing for roofs and may also have sound-absorbing properties or can be used in furniture. The overall environmental impact for all type of panels^{1,2,3} is related to:

- Resources/use of raw materials,
- Energy consumption in the production of panels. Energy savings have an important role to play in reducing global warming and climate change,
- Use for chemicals in the production of panels such as gluing and surface treatment,
- Emissions of substances that are harmful to health both during production and use-face,
- Quality,
- End of life

2.2 RPS

Interior panels and mouldings environmental impact is mainly linked to resources/use of raw materials, energy and chemical us in the production of panels, emissions of substances during production and use-phase and quality.

In the criteria for panels and moulding for interior use, all significant environmental impacts in the life cycle are assessed. Nordic Ecolabelling has analysed relevance, potential, and steerability (RPS analysis). The purpose of the RPS analysis has been to clarify where the greatest environmental benefit can be achieved by setting requirements. The results (summary) of the analysis are shown in the table below, and they underpin Nordic Ecolabelling's decisions on which areas to assign requirements for interior panels and mouldings and the extent of these requirements. For more details on what an RPS analysis entails, please refer to the Nordic website⁴.

¹ Katrine Raunkjær Stubdrup et. al: Best Available Techniques (BAT) reference document for the production of wood-based panels, European IPPC Bureau (2016)

² R.sathre et.al: Life cycle assessment of wood based building materials, University of Santiago de Compostela , Spain 2014

³ Life-cycle assessment summery, Gypsum Association 2013

⁴ <https://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/nordic-swan-ecolabel/criteria-process/> (accessed 05.07.2022)

Table 1: Summary of results of the RPS analysis. The aspects assessed to have high or medium relevance are those covered by requirements in the criteria.

Lifecycle stages	Area and assessment of R,P,S (high, medium or low)	Comments
Raw materials		
	<p>Resources - wood raw materials R: High P: High S: High</p>	<p>Wood raw materials used in panels and mouldings has a high RPS.</p> <p>From a life cycle perspective, forestry is a key part of wood products' environmental impact, and it is also important that wood as a renewable raw material is grown / harvested and used in a sustainable way.</p> <p>Much of the world's forest loss is driven by conversion of natural forest to other land uses such as cattle farming, palm oil and soy plantations. Deforestation and degradation from illegal and unsustainable logging, fires and fuelwood harvesting can harm wildlife, jeopardize people's livelihoods and intensify climate change.</p> <p>Credible forest management certification contributes to a more sustainable wood / timber product industry by helping create market conditions that support forest conservation. Requirements for high share of certified wood raw materials and certified traceability ensures more sustainable forestry.</p>
	<p>Resources - recycled raw materials R: High P: Medium/High S: High</p>	<p>Use of recovered and recycled materials such as renewable fibres or mineral raw materials will reduce the negative environmental impact of all types of panels. Requirements for a minimum proportion of recycled materials in panels will reduce the need for virgin raw materials and thus save natural resources.</p> <p>The potential for using recycled materials is high in most type of panels even though recycled wood raw materials is also requested in the energy sector. A challenge of using recycled materials can be the content of harmful substances. Recycled materials therefor need to be tested in order to reduce the spread of substances of concern and promote the potential of material reuse in the future.</p> <p>The traceability for recycled materials is high due to widespread certification schemes for recycled raw materials.</p>
	<p>Resources - mineral raw materials R: High P: High S: Medium</p>	<p>The R and P for responsible sourcing of virgin mineral raw materials from quarries are high. The mineral industry has been working with both traceability- and biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans for several years. Certification schemes for sustainable mining are however still under development and S has therefor been assessed as medium.</p> <p>The latest assessment of the State of Nature in the EU, published in 2020⁵, shows that we are still losing nature as too many protected species continue to decline. The extraction of minerals, particularly by surface methods, inevitably results in changes to the characteristics of the land and local biodiversity where it takes place.</p>

⁵ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/state-of-nature-in-the-eu-2020>

Production/distribution	
<p>Energy - production of wood-based panels R: High P: Medium/High S: High</p>	<p>High/medium RPS has been identified in relation to energy impact from panel production (production and/or drying of panels). For panels, the production of adhesives and its input raw materials can also have a relatively large effect on the climate impact as it is an energy-intensive process. In panels where paper makes up a high proportion of the material composition, the paper contributes a significant part of the panel's total energy load. Energy savings have an important role to play in reducing environmental impact and thus also global warming and climate change.</p> <p>All panel manufactures are focusing on reducing their energy consumption and therefore the potential to tighten the requirement levels are medium.</p>
<p>Energy - production of mineral-based panels R: High P: Medium/High S: Medium</p>	<p>Mineral raw materials such as gypsum, mineral wool and cement are used in several types of panels/acoustic panels. In a live cycle perspective, the production of the raw materials (especially mineral wool and cement) has a higher environmental impact compared to the actual manufacturing of the panels. However, the relevance for restricting the use of energy in the manufacturing process is high.</p> <p>The variation in design/function of the different types of panels makes it difficult to set ambitious energy requirements for the individual board type (medium P and S).</p>
<p>Energy - production of cement R: High P: Medium/High S: High</p>	<p>Portland cement being the key ingredient in cement-based panels/acoustic panels and one of the major sources of emission of greenhouse gasses. Portland Cement accounts for 5% of global carbon dioxide emissions⁶, which is due to inputs of high amounts of energy to heat the kilns, with indirect emissions from the energy and direct emissions from the production.</p> <p>Nordic Ecolabel sets out requirements to restrict the GWP on the production of cement to limit the anthropogenic emissions of CO₂.</p>
<p>Energy - production of mineral wool R: High P: Med/High S: Medium/High</p>	<p>Mineral wools are used in acoustic panels due to good properties to absorb sound. Mineral wool production is a high temperature energy intensive process, and the relevance for reducing energy consumption is therefore high. The most important issue when benchmarking mineral wool products is the difference in electricity intensity due to the use of different types of furnaces. The mineral wool industry is focused on reducing its energy consumption and the potential for restricting the energy consumption is therefore medium/high.</p>
<p>Chemicals used in manufacturing of panels - R: High P: Medium/High S: High</p>	<p>Chemicals used in the manufacturing of panels and possible surface treatment contain many different substances and raw materials with many different harmful effects on the environment and health.</p> <p>The chemicals requirements apply to all chemical products used in panel production. Here it is assessed that formaldehyde, VOC and isothiazolinones in the binders have the highest relevance. Also securing a low content of problematic chemicals in the surface treatment, e.g., VOC, flame inhibitors, heavy metals in pigments. Also, a high RPS for requirements limiting the use of nano particles, for instance in the surface treatments.</p>

⁶ The Cement Sustainability Initiative: <https://docs.wbcsd.org/2016/12/GNR.pdf> (visited 2022-05-30)

Use phase		
	Quality and properties R: High P: High S: Medium	RPS for securing conformity between the properties and the functions for which the panels are marketed, and the performance declarations drawn up in relation to the CE marking. There is also RPS for ensuring that panels not covered by harmonised product standards also have documentation for the properties and functions for which the panel is marketed.
	Chemicals - emissions of formaldehyde and VOC R: High P: Medium/High S: High	Formaldehyde is a toxic, sensitising, and carcinogenic substances and exposure to VOC vapours can cause a variety of health effects, including eye, nose, and throat irritation. Therefore, high RPS for requirements for formaldehyde and VOC both in the form of reduced formaldehyde/VOC emissions in the use phase and reduced free formaldehyde in the chemical products used, e.g. adhesives.
End of life		
	End of life – take-back system R: High P: High/medium S: Medium/low	Product take-back systems are fundamental for Circular Economy (CE) and focus on recovering value by taking back products to be recycled. High relevance and potential have been identified regarding setting requirements at the end-of-use stage to increase recycling of panels and decrease their incineration. Steerability is however challenged by many parameters such as the choice of the material used in the panels and their recyclability, the long lifespan of panels and the lack of traceability between the installed products and the panel manufacturers. As a result, no panel manufacturers have a fully operational take-back system for worn out panels as of today (Wood-based panels and gypsum plasterboards are already covered by existing waste systems, which means that part of the materials is returned to the panel production again). A requirement is set to ensure that manufactures of panels must also offer a system for taking back old used panels or alternative be in a process/test/pilot face to establish a system for taking back products.

2.3 UN Sustainable Development Goals

On an overall level the Nordic Swan Ecolabel contributes to Goal 12, “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns”. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel strives to reduce the environmental impact of production and consumption. This ensures sustainable production, control of the supply chain and provides end users with sustainable products. Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products are manufactured all over the world. Wherever the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product is made, the strict environmental requirements for production go beyond legislation. This promotes more environmentally-friendly production methods – in developing countries too.

The criteria for panels and mouldings for interior use products contribute to Goal 12 as follows:

- Requirements for certified sustainable wood raw material and traceability, energy requirements for drying of wood and/or production of the panel and requirements that stimulate the use of recycled material contribute to sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

- Quality requirements and consumer information requirements on maintenance and use promote a longer service life and also help to ensure optimum use of resources.
- Restrictions on chemicals that are harmful to health and the environment, which are present in the production of panels and in surface treatments, reduce the spread of undesirable substances and promote the potential for material recovery in the future.
- Restrictions on chemicals that are harmful to health and the environment and emission requirements also contribute to a healthy indoor climate.

Although Nordic Ecolabelling mainly contributes to Goal 12, Target 3.9 is also included. Target 3.9 addresses the reduction of harmful effects caused by chemicals and the reduction of pollution and contamination. Comprehensive and demanding criteria for chemicals, e.g., a ban on chemicals that are classified as environmentally hazardous, carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic for reproduction, requirements concerning COD emissions, and other requirements governing emissions from panels and chemicals, e.g., VOC from adhesives and formaldehyde emissions, all contribute towards this target.

2.4 Circular economy and climate

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel is a good tool for promoting a circular economy. The entire product life cycle from raw materials to production, use, disposal and recycling is assessed in the development of the requirements. This holistic approach to the life cycle is essential for a circular economy. More information about how the Nordic Swan Ecolabel generally contributes to a circular economy can be found on our website⁷. Factors relating to the circular economy are often closely linked to factors that contribute to a reduced climate impact. Both of these aspects are therefore described below for Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements for panels:

- The criteria promote the use of renewable, controlled and recovered raw materials, which leads to more efficient and sustainable use of resources. The use of recycled raw materials reduces the need for virgin raw materials and thus saves natural resources.
- Reduced energy consumption cuts greenhouse gas emissions. The criteria therefore set requirements concerning maximum energy consumption in the production of panels and raw materials such as paper. The use of renewable and recycled raw materials also reduces overall energy consumption indirectly, and the impact on the climate is reduced.
- Protecting key habitats for biodiversity also helps to reduce the climate impact; for example, forest areas play a role in regulating the climate. There are therefore requirements that ensure sustainable extraction of wood raw material. Also, virgin mineral raw materials must come from mining operations (quarries) with documented biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans.

⁷ <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/official-nordic-ecolabel/life-cycle-perspective/> and <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/official-nordic-ecolabel/life-cycle-perspective/> (visited March 2023)

- Strict chemical requirements lead to the substitution of hazardous substances and avoid the recycling of harmful substances.
- Quality requirements and consumer information/maintenance instructions promote a longer service life and reduce the need for new products. This leads to more efficient use of resources and a reduced climate impact.
- Requirements for take-back system as well as a general use of recycled raw materials promotes circular economy.

2.5 Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of all living organisms on Earth and how they interact. It has a value in itself and is crucial to sustain nature's contributions to people (ecosystem services) and ability to respond to change.

In 2019 the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) published its first global report, calling for transformative change. The world must bring biodiversity back into the production landscapes in addition to creating more protected areas. In 2022 the UN Convention on Biological Diversity⁸ adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework agreeing to conserve and manage at least 30 percent of the world's lands, inland waters, coastal areas and oceans.

Nordic Ecolabelling contributes to protecting biodiversity by requiring that renewable raw materials be sustainably sourced. Virgin mineral raw materials must come from mining operations (quarries) with documented biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans. The goal is to counteract loss of species and deterioration of ecosystems and that sourcing of biological raw materials is in balance with regeneration.

3 Other labelling schemes and management systems

There are several other labelling schemes operating in the field of construction materials. Of the other Type 1 ecolabels (equivalent to the Nordic Swan Ecolabel) in Europe, Blue Angel has criteria for panels in the criteria "Low-Emission Floor Coverings, Panels and Doors for Interiors Made of Wood and Wood-Based Materials"⁹. Other types of labels in the Nordic market, which often only cover one parameter, are FSC/PEFC (raw materials), M1 (indoor climate) and Dansk Indeklima (indoor climate). In construction products, there are also several manufacturers that have EPDs (Environmental Product Declarations) and Cradle to Cradle certification. There are several building certifications in the Nordic region, such as Sunda Hus, BREEAM and LEED, that set requirements for construction materials.

In addition to voluntary certification schemes, construction products are regulated by the EU's Construction Products Regulation (EU/305/2011). The Construction Products Regulation sets out rules for the sale and documentation of CE marked construction products. The CE mark confirms that the construction

⁸ <https://www.unep.org/un-biodiversity-conference-cop-15> (visited February 2023)

⁹ Blue Angel: Low-Emission Floor Coverings, Panels and Doors for Interiors made of Wood and Wood-Based Materials, UZ 176, 2013

product has been manufactured and checked in accordance with a harmonised product standard or a European assessment document. Most types of panels are covered by a harmonised product standard¹⁰.

3.1 Alignment with the EU Taxonomy framework

There are many uncertainties on how EU Taxonomy compliance can be documented as well as the interpretation. Therefore, Nordic Ecolabelling cannot guarantee EU taxonomy alignment through our criteria for Panels and mouldings for interior use.

Nordic Ecolabelling do not take any legal responsibility for the (degree of) alignment, nor can a building material ecolabelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel (or listed in the Supply Chain Declaration Portal) be claimed as taxonomy aligned based on the ecolabelling criteria.

The responsibility for documentation of EU taxonomy compliance solely belongs to the company who is claiming it.

Nordic Ecolabelling closely follow interpretations of the EU Taxonomy criteria in both the Nordic countries and from EU. In the end the interpretation is a task for national authorities or other officially appointed bodies.

However, when it comes to the Delegated Act on the objective climate change mitigation (Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2139 of 4 June 2021) the following issues have been handled in these criteria for Panels and mouldings for interior use. Specifically, reference is made to the activity 7.1 "Construction of new buildings":

7.1.5.2: Pollution and prevention control

Building components and materials used in the construction that may come into contact with occupiers emit less than 0,06 mg of formaldehyde per m³ of test chamber air upon testing in accordance with the conditions specified in Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and less than 0,001 mg of other categories 1A and 1B carcinogenic volatile organic compounds per m³ of test chamber air, upon testing in accordance with CEN/EN 16516 or ISO 16000-3:2011 or other equivalent standardised test conditions and determination methods.

- This requirement is relevant for the criteria for Panels and mouldings for interior use. The proposed requirement for formaldehyde emissions from panels are harmonised with the EU Taxonomy requirement. Nordic Ecolabelling is aware that the specified test conditions referred to in Annex XVII has not yet been published. As mentioned earlier, Nordic Ecolabelling is closely following the development and interpretations of the EU Taxonomy criteria in both the Nordic countries and from EU.

¹⁰ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/single-market/european-standards/standardisation-requests_en, visited January 2023

4 Justification of the requirements

This section presents proposals for new and revised requirements, and explains the background to the requirements, the chosen requirement levels and any changes since generation 6. The appendices referred to in the requirements can be found at the end of the criteria document.

As previously described, the requirements set out in this document are the result of an RPS analysis (see Appendix 4). The requirements are set in the areas where the environmental impact is greatest, Nordic Ecolabelling has good opportunities to set requirements that can differentiate between products on the market, and credible supporting documentation exists.

4.1 Definition of the product group

Products that may be ecolabelled in this product group (draft for consultation) must be intended for indoor use. Panels can have different applications such as walls, subfloors, ceilings, as well as being used in the production of furniture and interior design. Panels designed for wet room such as bathrooms is also part of the criteria. The products must fall into one of the categories below:

1. Panels made from renewable raw materials according to EN 13986, classes 1 and 2.
2. Melamine faced boards according to EN 14322
3. Laminate such as HPL (High Pressure Laminate) or compact laminate according to the EN 438 series.
4. Panels and mouldings, either of solid wood or consisting of the panel types indicated in any of the other points.
5. CLT (cross laminated timber) according to EN 16351
6. Glulam (glued laminated timber) according to EN 14080
7. Composite construction panels/boards
8. Gypsum plasterboard according to EN 520
9. Cement-based panels according to EN 12467
10. Acoustic ceiling- and wall panels* for which the main function is acoustic insulation.

** Panels either part of the wall or ceiling construction or which is mounted directly on walls or ceilings.*

The product group does not include the following products:

- Panels and moulding for outdoor use e.g., façade and cladding. This includes i.e., wood based panels, defines in EN 13986, class 3. Panels and cladding for exterior use can be labelled according to criteria for 114 Exterior panels and cladding*.
- A maximum of 10% by weight of the panel or moulding may consist of materials that are not required by the criteria.
- Panels where the main function is insulation against heat or cold loss.

- Hard covering products such as panels, boards, tiles, clinker made of natural stone, agglomerated stone, ceramic or precast concrete/cement.
- Acoustic panels which can be installed directly on an office desk or between office desks (partitions) can be labelled according to the criteria for Nordic Ecolabelling for Furniture and fitments*.
- Acoustic panels containing polyurethane or extruded melamine foam.
- Fully prefabricated wall elements e.g., wall systems complete with structural framing, water/air/vapor barrier(s), insulation, and interior/exterior panels.
- Flooring. This can be labelled according to the criteria for Nordic Ecolabelling of Floor coverings*.
- Kitchen and bathroom worktops. These can be labelled according to the criteria for Nordic Ecolabelling for Furniture and fitments*.

* See <https://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/product-groups>

If there is a desire for ecolabelling other types of panels than those covered by the product group definition, an assessment may be made as to whether these can also be included. Nordic Ecolabelling will determine which new products may be included in the product group.

Nordic Ecolabelling determines whether a product can be Nordic Swan Ecolabelled, and under which criteria a product can apply for a licence.

Background to the product group definition

The revision of existing criteria for building and facade panels only includes panels and mouldings for interior use. The criteria have been split into 2 separate documents: 010 Panels and moulding for interior use and 114 Panels and claddings for external use.

There are several reasons why this has been done. The previous product group definition was very broad and included many different types of panels and materials. The requirements would differ widely depending on the materials that made up the panel, so narrowing the definition will make the criteria more transparent and it will be easier for our applicants to find the right requirements. Products for indoor and outdoor use also have different RPS in key areas such as quality and emissions, which is another reason why Nordic Ecolabelling has chosen to divide them up in two product groups.

The product group definition has been adjusted and expanded with several new types of panels: CLT (cross laminated timber), glulam (glued laminated timber), composite construction panels/boards and panels designed for use in wet rooms. The definition of cement-based panels has been clearer and now covers cement bonded particle boards, fibre-cement boards, and wood wool cement boards. Finally, it has been clarified that only ceiling and wall panels for which the main intended use is acoustic insulation (not thermal insulation) is part of the criteria.

The possibility of labelling CLT and glulam has been added according to the standards EN 16351 (Timber structures – Cross laminated timber) and EN 14080 (Timber structures – Glued laminated timber). There have been discussions about whether they could be Nordic Swan Ecolabelled or not, as they cannot be defined as a panel. However, these products are very similar to wood-

based panels in their construction (raw materials and chemicals) and the decision has been taken that these can now be labelled in these criteria.

Composite construction panels consist of materials that combines a plastic matrix with a plant-based filler (often cellulose fibres). There are different views on whether the composite materials have a place in the circular economy or not. Composite materials can be considered a dead end because plastic and wood are mixed and cannot be separated in the waste phase. On the other hand, composite materials provide the opportunity to use recycled post-consumer plastic that has been collected from households and that is difficult to find outlets for today. For it to be relevant for the Nordic Ecolabel to label a composite material that cannot be separated into its original materials at end-of-life, there is a requirement that 100% of both the plastic and cellulose fibres used is post-consumer recycled materials.

Gypsum plaster boards has several performance characteristics such as flexural strength (breaking load), impact resistance or reaction to fire and water. Gypsum plaster boards are designed to be used in water/moisture protected environments due to the nature of gypsum. Therefore, it has been clarified that all types of gypsum plaster boards covered by EN 520 is part of the criteria. This means that panels design for wet-rooms, such as wet-room plaster boards, but also other types of wet-rooms panel made from material, are part of these criteria.

Cement is used as a binder in several types of panels such as wood-based panels, fibre-cement flat sheets or wood-wool acoustic panels. Cement must comply with the definition in EN 197-1. The cellulose component varies widely in the different types of panels. Common to all types of cement-based panels are strict requirements for certified wood raw materials and energy use both for the actual production of cement and the production of the various types of panels.

Acoustic panels are made from various types of materials and often marked with insulation characteristics. Panels where the main function is insulation against heat or cold loss is not part these criteria. Only ceiling and wall panels for which the main function is acoustic insulation, e.g., marked as acoustic panel, is part of these criteria.

The product group definition specifies several different types of panels made from different types of materials that can be labelled. A maximum of **10% by weight** of the product may consist of materials that are not required by the criteria. This allows panels to contain a limited amount pf materials for which there are no requirements.

4.2 Definitions

The first time a term is used in the document, it is written in **bold font** or with a reference to this definition list.

Words/Terms	Definitions
ADt	ADt is dry, solid content of pulp and paper. ADt for pulp is 90%, while ADt for paper means a solid content of 94%.
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. CITES is an international convention for the control of trade (across borders) in wild fauna and flora at risk of extinction.
CoC	Chain of Custody – certification that ensures traceability in the supply chain.
COD	Chemical oxygen demand. A measure of how much oxygen is used during chemical degradation of organic matter.
Decor paper	Decor papers enable surface upgrades for wood-based substrates for use in the production of furniture, laminate flooring and other interior and exterior design panels.
Dry conditions (Service Class 1)	Conditions corresponding to Service Class 1 of EN 1995-1-1 (Eurocode 5) which are characterised by a moisture content in the material corresponding to a temperature of 20°C and a relative humidity in the surrounding air only exceeding 65% for a few weeks per year.
EPD	A product specific EPD according to the standard ISO 14025 and EN 15804 is a third-party verified document based on product category rules (PCR) and life cycle assessment (LCA).
FDG gypsum	FDG gypsum means gypsum from flue gas desulphurisation.
Fibre-cement flat sheets	Defined in EN 12467
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council Certification scheme for forestry and traceability in the supply chain.
Gypsum plasterboard	Gypsum plasterboard means a gypsum-based core material sold in the form of sheets for the purpose of finishing the interior surfaces of walls, ceiling, or floor prior to the application of paint, wallpaper, or other coating. Gypsum plasterboard's purpose can also be acoustic. It includes paper-faced, water-resistant, noise-resistant and fire-resistant and fibre reinforced gypsum board.
Humid conditions (Service Class 2)	Conditions corresponding to Service Class 2 of EN 1995-1-1 (Eurocode 5) which are characterised by a moisture content in the material corresponding to a temperature of 20°C and a relative humidity in the surrounding air only exceeding 85% for a few weeks per year.
IFL	Intact Forest Landscape Continuous propagation of natural ecosystems within the zone with current forest spread, showing no sign of significant human activity. The area is large enough to maintain all-natural biodiversity, including viable populations of widespread species.
Ingoing substances and impurities	Ingoing substances: All substances in the chemical product regardless of amount, including additives (e.g. preservatives and stabilisers) from the raw materials. Substances known to be released from ingoing substances (e.g. formaldehyde, arylamine, in situ-generated preservatives) are also regarded as ingoing substances.

	<p>Impurities: Residues from production, incl. raw material production, which remain in the chemical product at concentrations below 1000 ppm (0.1000% by weight).</p> <p>Examples of impurities are residues of reagents incl. residues of monomers, catalysts, by-products, scavengers (i.e. chemicals that are used to eliminate/minimise undesirable substances), detergents for production equipment and carry-over from other or previous production lines.</p>
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature IUCN's Red List is the world's most comprehensive overview of the global conservation status of the planet's species, including trees.
Laminate	Laminate means a process in which paper is used in the product, e.g. melamine, HPL or compact laminate.
Lignocellulose raw materials	Lignocellulose refers to plant dry matter (biomass), so called lignocellulosic biomass such as straw, hemp, linen and bagasse
Mineral wool	Insulation wool manufactured from molten rock, slag or glass
Nanomaterial	'Nanomaterial' means a natural, incidental or manufactured material consisting of solid particles that are present, either on their own or as identifiable constituent particles in aggregates or agglomerates, and where 50 % or more of these particles in the number-based size distribution fulfil at least one of the following conditions: (a) one or more external dimensions of the particle are in the size range 1 nm to 100 nm; (b) the particle has an elongated shape, such as a rod, fibre or tube, where two external dimensions are smaller than 1 nm and the other dimension is larger than 100 nm; (c) the particle has a plate-like shape, where one external dimension is smaller than 1 nm and the other dimensions are larger than 100 nm.
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Certification scheme for forestry and traceability in the supply chain
VOC	Volatile organic compounds (VOC) are defined as any organic compound having an initial boiling point less than or equal to 250°C measured at a standard pressure of 101.3 kPa. This definition is the same as in the Paints Directive (2004/42/EC).
Recycled materials	Recycled materials are defined according to ISO 14021 in the following two categories: "Pre-consumer/commercial" is defined as material diverted from the waste stream during a manufacturing process. Excluded is reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it. Nordic Ecolabelling defines rework, regrind or scrap, that cannot be recycled directly in the same process, but requires a reprocessing (e.g. sorting, reclamation and granulation) before

	<p>it can be recycled, to be pre-consumer/commercial material. This is whether it is produced in-house or externally.</p> <p>"Post-consumer/commercial" is defined as material generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product, which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain.</p> <p>Materials that are approved as input in FSC Recycled and which are covered by the term Reclaimed in FSC are regarded as recycled material.</p>
Self-generated energy	<p>Self-generated energy refers to energy (electricity and heat) not purchased from an external supplier. For example, if the panel production has an energy surplus that is sold as electricity, steam or heat, the sold amount can be deducted from the energy consumption. Internally produced fuel sources and residual products are not regarded as self-generated energy.</p>
Wood based panels	<p>Example of wood-based panels:</p> <p>Particleboard MDF (Medium Density Fibreboard) HDF (High Density Fibreboard) MFB (Melamine Faced Board) Plywood OSB (Oriented Stranded Board) Flaxboard LVL (Laminated Veneer Lumber) SWP (Solid Wood Panel), Kerto LVL products are CE marked according to standard EN 14374. Cement bonded particleboard</p>
Wood wool acoustic panels	<p>Defined in EN 13168</p>

4.3 Overview of the requirements

The criteria are mainly divided into requirement areas where some of the requirements apply to all panel types, while others only apply to certain panel types. The table below provides an overview of the requirements that must be met for the different panel types.

Requirement area	Requirement/Material	Requirement	Responsibility for documentation
Description of product and production process	General requirements	O1	Product manufacturer
Quality			
Product requirements	Quality and properties	O2	Product manufacturer
Acoustic panels	Acoustic performance	O3	Product manufacturer
Raw materials			
Wood raw material	Wood, cork and bamboo	O4 O5	Product manufacturer/Subcontractor Product manufacturer
	Recycled wood raw material	O6	Product manufacturer/Subcontractor
Lignocellulose raw materials	Lignocellulose raw materials	O7	Product manufacturer/Subcontractor

Paper	Ecolabelled paper	O8	Product manufacturer
	Raw materials, chemicals, and emissions in manufacturing of pulp and paper	O9-O12	Manufacture Product manufacturer of pulp and paper
Textile/fabric	Ecolabelled textile	O13	Product manufacturer
	Fibres in textiles	O14-O16	Product manager/supplier of textile/fibres
Plastic	Recycled plastic raw materials	O17-O20	Product manager/supplier of recycled plastics
Wood plastic composite (WPC)	Raw materials	O21-O23	Product manufacturer
Mineral raw materials	Responsible sourcing	O24	Product manufacturer
	Heavy metals	O25	Supplier of mineral raw materials
Gypsum	Raw materials	O26	Product manufacturer
Mineral wool	Mineral wool raw materials	O27	Product manufacturer
	Mineral wool raw materials	O28	Manufacture of mineral wool
Metal	Aluminium	O29	Supplier of aluminium
Chemicals			
Chemicals in production	Classification of chemical products	O30	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Classification of ingoing substances	O31	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Prohibited substances	O32	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Antibacterial substances	O33	Product manufacturer and manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Nanomaterials	O34	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Preservatives	O35	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	VOCs in adhesives	O36	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Free formaldehyde	O37	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
Chemicals – surface treatment	Plastic foiling	O38	Product manufacturer
	Classification of chemical products	O39	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	UV curing surface treatment system	O40	Supplier/performer of surface treatment
	Classification of ingoing substances	O41	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Prohibited substances	O42	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Antibacterial substances	O43	Product manufacturer and manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Nanomaterials	O44	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Preservatives	O45	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Free formaldehyde	O46	Manufacturer/supplier of chemical product
	Application method and quantity applied – surface treatment	O47	Supplier/performer of surface treatment

	Volatile organic compounds (VOC)	O48	Supplier/performer of surface treatment
Emissions			
Emissions from product	Formaldehyde and VOC emissions	O49	Product manufacturer
Emissions from production – COD	Emissions of COD from wet processes	O50	Product manufacturer
Emissions from production – working environment	Emissions to air from production – HPL and compact laminate	O51	Laminate manufacturer
	Emissions of dust	O52	Product manufacturer
Climate and energy			
Pulp and paper	Pulp and paper production included in HPL and compact laminate	O53	Manufacturer of pulp and paper
Laminate	Laminate	O54	Laminate manufacturer
Wood-based panels	Wood-based panels	O55	Panel manufacturer and wood suppliers (drying process)
Panels from lignocellulose raw materials	Panels – other lignocellulose raw materials	O56	Product manufacturer
CLT and glulam		O57	Product manufacturer and wood suppliers (drying process)
Solid wood panels and mouldings	Solid wood	O58	Product manufacturer and wood suppliers (drying process)
Wood Plastic Composite (WPC)	Wood Plastic Composite panels	O59	Product manufacturer
Gypsum plaster boards	Gypsum plaster boards	O60	Product manufacturer
Mineral wool	Stone- and glass wool	O61	Manufacturer of mineral wool
Mineral wood-based panels	Mineral wood-based panels - acoustic panels	O62	Product manufacturer
Cement	Cement	O63	Manufacturer of cement
Cement-based panels	Cement-based panels	O64	Product manufacturer
Panels made of other materials	Panels made of other materials	O65	Product manufacturer
Circularity			
Information to customer	Information	O66	Product manufacturer
Maintenance	Maintenance	O67	Product manufacturer
Take-back system		O68	Product manufacturer
Innovation			
	Innovation requirements	O69	Product manufacturer
Other requirements			
	Maintenance of the Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence	O70–O71	Product manufacturer/licensee

4.4 Product information

This chapter contains product specification such as description of the product, material composition and production methods/process.

O1 Description of the product

Applicants must provide the following information about the product:

- Trade name(s) and brand name(s)
 - Description of the product(s) and materials/raw materials included. The total weight of the product and the weight of the constituent materials/raw materials must be stated.
 - Description of production methods/treatment techniques.
 - Description of subcontractors, including the name of their business, production site, contact and the production steps carried out.
 - Names of chemical products used in the production and any surface treatment (including products used by any subcontractors).
- Description of the points above.
- Product sheets or equivalent information. A flow chart is recommended to explain the production process.

Background

The purpose of the requirement is to give information on the product, material composition, description of the production method and treatment techniques. Panels and moulding can have different functions and be produced from different types of materials, techniques, and production sites. To provide traceability for the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panel or moulding, all activities must be described. Product data sheets or equivalent information must be included in the application.

4.5 Quality

02 Quality and properties

Products covered by a harmonised standard

Products covered by a harmonised standard in accordance with the Construction Products Regulation (EU/305/2011) must document the features and functions with which the product is marketed.

Products not covered by harmonised standard

Products not covered by a harmonised product standard must document the features and functions of the product with one of the following options:

- voluntary CE marking and declaration of performance according to an ETA (European Technical Assessment), or
 - as an alternative to an ETA, the properties of the product can be declared via a third-party verification of the product's performance. The third-party verification must be approved by Nordic Ecolabelling.
- For products covered by a harmonised product standard, state which product standard(s) the product is covered by and submit example of CE marking and the declaration of performance.
- For products that are not covered by a harmonised standard, a declaration of performance must be submitted in accordance with an ETA or other third-party verification of the product's performance.

Background

The purpose of the requirement is to ensure a correlation between the features and functions that the product is marketed, and the declaration of performance prepared in accordance with the Construction Products Regulation¹¹. At the same time, the requirement must ensure that construction panels and other products not covered by a harmonised product standard can document the features and functions with which the product is marketed, on the basis of standardised test results.

O3 Acoustic panels, acoustic performance

An acoustic panel must achieve a minimum sound absorption class A or B according to EN ISO 354 and EN ISO 11654.

- ☒ Test report according to EN ISO 354 and EN ISO 11654 showing compliance with the requirement.

Background

This is a new proposed requirement in generation 7.

The material's ability to absorb sound is generally presented with absorption coefficients measured in different frequencies. This means in practice that one material has several different absorption coefficients based on frequencies. EN ISO 11654 is used to classify the sound absorption materials based on the measured absorption curves to categories from A to E. Class A has the best ability to absorb sound, and E has the weakest.

The requirement for minimum absorption class B secure that only acoustic panels with extremely- and highly absorbing properties comply with the requirement. Nordic Ecolabelling is aware that buildings and spaces may have different requirements regarding acoustic, and therefore the absorption class system is not the only relevant acoustic performance parameter.

4.6 Raw materials

The requirements in this chapter concern requirements for raw materials used in panels and mouldings.

The requirements only apply to raw materials that are included by **more than 5 wt%** of the panel.

Panels consisting of different types of raw materials need to comply with the specific raw material requirements e.g., a wood wool acoustic panel must comply with requirements for wood raw materials and cement.

4.6.1 Wood raw materials

O4 Tree species – restrictions

Nordic Ecolabelling's list of tree species* consists of virgin woods listed on:

¹¹ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/construction/construction-products-regulation-cpr_en (visited March 2023)

- a) CITES (Appendices I, II and III)
- b) IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN and VU
- c) Rainforest Foundation Norway's tree list
- d) Siberian larch (from forests outside the EU)

Use of tree species listed on a) CITES (Appendices I, II and III) is not permitted.

Tree species listed on either b), c) or d) may be used if they meet all the following requirements:

- the tree species does not originate from an area/region where it is on the IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN or VU
- the tree species does not originate from an Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), as defined in 2002 <http://www.intactforests.org/world.map.html>.
- the tree species shall originate from FSC or PEFC certified forests/plantations and shall be covered by a valid FSC/PEFC Chain of Custody (CoC) certificate documented/controlled as FSC or PEFC 100% through the FSC transfer method or PEFC physical separation method.
- In addition, tree species grown in plantations shall originate from FSC or PEFC certified plantations established before 1994.

* https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/pulp-paper-declaration-portal/what-can-be-declared/forestry-requirements/forestry_requirements_2020/

- Enter the names of the tree species included in the product.
- Declaration from the applicant/manufacturer/supplier that tree species listed on a)–d) are not used in the product.
If species from the lists b), c) or d) are used:
 - Valid FSC/PEFC Chain of Custody certificate from supplier/applicant/manufacturer covering the specific tree species and documenting that the wood is controlled as FSC or PEFC 100% through the FSC transfer method or PEFC physical separation method.
 - The applicant/manufacturer/supplier shall document full traceability back to the certified forest unit and document the following:
 - the wood does not originate from an area/region where it is on the IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN or VU.
 - the tree species does not originate from an Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), as defined in 2002: <http://www.intactforests.org/world.webmap.html>
 - For plantations, the applicant/manufacturer/supplier must document that the tree species does not originate from FSC or PEFC certified plantations established after 1994.

Background

The requirement concerning tree species that are banned or restricted is new and part of Nordic Ecolabelling's general forestry requirements.

The requirement only applies to virgin wood and not wood defined as recycled material in accordance with ISO 14021.

A number of tree species are not allowed to be used or are allowed only under certain conditions. The tree species are shown on a list, and the species on the list are based on tree species that are relevant to the Nordic Ecolabelling criteria, i.e. wood that may be relevant to use in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products. Listed tree species are indicated by the scientific name and most common trade names. The scientific name/trade name is not always sufficient, as there may be more than one scientific name/trade name for the listed tree species, not all of which feature on the list.

Criteria for tree species on the list:

- a) Species listed in CITES Appendices I, II and III.
- b) IUCN Red List, categorised as Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU).
- c) Rainforest Foundation's list of tropical tree species.
- d) Siberian larch (derived from forests outside the EU).

Use of species on the CITES list in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels, mouldings and glulam products is prohibited. CITES is an international convention for the control of trade (across borders) in wild fauna and flora. Depending on how endangered they are, the tree species in CITES are listed in Appendix I, II or III. Species listed in Appendix I are critically endangered and trading in these species is completely forbidden. Special permits for import and export are required for species in Appendices II and III. Trees with valid CITES permits are considered to be legally harvested under the EUTR (EU Timber Regulation). The Nordic Swan Ecolabel's ban on the use of tree species listed in CITES (Appendix I, II or III) goes beyond EU legislation. CITES regulates trade in endangered species, and there are also challenges concerning corruption in trade with wild animals and plants. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore does not wish to approve species on any of the appendices.

IUCN's Red List is the world's most comprehensive overview of the global conservation status of the planet's species, including trees. IUCN has established clear criteria to assess the risk of extinction according to the origin of tree species. These criteria cover all countries and all species in the world. Nordic Ecolabelling is aware that the IUCN Red List system focuses only on the extinction risk of species, and is therefore not designed for an overall assessment of whether a tree can be of sustainable origin. However, the list is updated continuously and is thus an important tool to estimate the conservation status of a specific tree species globally. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel seeks to prohibit tree species listed as endangered (categories CR, EN and VU).

The Rainforest Foundation is an NGO in Norway that works to protect the world's remaining rainforests. At the moment, the Rainforest Foundation does not see any credible certification schemes operating in the tropics, and therefore recommends not buying tropical woods. The Rainforest Foundation has developed a list of tropical tree species based on tree species that are found on the Norwegian market. This list serves as a guide in complying with Norwegian guidelines for not using tropical wood in public-sector construction projects. Nordic Ecolabelling considers this to be a pragmatic approach for handling tropical wood in the Nordic market.

Siberian larch (with origins in forests outside the EU) is also on the tree list. Siberian larch is a sought-after type of wood in the construction industry due to its high quality. Species of this tree are widespread in the Eurasian North Boreal climate zone, with the species *Larix sibirica*, *Larix gmelinii*, *Larix cajanderi* and *Larix sukaczewii* particularly widespread in the large areas of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) in Russia. Siberian larch should be seen as an indicator species for boreal IFL areas that need to be kept intact.

Exemptions:

Nordic Ecolabelling is aware that wood on lists b), c) or d) may come from legal and sustainable forestry. Therefore, it is possible to use tree species listed under b), c) or d) if the applicant/manufacturer/supplier can demonstrate compliance with a number of strict certification and traceability requirements.

Many of the trees on the list grow in countries that still have large Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL). It is important to protect these for the sake of biodiversity and the climate. Several of these countries are at high risk of corruption, and national legislation relating to the environment, human rights and land ownership is often weak and/or not enforced by the authorities. There are different views on whether certification is good enough to meet the challenges of forest management in countries with a high risk of corruption and illegal logging. For example, relevant challenges related to this were published by Danwatch in a number of articles in 2018¹²,¹³ and by redd-monitor.org in 2019¹⁴. Greenpeace International has terminated its membership of FSC for the reason that the certification body no longer fulfils its goals of protecting forests and human rights¹⁵. Other environmental organisations like WWF support certification as an important tool for sustainable forestry in these countries. Due to the uncertainty that FSC and PEFC certification systems are good enough to protect important areas of biodiversity and ethical aspects such as human rights and land ownership in areas with a high risk of corruption, Nordic Ecolabelling takes a precautionary approach and seeks further documentation about the tree species and its origins.

To document full traceability of the tree species, the applicant/manufacturer/supplier must present a valid FSC/PEFC Chain of Custody certificate covering the specific tree species and demonstrate that the wood is controlled as FSC or PEFC 100%, through the FSC transfer method or PEFC physical separation method. This means that the FSC percentage or credit control system and the PEFC percentage system are not approved. Full traceability of the wood back to the forest/certified forest unit makes it possible to document that the tree species does not come from an area/region where it is on the IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN or VU. Full traceability also makes it possible to document that the tree species does not come from an Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), as defined by Intactforest.org in 2002¹⁶. Intact forest has

¹² <https://danwatch.dk/undersogelse/dokumentfalsk-og-millionboeder-danske-byggemarkeder-saelger-trae-forbundet-til-ulovlig-hugst-i-amazonas/>

¹³ <https://danwatch.dk/undersogelse/baeredygtighedsmaerke-er-ingen-garanti-for-baeredygtigt-trae/>

¹⁴ <https://redd-monitor.org/2019/08/29/evicted-for-carbon-credits-new-oakland-institute-report-confirms-forced-evictions-for-green-resources-plantations-in-uganda/>

¹⁵ <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/15589/greenpeace-international-to-not-renew-fsc-membership/>

¹⁶ <http://www.intactforests.org/world.webmap.html>, accessed January 2020

monitored IFL areas since 2000 and has developed an updated online map tool that shows the scope of IFLs back to 2002. The monitoring results show that the world's IFLs are disappearing at an alarming rate, which is why Nordic Ecolabelling refers to 2002.

Plantations: Nordic Ecolabelling believes that responsibly managed forest plantations can play a role in preserving natural IFLs by reducing the pressure to cut down the world's remaining natural forests. In order to ensure that the plantation has not replaced original ecosystems (forests/grasslands) over the last 25 years, tree species must come from FSC or PEFC certified plantations that were established before 1994. 1994 follows FSC's international forest management standard (version 5.2), while PEFC works with 2010.

O5 Traceability and certification

The requirement applies to wood raw material, cork and bamboo used in the product.

Species name

The applicant/manufacturer must state the name (species name) of the wood raw material/bamboo/cork used in the product.

Chain of Custody certification

All wood raw material and bamboo used in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products must be covered by a valid Chain of Custody certificate in accordance with FSC/PEFC schemes.

The applicant or product manufacturer must have Chain of Custody certification under the FSC/PEFC schemes.

Certified wood raw material, bamboo and cork

A minimum of 70% by weight/volume of the wood raw material, bamboo and cork used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product must come from forests that are managed in accordance with sustainable forestry management principles established by FSC and PEFC and/or be recycled raw material*.

For particleboards:

- A minimum of 70% by weight/volume of the wood raw material, bamboo and cork used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product must come from forests that are managed in accordance with sustainable forestry management principles established by FSC and PEFC and/or be recycled raw material* and
- a minimum of 50% of the wood raw material in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled particleboard must consist of post consumed recycled raw material*.

For particleboard, a minimum of 50% of the wood raw material in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled particleboard must consist of post consumed recycled raw material*.

The remaining proportion of wood raw material must be covered by FSC/PEFC's control schemes (FSC controlled wood/PEFC controlled sources) or be recycled material.

The applicant/manufacture must create a designated product group for Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products in their accounting system to control and meet the required certified content in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products.

**See Terms and definitions.*

- ☒ The names (species names) of the wood raw material, bamboo and cork that are used.
- ☒ The applicant/manufacture must provide valid FSC/PEFC CoC certification that includes all wood raw material, bamboo and cork used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product.
- ☒ The applicant/manufacture shall provide audited accounting documents showing that at least 70% of the material in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product or production line is from forests or areas that are managed in accordance with sustainable forestry management principles that meet the requirements of the FSC or PEFC scheme. If the product or production line includes uncertified material, evidence must be provided that the content of uncertified material does not exceed 30% and is covered by a verification system that ensures that it is legally harvested and meets any other requirements laid down by FSC or PEFC with regard to uncertified material.
- ☒ Particleboards: The applicant/manufacture must provide documentary evidence that at least 50% of the wood raw material in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled particleboard consist of post consumed recycled raw material.
- ☒ An applicant/manufacture who only uses recycled material in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product, which is not FSC/PEFC certified, must provide documentary evidence that the material is recycled, e.g. an invoice.

Background

The requirement has been tightened and it is now required that the manufacturer of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product must hold Chain of Custody certification (or only use recycled raw material). The certified share has increased to 70%, while the remainder must be covered by the CoC system and be controlled wood/from controlled sources. Alternatively, recycled material can be used.

Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements concerning raw material based on wood, bamboo or cork focus on sustainable forestry and traceability of raw materials.

The many benefits that sustainably managed forests deliver to society include wood for materials and energy, protection against global warming, homes and livelihoods for local communities and indigenous peoples, support of biodiversity and protection of water and soil from pollution and erosion. By setting a requirement that wood raw material must originate from certified, sustainable managed forests, Nordic Ecolabelling is supporting the move towards more sustainable forestry practices.

Nordic Ecolabelling requires a declaration of the species of wood contained in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product. This makes it possible to check the validity of Chain of Custody certificates in the supply chain. The requirement for CoC certification improves the traceability of materials in the supply chain within the guidelines and control systems of the FSC and PEFC. The company's CoC

certification proves how certified wood is kept separate from other wood during production, administration and storage and is inspected annually by independent certification bodies.

The manufacturer of the product must be CoC certified, and there is a requirement that certified raw material must be assigned/allocated to the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product in the accounts for certified/non-certified material. This ensures that FSC/PEFC credits are used for the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled production and that the credits are “used up” and not sold twice. This will stimulate increased demand for certified wood raw material because more certified wood raw material must be purchased if the manufacturer wants to label other products, and not just the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products, with the FSC/PEFC logo. This also means that it is possible to label the finished product with the FSC/PEFC logo and that a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product can carry both the Nordic Swan Ecolabel logo and the FSC/PEFC logo. It should be noted that Nordic Ecolabelling approves both the percentage system and the credit system for accounting and sale of certified material.

The raw material used in the production of particleboard is largely recycled/waste wood. Requiring a minimum of 50% of the wood raw material in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled particleboard to be made from post consumed recycled raw material keeps wood waste in the cycle of the circular economic process.

O6 Chemicals – recycled material in wood-based panels

Recycled material in wood-based panels must meet the requirements of the European Panel Federation’s (EPF) Standard for delivery conditions of recycled wood¹⁷.

This means that the materials must not come from

- Treated wood: wood that contains halogenated organic compounds or heavy metals as a result of treatment with wood preservatives.
- Wood that exceeds the threshold limit values in the table below:

Substance/compound	Limit value (mg/kg recycled wood)
Arsenic (As)	25
Cadmium (Cd)	50
Chromium (Cr)	25
Copper (Cu)	40
Lead (Pb)	90
Mercury (Hg)	25
Fluorine (F)	100
Chlorine (Cl)	1000
Pentachlorophenol (PCP)	5
Creosote (Benzo(a)pyrene)	0.5

The requirement does not apply to sawdust, wood chips and similar materials that come straight from the wood-processing industry where the wood is virgin/untreated.

¹⁷ <https://europanel.org/issues/standards/>, visited December 2022

- Certification or declaration of compliance with the EFP's Standard for delivery conditions of recycled wood.

Background

The requirement is set in order to have better control over the type of recycled material used and to ensure that materials containing undesirable substances are not used. The requirement is the same as that set out in Nordic Ecolabelling's Criteria for furniture and fitments (generation 5) and the EU Ecolabel Criteria for furniture. Compliance with this standard is relatively good in the EU but it is important to ensure that production outside the EU also complies with the requirements of the standard. Requirements are imposed on the content of a number of heavy metals and creosote. If it can be documented that the requirements of the German Waste Wood Ordinance regulation, 2002 or later are met, this will also be approved as documentation.

4.6.2 Lignocellulose raw materials (other than wood)

This requirement concerns panels made from lignocellulose raw materials such as straw, flax or hemp.

O7 Lignocellulose raw materials (other than wood)

The species name (Latin and English/Nordic language) and geographic origin (country) must be stated for the renewable raw material.

The renewable raw materials must be waste* or residual products* from other production systems, e.g., straw from grain production.

** Waste and residues as defined in EU Directive 2018/2001/EC. Examples of residual products include straw, chaff, and the non-edible part of maize.*

- Name and geographic origin of the renewable raw materials.
- Description of the raw material showing that it is a residual or waste product.

Background

Nordic Ecolabelling is positive about the use of renewable materials but wishes to receive information about the species used and geographical origin. It is important that the renewable raw materials have a sustainable origin and are not suitable for other important uses, such as human food or animal feed. There is therefore a requirement that the raw materials must be waste or residual products from other production.

4.6.3 Paper and cellulose fibre

The requirements in this chapter comprise raw materials, chemical and emissions in production of pulp and paper used in panels. Pulp and paper are used in several types of panels such as kraft- and decor paper used in HPL/compact laminate, layers of paper in gypsum plaster boards and sound absorbing material in acoustic panels.

If the paper used carries the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and/or the EU Ecolabel, the requirements concerning paper raw material are considered to be fulfilled and they do not need to be documented.

O8 Ecolabelled paper

If the paper is ecolabelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel or the EU Ecolabel, all requirements in this chapter 4.6.3 is fulfilled.

- Nordic Swan Ecolabelled or EU Ecolabelled textile: Submit name of paper, manufacturer, and licence number. Appendix 3 may be used.

Background

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel and the EU Ecolabel are so called type 1 ecolabels and both schemes assess the entire life cycle of the paper and target requirements at the stages in the life cycle that have relevance and potential.

O9 Tree species – restrictions (pulp and paper)

Nordic Ecolabelling's list of tree species* consists of virgin woods listed on:

- a) CITES (Appendices I, II and III)
- b) IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN and VU
- c) Rainforest Foundation Norway's tree list
- d) Siberian larch (from forests outside the EU)

Use of tree species listed on a) CITES (Appendices I, II and III) is not permitted. Tree species listed on either b), c) or d) may be used if they meet all the following requirements:

- the tree species does not originate from an area/region where it is on the IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN or VU
- the tree species does not originate from an Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), as defined in 2002 <http://www.intactforests.org/world.map.html>.
- the tree species shall originate from FSC or PEFC certified forests/plantations and shall be covered by a valid FSC/PEFC Chain of Custody (CoC) certificate documented/controlled as FSC or PEFC 100% through the FSC transfer method or PEFC physical separation method.
- In addition, tree species grown in plantations shall originate from FSC or PEFC certified plantations established before 1994.

* https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/pulp-paper-declaration-portal/what-can-be-declared/forestry-requirements/forestry_requirements_2020/

- Enter the names of the tree species included in the product. Appendix 3 may be used.
- Declaration from the applicant/manufacturer/supplier that tree species listed on a)–d) are not used in the product.
- If species from the lists b), c) or d) are used:
- Valid FSC/PEFC Chain of Custody certificate from supplier/applicant/manufacturer covering the specific tree species and documenting that the wood is controlled as FSC or PEFC 100% through the FSC transfer method or PEFC physical separation method.

- The applicant/manufacturer/supplier shall document full traceability back to the certified forest unit and document the following:
- the wood does not originate from an area/region where it is on the IUCN Red List, categorised as CR, EN or VU.
 - the tree species does not originate from an Intact Forest Landscape (IFL), as defined in 2002: <http://www.intactforests.org/world.webmap.html>
 - For plantations, the applicant/manufacturer/supplier must document that the tree species does not originate from FSC or PEFC certified plantations established after 1994.

Background

See requirement O4.

O10 Traceability and certification of wood raw materials (pulp and paper)

Species name

The applicant/manufacturer of the panel (containing pulp or laminate) or pulp/paper supplier must state the name (species name) of the fibre raw material used in the pulp/paper.

Chain of Custody certification

All wood raw material used in the pulp or laminate must be covered by a valid Chain of Custody certificate in accordance with FSC/PEFC schemes.

The manufacturer/supplier of the pulp or laminate must have valid FSC/PEFC CoC certification.

Certified fibre raw material

A minimum of 70% by weight/volume of the fibre raw material used in the pulp or laminate must come from forests that are managed in accordance with sustainable forestry management principles that meet the requirements of the FSC or PEFC Chain of Custody schemes, and/or be recycled raw material*.

The remaining proportion shall be covered by FSC/PEFC's control schemes (FSC controlled wood/PEFC controlled sources) or be recycled material*.

- Name (species name) of the fibre raw material used. Appendix 3 may be used.
- The manufacturer/supplier of the pulp and laminate must present a valid FSC/PEFC CoC certificate, which includes all fibre raw material used in the pulp or laminate.
- The panel manufacturer must document that pulp or laminate is purchased from a CoC FSC/PEFC certified subcontractor and provide documentation that the certification requirement of at least 70% certified raw materials has been met, and the remaining proportion is covered by FSC/PEFC's control schemes (FSC controlled wood/PEFC controlled sources). This must be specified on the invoice/delivery note with certification claim.
- Valid Nordic Swan Ecolabel and or EU Ecolabel licence certificate for paper.

Background

The requirement has been tightened and it is now required that the manufacturer of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product must hold Chain of Custody certification (or only use recycled raw material). The certification share has increased to 70%, while the remainder must be covered by the Chain of Custody system and be controlled wood/from controlled sources. Alternatively, recycled material can be used.

O11 Chemicals in the manufacture of pulp and paper

Chemicals used in the manufacture of pulp and paper must meet the requirements contained in the Chemical Module for Nordic Ecolabelling of paper, Version 3, or later versions.

- Declaration from the manufacture of pulp and paper that the requirement is met. Appendix 3 may be used.

Background

Nordic Ecolabelling has long experience of setting requirements for paper production. The requirements to be met have recently been revised and the result is the chemical module generation 3 to produce pulp and paper. The chemical module contains, among other things, requirements for the classification of chemicals, specific requirements for classified residual monomers and a ban on GMO in starch. For more background, please see the background document for the Chemicals module which can be found on the Nordic Ecolabelling website.

O12 COD emissions from the production of paper and pulp

COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand) emissions to water must be less than the stated COD value in the table below. A description of the preparation and analysis methods is provided in Appendix 1.

The COD is calculated by adding up COD emissions from pulp and paper:

COD mass (kg/ADt) + COD emissions paper machine (kg/ADt).

For paper produced from mixtures of chemical, recycled fibre and mechanical pulps, a weighted limit value is calculated from the proportion of the various pulp types. In the weighted calculation, the percentage of COD emissions from the paper machine must be set to 1 kg/ADT. For example, for 60% unbleached chemical mass and 40% recycled pulp, the calculation is: $(14-1 \times 0.6) + (4-1 \times 0.4) = 7.8 + 1.2 = 9.0$ kg/ADT

Pulp types	Total COD emissions for both pulp and paper (kg/ADt)
Unbleached chemical pulp	14.0
CTMP pulp	19.0
TMP/groundwood pulp	7.0
Recycled fibre pulp	4.0

- Information about the types of pulp used in the production of paper. Appendix 3 may be used.

- ☒ If pulp that has been checked in accordance with Nordic Ecolabelling's Basic Module for paper is used: Description of the producer, production site and name of the pulp.
- ☒ Description of the sampling procedure including measurement methods and measurement results in the last 12 months from the producers of the paper and pulp.
- ☒ Calculation from the producers of the paper and pulp showing that the total emissions of COD are below the relevant limit value in the requirement.

Background

The requirement was also included in generation 6 of the criteria and remains unchanged. All pulp and paper production generate wastewater with organic content expressed as chemical oxygen demand (COD). Microorganisms consume oxygen to break down the organic matter. This may lead to low oxygen concentrations in the water and, in some cases, anaerobic conditions. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel's basic module for paper also contains requirements concerning other emissions, such as emissions of nitrogen and phosphorus. However, requirements are only set for COD. COD emissions also correlate with other emissions. If the emission of COD is low, emissions of other substances to water are thus also expected to be low.

4.6.4 Textile/fabric

The requirements apply to textiles/fabric used as an outer layer on the panel or textile/fabric used as sound absorbing material in the panel. Textile/fabric can be made from both natural and synthetic fibres such as cotton, viscose, silk, polyester and wool used in panels.

O13 Ecolabelled textile

If the textile is ecolabelled with Nordic Swan Ecolabel or EU Ecolabel, all requirements in this chapter 3.6.4 is fulfilled.

- ☒ Nordic Swan Ecolabel or EU Ecolabelled textile: Submit name of textile, manufacturer, and licence number.

Background

New requirement in generation 7.

Nordic Swan Ecolabel and EU Ecolabel are so called type 1 ecolabels and both schemes assess the entire life cycle of the textile and target requirements at the stages in the life cycle that have relevance and potential. Textile products may comprise different fabrics with totally different production chains. The requirements for the textile used are comprehensive in these criteria. The choice has therefore been made to permit the use of the other stated certifications to make the application process easier. Nordic Swan Ecolabel and EU Ecolabel covers both cotton/natural fibres of cellulose and synthetic fibres.

O14 Cotton, other natural seed fibers of cellulose or wool

Cotton, other natural seed fibres of cellulose (including kapok) or wool shall not come from genetically modified organisms (GMO) and must be one of the following or a combination (where the different types of certified cotton must add up to 100%) of:

- organically cultivated* or
- recycled** or
- GOTS certified or
- grown in compliance with one of the following standards: BCI (Better Cotton Initiative), CmiA (Cotton made in Africa) or FairTrade for cotton.

**Organic means cotton that is certified organic or is grown during the transition period to organic cultivation in accordance with a standard approved in the IFOAM Family of Standards. See definitions for more details.*

*** see Terms and definitions.*

- ☒ A valid certification showing that the cotton in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product has been organically grown or grown in compliance with the standards in the requirement. If the GOTS certification is held by the subcontractor, a transaction certificate is required showing that the product being shipped is GOTS certified. Documentation for BCI cotton must show traceability back to the BCI farmers.

Documentation for recycled fibre must be either a or b:

- ☒ a) Certificate showing that the raw material is 100% recycled (post- and/or pre-consumer) with Global Recycled Standard certificate 4.0 (or later versions), Recycled Claim Standard (RCS) or other equivalent certification approved by Nordic Ecolabelling.
- ☒ b) Present documentation demonstrating that the recycled fibre was purchased as 100% recycled (post- and / or pre-consumer) and state the supplier.

Background

New requirement in generation 7. The cultivation and harvesting of cotton are associated with serious environmental and health problems. This is mainly caused using pesticides, fertilisers and other chemicals during cultivation. Other factors, such as water consumption (irrigated or rainwater), monoculture, land use also have significant impacts on the environment¹⁸.

There are several ways to reduce adverse effects on health and the environment in the production of cotton. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) promotes measures such as the use of personal protective equipment, training farmers in the use of pesticides, and improved control of the pesticides used. A reduction in the use of artificial fertiliser and energy is also a requirement.

The environmental impact can also be reduced through organic cultivation and farming that does not use synthetic pesticides or artificial fertilisers and does not

¹⁸ Revision of the European Ecolabel and Green Public Procurement (GPP) Criteria for Textile Products – Technical report and criteria proposal, Working document, European Commission, Joint Research Centre Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) 2013.

allow genetically modified cotton. One of the environmental problems that organic production does not solve is the problem related to artificial irrigation. Organic cultivation today is primarily located in areas where rainwater is the main source of water, which reduces the problems associated with water consumption¹⁹. Although organic production does not necessarily result in reduced water consumption, the run-off water quality will be significantly better for both humans and nature. It is difficult to say whether there is any difference between cotton yields in conventional and organic production. One of the reasons for this is that yields already differ greatly within individual systems. Various studies suggest that IPM produces the highest yields of the three production methods and that approx. 20% of global cotton production is IPM²⁰.

Recycled cotton fibre:

This is cotton fibre that is recovered from used clothing and textiles from consumers or industrial waste (post- or pre-consumer textile waste). Industrial textile waste may be surplus material from the production of yarns, textiles, and textile products, for example selvedge from weaving and fabric remnants from factory cutting rooms. The textiles are stripped and pulled into fibres, which are then carded and spun into new yarn. Recycled cotton may also be blended with virgin fibres to improve yarn strength²¹.

GMO:

GMO is a highly debated topic, and several countries have banned cultivation of GMOs. Topics discussed are food security, land use, lack of scientific knowledge about effects under local agricultural/forest conditions and risk of adverse effects on health and the environment.

Nordic Ecolabelling emphasises the precautionary principle and bases its position on regulations that have a holistic approach to GMOs. This means that sustainability, ethics, and benefit to society must be emphasised together with health and the environment. We are not in principle against genetic engineering and GMOs per se but are concerned about the consequences when genetically modified plants, animals and microorganisms are propagated in nature. Nordic Ecolabelling believes that GMOs should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

O15 Recycled fibres: Synthetic fibres

Synthetic fibres must comprise of 100% recycled material*. This must not include recycled plastic form plants that are EFSA** or FDA*** approved as food contact material or marketed as compatible with these.

The traceability of the recycled raw material must be documented with either a) or b) below:

- a) Global Recycled Standard certificate or Recycled Claim Standard certificate showing that the raw material is recycled, or other equivalent certification approved by Nordic Ecolabelling.

¹⁹ "The sustainability of cotton – consequences for man and the environment", Kooistra K., Termorshuizen A and Pyburn R., Wageningen University & Research Center, report no. 223, April 2006

²⁰ Revision of the European Ecolabel and Green Public Procurement (GPP) Criteria for Textile Products – Technical report and criteria proposal, Working document, European Commission, Joint Research Centre Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) 2013.

²¹ Wikipedia - Cotton recycling, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cotton_recycling (accessed 26.08.2019)

- b) By stating the producer of the recycled raw material and documenting that the feedstock used in the raw material is 100% recycled material, see definition in requirement.

* *See Terms and definitions.*

** *In line with Commission Regulation (EC) No 282/2008 of 27 March 2008 on recycled plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foods.*

*** *In line with the Code of Federal Regulations Title 21: Food and Drugs, PART 177 – Indirect food additives: polymers.*

- Declaration from the producer of the recycled raw material that the raw material is not EFSA or FDA approved, see requirement.
- a) Certificate from an independent certifier of the supply chain (e.g., Global Recycled Standard or Recycled Claim Standard).
- b) Documentation from the producer, showing that the feedstock used in the raw material is 100% recycled material, see definition in requirement.
- Documentation showing that 100% of the synthetic fibers are recycled materials.

Background

The requirement is new and is based on requirements in the criteria for the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling of furniture.

Nordic Ecolabelling wants to support the circular economy through the use of recycled materials instead of virgin materials, which in this case is crude oil. However, fibre to fibre recycling is still limited for textiles²² and recycled polymers from other synthetic materials are frequently used today as different plastic materials. The requirement thus accepts both fibre to fibre recycling and polymer fibre recycling. There are reasonable opportunities for using recycled fibre types like polyester and polyamide today. The opportunities for other fibre types are not yet quite the same (August 2019).

The article “Environmental impact of textile reuse and recycling - A review”²³ reports that it is well documented that textile reuse and recycling in general minimises negative impacts on the environment compared with incineration and landfill, and that reuse is more beneficial than recycling.

There is a ban on the use of re-granulate that is approved for contact with foods by the EFSA under Regulation No. 282/2008 or FDA in compliance with Code of Federal Regulations Title 21: Food and Drugs, PART 177—INDIRECT FOOD ADDITIVES: POLYMERS. It is considered inappropriate that raw materials which are approved for production of food packaging should be used in the production of textiles. The highest levels of traceability and purity are required for plastic raw materials used in packaging in contact with food. The use of these plastics for anything other than food contact is therefore downcycling.

The requirement stipulates that feedstock used in the recycled raw material must be fully traceable. Without proper traceability, it is difficult to ascertain

²² PULSE OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY, Global Fashion Agenda & The Boston Consulting Group 2017

²³ Sandin, G, Environmental impact of textile reuse and recycling – A review, Journal of Cleaner Production Volume 184, 20 May 2018, Pages 353-365 70 EU Ecolabel’s background report; “Establishment of ec

that the material is actually recycled. Documentation regarding traceability should be available, e.g., a certificate from a third party's certification of the supply chain, such as Global Recycled Standard. Alternatively, the manufacturer of the recycled raw material can document the traceability by declaring that 100% recycled feedstock has been used.

O16 Recycled fibres - test for harmful substances

Recycled fibres shall not contain the following substances above the limits stated in the table below.

This requirement applies to all recycled fibres – both synthetic and natural and must be documented annually with either a) or b):

- a) an Oeko-Tex standard 100 class I-III certificate.
- b) test report showing that the requirement is complied with.

The following are exempted from this requirement:

- Material from PET bottles originally approved for food contact.
- Fibres from chemically recycled polymers, if it can otherwise be documented that the process ensures, that the requirement limits are complied with.
- Fibres, where it can be documented that they originate from type I (according to standard ISO 14024) eco-labelled products.

Substance/substance group	Max. limit	Test method
Extractable metals		Atomic absorption spectrometry (AAS) or ICP. The metals are extracted by use of artificial acidic sweat solution according to ISO 105-04 (testing solution II).
Chromium total	2.0 mg/kg	
Lead	1.0 mg/kg	
Mercury	0.02 mg/kg	
Cadmium	0.1 mg/kg	
Organic tin compounds		
TBT and TPhT	0.5 mg/kg	
Phthalates		Extraction of the testing material with an organic solvent. The extract is analysed by gas chromatography (MS detection).
BBP, DBP, DEP, DMP, DEHP, DMEP, DIHP, DHNUP, DCHP, DHxP, DIBP, DIHxP, DIOP, DINP, DIDP, DPrP, DHP, DNOP, DNP and DPP	Total 0.05 weight%	

PAHs (Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons)		Extraction of the testing material with an organic solvent. The extract is analysed after clean-up by gas chromatography with mass selective detection (MSD).
Naphthalene, Acenaphtene, Acenaphtylene, Phenanthrene, Anthracene, Fluorene, Fluoranthene and Pyrene	Each 1 mg/kg	
Flame retardants		Extraction of the testing material with an organic solvent. The extract is analysed then by LC/MS/MS respectively GC/MS/MS.
Brominated and chlorinated flame retardants	Total 50 mg/kg	
Chlorophenols		The samples are extracted with a basic aqueous solution following DIN 50009. The extracted free phenols and possibly hydrolysed phenolesters are acetylated, transferred to an organic phase and analysed with GC-MS.
Pentachlorophenol	0.5 mg/kg	
Tetrachlorophenol	0.5 mg/kg	
Trichlorophenol	2.0 mg/kg	
Dichlorophenol	3.0 mg/kg	
Monochlorophenol	3.0 mg/kg	
Per- and polyfluorinated compounds		The method for the determination of PFCs/PFAS is based on an extraction with methanol followed by determination of the PFCs/PFAS by means of LCMS and GC-MS.
PFOS, PFOSA, PFOSF, N-Me-FOSA, N-Me-FOSE, N-Et-FOSE	Total <1.0 µg/m2	
Dyes		EN 14362-1 EN 14362-3 The identification and quantification of dyes extracted with an organic solvent is made by means of chromatographic methods.
Cleavable, classified as carcinogenic	20 mg/kg	
Cleavable aniline	50 mg/kg	
Classified as carcinogenic	50 mg/kg	
Dyes classified as allergenic	50 mg/kg	
Other dyes	50 mg/kg	

- Test reports or Oeko-Tex 100 class I-III certificate showing fulfilment of the requirement. A written procedure showing how an annual test is performed in

line with the requirement, along with annual in-house checks of compliance with the requirement. Alternatively, a procedure for annual requisition of Oekotex 100 class III certificate. Test results/certificate are to be archived and kept available for inspection by Nordic Ecolabelling.

- ☒ When using chemically recycled polymers documentation showing that the recycling process ensures that the requirement is complied with.
- ☒ When using the exemption for material from PET bottles, this must be documented by the fibre supplier.
- ☒ When using an exemption for fibres from earlier type I ecolabelled textiles, this must be documented by the fibre supplier.

Background

The requirement is new and is based on requirements in the criteria for the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling of furniture.

It is important to consider the potential exposure of the user and the environment to undesirable chemicals from recycled material. The requirement covers the chemical substances and substance groups that are at greatest risk of being present in recycled fibre for textile production. Recycled fibre may contain residues of additives from previously used dyes, pesticides from cultivation, biocides used during transport, and so on²⁴. This applies to both fibre recovered from used textiles and fibre recovered from products other than textiles. Even if the textile is washed several times, unwanted chemicals may still be present in the recycled fibre. In mechanical recycling processes, all the chemical substances remain in the fibre and may be transferred to the new textile fibre. In the chemical recycling process, some chemical substances remain in the material, and both unproblematic and problematic substances can cause technical interference with the process²⁵. It is possible to conduct a spot test for the most relevant substances over a set interval, but since the recycled feedstock may come from multiple sources and can therefore vary a great deal, it is not possible to implement the testing required to identify all the potential “old additives”.

Recycled fibre from PET bottles may also contain small amounts of undesirable substances such as antimony and heavy metals, which are derived from labels, adhesives, printing inks and waste from the transport and sorting of the plastic. However, measurements have established that the levels fall well below the limits set for heavy metals in packaging materials in California’s Toxics in Packaging Prevention Act of 2006²⁶.

²⁴ IKEA and H&M analyze the content of recycled fabrics, article 29-10-2019 on Treehugger.com https://www.treehugger.com/sustainable-fashion/ikea-and-hm-analyze-content-recycled-fabrics.html?utm_source=TreeHugger+Newsletters&utm_campaign=9cd1c025b2-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_11_16_2018_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_32de41485d-9cd1c025b2-243762625

²⁵ Nordic Council of Ministers (2016). Gaining benefits from discarded textiles: LCA of different treatment pathways

²⁶ M. Whitt, Survey of heavy metal contamination in recycled polyethylene terephthalate used for food packaging, Journal of Plastic Film & Sheeting 2012

4.6.5 Plastic

The requirements in this chapter comprise plastic used in panels e.g., face sheets, layers/membranes or core material used for sound absorbing such as expanded polystyrene (EPS), extruded polystyrene (XPS), polyisocyanurate (PIR) or Polyurethane (PU). Polyester made from recycled plastic must comply with requirements for textile in section 4.6.4.

O17 Recycled plastic

100 wt% of the plastic in the panel or moulding must consist of recycled* plastic. The recycled plastic must not contain:

- recycled plastic from plants that are EFSA** or FDA*** approved as food contact material or marketed as compatible with these.
- recycled plastic must not be PVC or PVDC.

* See Terms and definitions.

** In line with Commission Regulation (EC) No 282/2008 of 27 March 2008 on recycled plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foods.

*** In line with the Code of Federal Regulations Title 21: Food and Drugs, PART 177 – Indirect food additives: polymers

- Manufacturers of recycled raw materials must be stated.
- Description and documentation from manufacturers of recycled raw materials showing that the plastic is recycled in compliance with the requirement's definition or has Global Recycled Standard certification or EuCertPlast certification, showing that the raw materials are recycled, or other equivalent certification approved by Nordic Ecolabelling.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7. Nordic Ecolabelling wants to support the circular economy using recycled materials instead of virgin materials, which in this case is crude oil. This helps to reduce both the general environmental impact and the more specific energy and climate impact of the product.

There is a ban on the use of re-granulate that is approved for contact with foods by the EFSA under Regulation No. 282/2008 or FDA in compliance with Code of Federal Regulations Title 21: Food and Drugs, PART 177—INDIRECT FOOD ADDITIVES: POLYMERS. It is considered inappropriate that raw materials which are approved for production of food packaging should be used in the production of plastics. The highest levels of traceability and purity are required for plastic raw materials used in packaging in contact with food. The use of these plastics for anything other than food contact is therefore downcycling.

A ban on PVC is a requirement that Nordic Ecolabelling includes in many criteria. The environmental impact of PVC is associated primarily with waste management, the use of additives and dioxin emissions, for example in the manufacture and incineration of PVC. The latest membrane cell technology is considered to be the most environmentally-sound means of production, but the membranes are coated with PFAS and this represents a potential source of PFAS

contamination to the environment^{27,28}. The mercury method is still used to produce chlorine at some production facilities²⁹.

Plasticisers that have adverse health and environmental effects, such as phthalates, are frequently added to PVC. So-called imitation leather can be coated with plasticised PVC³⁰. Some consultative bodies have commented that PVC is necessary for furniture for the health sector. However, there are other consultative bodies that have pointed out that there are alternatives to PVC such as PU. The ban on PVC is in line with requirements in other type 1 ecolabels such as EU Ecolabel and Blauer Engel in Germany.

The requirement for polymer-based insulation materials (XPS, EPS, PIR, and PU) is ambitious and manufacturers may have difficulty finding appropriate recycled materials to use as feed stock. However, the development in the market is moving towards a greater share of recycled materials in the polymer-based insulation materials. Some materials are marketed as 100% recycled materials.

O18 Chemicals in recycled plastics

Recycled plastic must not contain:

- halogenated flame retardants
- cadmium
- lead
- mercury
- chromium VI
- arsenic
- phthalates
- Impurities up to 100 ppm are permitted.

- ☒ A test report (XRF, X-ray fluorescence or equivalent method) from the supplier of the recycled plastic showing compliance with the requirement. Alternatively, the requirement can be documented with traceability to the source to substantiate that these substances are not included.

Background

The requirement is new and corresponds to requirements set in the new criteria for Nordic Ecolabelling of furniture.

The requirement applies to chemicals contained in the recycled plastic raw material and not chemicals that are added through regranulation. There are separate requirements for this, see O19. The requirement must be documented

²⁷ Chlorine and Building Materials: A Global Inventory of Production Technologies, Markets, and Pollution, Phase 1: Africa, The Americas, and Europe

²⁸ Chlorine and Building Materials: A Global Inventory of Production Technologies, Markets, and Pollution, Phase 2: Asia, Healthy Building Network, 2019

²⁹ The Danish Environmental Protection Agency, Green Tips for Furniture:

<https://mst.dk/kemi/kemikalier/saerligt-for-borgere-om-kemikalier/groenne-tips/hjemmet/moebler-udenpvc-og-phthalater/> (downloaded 10 October 2019)

³⁰ The Danish Environmental Protection Agency, Green Tips for Furniture:

<https://mst.dk/kemi/kemikalier/saerligt-for-borgere-om-kemikalier/groenne-tips/hjemmet/moebler-udenpvc-og-phthalater/> (downloaded 10 October 2019)

with a test report using X-ray fluorescence (XRF) or equivalent methods, or traceability to the source that substantiates that the specified substances are not included. The aim of the requirement is to capture the “worst substances”. Ways of documenting this were assessed during a review of the floor covering criteria and as part of an internal investigation by Nordic Ecolabelling in connection with amendments to the requirement applicable to plastics in Version 4 of Furniture and fitments. The dialogues held with floor covering and furniture manufacturers and suppliers of recycled plastics during this process showed that there are different practices in the industry for testing substances in recycled plastics. Some manufacturers rely on questionnaires/declarations from their subcontractors and follow them up with chemical analyses if it is considered likely that the plastic contains substances of concern. Some manufacturers of recycled plastic have XRF (X-ray fluorescence spectrometer) equipment for testing the plastic to see whether it can meet the given requirement (a level of 100 ppm can be achieved). Although this will entail extra documentation work, it shows that it is possible to set such a requirement. Using recycled plastic is good as it helps reduce resource use and stimulates a circular economy. At the same time, there is no wish to recycle chemicals that are harmful to health and the environment.

O19 Additives - prohibited substances

Additives in the list below must not be added to plastic (both virgin and recycled plastic). The requirement applies to additives actively added to the polymer raw material in the master batch or compound in production of plastic. The requirement also covers substances that are added during re-compounding of recycled plastic raw materials.

- CMR substances - Carcinogenic, Germ cell mutagenicity, Reproductive toxicity category 1A or B or category 2
 - An exemption is made for titanium dioxide (CAS No. 13463-67-7) classified H351
 - An exemption is made for 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS No. 77-99-6) classified H361
- Substances on the Candidate List*
- Substances evaluated by the EU to be persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) or very persistent and very bioaccumulative (vPvB), in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH**.
- Endocrine disruptors:
 - Substances considered to be potential endocrine disruptors in category 1 or 2 on the EU’s priority list of substances for further evaluation of their role in endocrine disruption. See the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/endocrine/strategy/being_en.htm (Annex L, page 238 onwards)
 - Substances on the EU member state initiative "Endocrine Disruptor Lists", List I and III. See the following links:
<https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-i-substances-identified-asendocrine-disruptors-by-the-eu> and <https://edlists.org/the-ed->

lists/list-iii-substances-identified-asendocrine-disruptors-by-participating-national-authorities

- Halogenated organic compounds with the following exceptions:
 - halogenated organic pigments that comply with the Council of Europe recommendation "Resolution AP (89) 1 on the use of colorants in plastic materials coming into contact with food", point 2.5
- Butylhydroxytoluene (BHT, CAS No. 128-37-0)
- Aziridine and polyaziridines
- Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (C10-C13) and medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (C14-C17).
- Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs)
- Alkylphenols, alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEO) and other alkylphenol derivatives (APD)***.
- Brominated flame retardants.
- Phthalates****
- Pigments and additives based on lead, cadmium, arsenic, chromium (VI), mercury and their compounds.
- Bisphenols and bisphenol derivatives
 - Bisphenol A used in the production of epoxy acrylate is not covered by the requirement.
 - Assessment of regulatory needs: Bisphenols. ECHA – 16 December 2021: Section 2.1: Bisphenols for which further EU RRM is proposed – restriction
<https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/c2a8b29d-0e2d-7df8-dac1-2433e2477b02>
- Organotin compounds.

**The Candidate List is available on the ECHA website:*

<http://echa.europa.eu/candidate-list-table>

***PBT and vPvB in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH*

****Alkylphenol derivative*

*****Phthalates are esters of 1,2 benzenedicarboxylic acid (orthophthalic acid)*

- Safety data sheet for additives in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).
- A declaration from the plastics manufacturer.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7. The requirement covers ingoing substances in additives that are added to the polymer raw material in the master batch or compound. Substances that arise from the actual polymer production are thus not covered by this requirement. Recycled plastic raw materials are counted as polymer raw materials, where additives that are added to a new master batch or compound are covered by requirements.

The list is based on the general principles from Nordic Swan Ecolabelling regarding undesirable compounds in combination with corresponding requirements for other Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products. For more information see chapter 4.7 Chemicals.

Organotin compounds

Organotin compounds are used in biocides and as fungicides in a wide range of consumer products. In the textile industry, they can be found in products such as socks, shoes, and sportswear to prevent odours caused by the breakdown of perspiration. One of the most common organotin compounds is tributyltin (TBT). Several of the tin-organic compounds are banned for selected areas of use through Reach Annex XVII entry 20 and the following three; TBTO, DBTC and DOTE are on the EU Candidate List³¹.

O20 **Manufacture of ESP, XPS, PIR and Polyurethane (PU)**

CFC, HCFC, HFC, methylene chloride or other halogenated organic compounds must not be used as blowing agents.

Protective measures must be taken when handling isocyanates to reduce employee exposure as far as possible. The Workplace Exposure Limits for air* concentrations of isocyanates in areas where employees are working without protective equipment are:

- MDI (CAS No. 101-68-8): Average over an 8-hour period must not exceed 0.005 ppm (0.05 mg/m³)
- TDI (CAS No. 584-84-9 and 91-08-7): Average over an 8-hour period must not exceed 0.005 ppm (0.04 mg/m³)

**If the legislation in the individual country has lower limit values than stated in the requirement, it is the limit values of the legislation that must be met.*

- A declaration from the manufacturer of EXP, XPS, PIR or polyurethane PU foam stating which blowing agent has been used.
- A description of the safety measures taken and the statutory Workplace Exposure Limits for isocyanates in the country of manufacture. If the statutory limits are the same or more stringent than the threshold limit values in the requirement, no further documentation is required. If the statutory limits are less stringent, a description of how air concentration levels of isocyanates are measured must be submitted, along with a test report showing compliance with the threshold limit values specified in the requirement.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7.

Polyurethane must not be foamed using CFC, HCFC, HFC or methylene chloride. These substances are stable organic substances that are strong greenhouse gases. CFC and HFC break down the ozone layer and methylene chloride are suspected of being carcinogenic. Manufacturers have phased out the use of these agents as foaming agents, but it is still considered relevant to keep the requirement in

³¹ <https://miljostatus.miljodirektoratet.no/tema/miljogifter/prioriterte-miljogifter/tbt-og-andre-organisketinnforbindelser/>) besøgt 8 august 2019.

order to ensure that they are not used. Foaming agents are only relevant for polyurethane foam because foaming agents are not required to produce latex foam.

Polyurethane is formed through polyaddition between isocyanates and polyol. The isocyanates that are used for the manufacture of polyurethane foam are MDI (CAS No. 101-68-8) and TDI (CAS No. 584-84-9 and 91-08-7). Both these isocyanates are suspected of causing cancer and may cause sensitisation by inhalation and contact with skin. From an occupational health and safety perspective, MDI is slightly better but gives the foam other technical properties and it is therefore not possible to completely replace TDI with MDI. Among other things, MDI gives the foam a higher density.

Polyurethane foam that has completely hardened is harmless, but it is important to limit worker's exposure to it because of the risks of unreacted isocyanates. Production of polyurethane foam does not take place in a closed process and personal protective equipment (respiratory masks and gloves) are only required for certain stages of the process. Closed-loop systems have therefore been removed from the requirement. Instead, a description of the safety measures taken to minimise employee exposure is required, and the hygiene threshold limit values for TDI and MDI must be observed. The threshold limit values set in this requirement are the same as those in the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority's Regulations on measures and threshold limit values³².

4.6.6 Wood-plastic composite material (WPC)

The requirement in this chapter comprise panels made of wood-plastic composite (WPC) and covers requirements for wood- and plastic raw materials, additives added to the production process and material recovery of WPC. WPC panels shall not comply with other requirements for wood raw materials in section 4.6.1 or plastic in section 4.6.5.

O21 Wood fibre and plastic

The subsidiary requirements below must be fulfilled by the raw materials of plastic and wood fibre in the wood-plastic composite material:

- a) The plastic raw material in WPC must be 100% post-consumer recycled plastic.
- b) The recycled plastic must not be PVC, PVDC or PET.
- c) The wood/cellulose fibre must be 100% post-consumer recycled materials. In addition, the wood/cellulose fibre must not originate from wood impregnated with biocides or heavy metals.

From the manufacturer of WPC:

- For Plastic raw materials: State the proportion and type of post-consumer recycled plastic according to the requirement.
- For wood/cellulose fibres: State the proportion of post-consumer recycled wood/cellulose fibres according to the requirement.

From the supplier of recycled plastic raw materials.

³² <https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/regelverk/forskrifter/forskrift-om-tiltaks--og-grenseverdier/8/1/>

- Declaration that the plastic is 100% post-consumer recycled and does not contain PVC, PVDC or PET.

Background

New requirement in generation 7. Wood-plastic composite (WPC) is a new material that has been added to these criteria.

Wood-plastic composite (WPC) is material that combines a plastic matrix with a plant-based filler and has properties that differ from those of the individual materials. The plant material is usually woodmeal or cellulose pulp but may also be hemp or flax. The plastic is almost always one of the olefins, polyethylene or polypropylene, or a blend of these. The wood fibre component accounts for a very small part of the environmental impact (often waste).

For the environmental impact of the composite material, the plastic component is crucial. In general, the plastic raw material can be recycled or newly produced. If the plastic raw material is recycled, energy use and climate impact are reduced. But it also has great significance if the recycled raw material is post-consumer or just pre-consumer.

There are different views on whether the WPC has a place in the circular economy or not. WPC can be considered a dead end because plastic and wood are mixed and cannot be separated in the waste phase. WPC can be recycled into a new WPC, but since WPC can be made of many different types of polymeric materials, it requires that the individual product made in WPC returns to the specific manufacturer of that type of WPC, which is not immediately logistically possible to solve. It can therefore be seen as a step in the wrong direction to include a new material such as WPC in the criteria for panels.

On the other hand, WPC provides the opportunity to use recycled post-consumer plastic that has been collected from households and that is difficult to find outlets for today.

There are differences in outlet for recycled plastic raw materials depending on whether the source is collected consumer packaging (i.e., post-consumer plastic) or plastic from businesses (trade, industry and agriculture). The latter fraction is called post-commercial or post-industrial. In order for it to be relevant for the Nordic Ecolabel to label a composite material that cannot be separated into its original materials at end-of-life, there is a requirement that 100% post-consumer plastic according to ISO 14021.

The environmental impact of PVC is associated primarily with waste management, the use of additives and dioxin emissions, for example in the manufacture and incineration of PVC. PET has many potentials for being recycled after use due to its performance quality. Use of PET in WPC is considered down-cycling, as PET cannot be separated in the waste phase again.

Nordic Ecolabelling allows the use of WPC in this generation of criteria, with the following arguments.

- A Nordic Swan Ecolabelled WPC should comprise residual products (wood fibre) and recycled plastic. Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements can help towards increased use of recycled raw material (collected consumer packaging) for which it is more difficult to find a market.

- Furthermore, WPC, when it meets Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements, is also free of substances that are hazardous to health and the environment and has a long service life.
- The criteria for panels include other materials that cannot be separated for material recovery and have to be sent for incineration instead, such as laminated materials or cement-based panels.
- It is possible to recycle WPC (e.g., after the use phase or from production waste) to new WPC at the manufacturer. However, there is no integrated fraction for WPC in today's Nordic waste systems.

O22 Additives - prohibited substances

Additives in the list below must not be added during WPC production. The requirement applies to additives actively added to the polymer raw material in the master batch or compound in production of plastic. The requirement also covers substances that are added during re-compounding of recycled plastic raw materials.

- CMR substances - Carcinogenic, Germ cell mutagenicity, Reproductive toxicity category 1A or B or category 2
 - An exemption is made for titanium dioxid (CAS No. 13463-67-7) classified H351
 - An exemption is made for 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS No. 77-99-6) classified H361
- Substances on the Candidate List*
- Substances evaluated by the EU to be persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) or very persistent and very bioaccumulative (vPvB), in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH**.
- Endocrine disruptors:
 - Substances considered to be potential endocrine disruptors in category 1 or 2 on the EU's priority list of substances for further evaluation of their role in endocrine disruption. See the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/endocrine/strategy/being_en.htm (Annex L, page 238 onwards)
 - Substances on the EU member state initiative "Endocrine Disruptor Lists", List I and III. See the following links:
<https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-i-substances-identified-asendocrine-disruptors-by-the-eu> and <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-iii-substances-identified-asendocrine-disruptors-by-participating-national-authorities>
- Halogenated organic compounds with the following exceptions:
 - halogenated organic pigments that comply with the Council of Europe recommendation "Resolution AP (89) 1 on the use of colorants in plastic materials coming into contact with food", point 2.5
- Butylhydroxytoluene (BHT, CAS No. 128-37-0)
- Aziridine and polyaziridines

- Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (C10-C13) and medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (C14-C17).
- Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), e.g., PFOA and PFOS
- Alkylphenols, alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEO) and other alkylphenol derivatives (APD)**.
- Brominated flame retardants.
- Phthalates****
- Pigments and additives based on lead, cadmium, arsenic, chromium (VI), mercury and their compounds.
- Bisphenols and bisphenol derivatives
 - Bisphenol A used in the production of epoxy acrylate is not covered by the requirement.
 - Assessment of regulatory needs: Bisphenols. ECHA – 16 December 2021: Section 2.1: Bisphenols for which further EU RRM is proposed – restriction
<https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/c2a8b29d-0e2d-7df8-dac1-2433e2477b02>
- Organotin compounds.

**The Candidate List is available on the ECHA website:*

<http://echa.europa.eu/candidate-list-table>

***PBT and vPvB in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH*

****Alkylphenol derivative*

***** Phthalates are esters of 1,2 benzenedicarboxylic acid (orthophthalic acid)*

- Safety data sheet for additives in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).
- A declaration from the plastics/rubber/silicon manufacturer.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7. During manufacture of WPC, it is common for bonding agents (resins and adhesives), stabilisers and pigments to be sprayed into the structure to bind together the plastic and wood fibre. For more information see chapter 4.7 chemicals.

O23 Material recovery in WPC

- a) The products must be labelled with information about composite material and main component parts. The labelling must be placed in the product sheet/technical documentation and on the actual WPC material/profile.
- b) The WPC-manufacturer must offer the possibility to return waste material after use (cut-offs, leftovers, demolition waste, returns, incorrect orders, etc.) to fully reintroduce this into the production of new wood-plastic composite. This service must be communicated to customers.

- ☒ An image of the labelling stating composite material and the main component parts. The labelling must be placed in the product sheet/technical documentation and on the actual WPC material/profile.
- ☒ Declaration from the WPC manufacturer describing the possibility to return waste material after use (cut-offs, leftovers, demolition waste, returns, incorrect orders) to be recycled in the production of new wood plastic composite. Example on how this is communicated to customers.

Background

Proposed new requirements for this generation of the criteria. The justification for the requirements is that the material must be resource-efficient and be designed for future material recovery.

As WPC has a long lifespan and was only introduced to the market within the last 10-20 years, no great scale return systems have yet been developed. Some manufacturers already take back returns and incorrect orders and grind the material down to create raw material to produce new WPC. Labelling products with their origin facilitates future recycling.

4.6.7 Mineral raw materials

The requirement in this chapter covers sourcing of virgin mineral raw materials and content of heavy metals in the mineral raw materials. The requirements apply to virgin minerals such as gypsum, limestone, volcanic rocks, and silica used in panels such as gypsum plasterboards, cement-based panels and acoustic panels containing mineral wool.

O24 Responsible sourcing of virgin mineral raw materials

The licensee must:

- have a supply chain policy/code of conduct for responsible sourcing of mineral raw materials such as gypsum, limestone, volcanic rocks, and silica. The policy must concern biodiversity and deforestation risk - reducing impact to biodiversity along the whole supply chain. The policy must be both public and communicated to the supply chain.
 - have a process to identify all specific mining operations (quarries) where the minerals are extracted from.
 - ensure that virgin mineral raw materials used in panels come from mining operations (quarries) with documented biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans.
- ☒ The most recent version of the public policy and a description of how it is communicated to the supply chain.
 - ☒ List of mining operations supplying virgin minerals to the ecolabelled panel.
 - ☒ Documentation/description of the supplying mining operations biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7 of the criteria. The latest assessment of the State of Nature in the EU, published in 2022, shows that we are unfortunately still losing nature as too many protected species continue to decline. The new European Biodiversity Strategy provides Biodiversity provides a real opportunity to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030³³.

The extraction of minerals, particularly by surface methods, inevitably results in changes to the characteristics of the land and local biodiversity where it takes place³⁴. Many source eco-systems harbour endemic species and highly diverse communities that are crucial for ecosystem functioning and services supply, including food and clean water provision, and land stability. Mining poses serious, often irreversible, and far-reaching impacts, to those ecosystems, for example through erosion, shrinking deltas, salinization, pollution, and traffic disturbances. However, these changes are often temporary, and if carefully managed, is possible to protect species/biotope both during active operations and after end use-phase³⁵.

The licensee must have a supply chain policy/code of conduct for responsible sourcing of mineral raw materials. The policy must concern biodiversity and deforestation risk - reducing impact to biodiversity along the whole supply chain. Addressing biodiversity risk involves e.g., knowing your supply chain, engaging suppliers, implementing strong purchasing standards, and monitoring mechanisms and being transparent. The policy must be both public and communicated to the supply chain.

Virgin mineral raw materials used in panels must come from mining operations (quarries) with documented biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans. This means that the licensee must have full traceability to the specific mining operations (quarries) where the minerals are extracted from. The European mineral mining industry such as Cembureau³⁶, Eurogypsum³⁷ and UEPG³⁸ have been working with biodiversity for several years and have been developing guidelines for biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans for mining operation (quarries).

O25 Heavy metals

Mineral raw materials or mineral byproducts must not exceed the quantities of heavy metals indicated in the table below in accordance with indicated test method:

³³ EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030; https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en, visited March 2023

³⁴ Torres A et al: Unearthing the global impact of mining construction minerals on biodiversity, 2022

³⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/NEEI%20case%20studies%20-%20Final%20booklet.pdf>, visited March 2023.

³⁶ The European Cement Association

³⁷ European Gypsum Industry

³⁸ The European Aggregates Association

Heavy metal	Partial opening of the test sample EN 259 Maximum content mg/kg	Total opening of the test sample EN 13656 Maximum content mg/kg
Arsenic	10	30
Lead	25	25
Cadmium	1	10
Mercury	0,5	0,5
Chrome (total)	300	300

- The declaration from the raw materials producer/-refiner, containing measurement results, measurement methods and measurement frequency.

Background

The requirement is unchanged in generation 7.

The requirement covers both primary mineral raw materials and mineral bi-products such as fly ash from heat and power generation at coal-fired power and district heating stations. Different raw materials may contain higher quantities of heavy metals compared to the background levels, e.g., in soil. These include natural gypsum, gypsum from cleaning of smoke gas (industrial gypsum), fibreglass from collected glass and mineral wool from stone. It is important that the heavy metal content is not too high that it creates problems in the user phase or for reuse of product materials.

4.6.8 Gypsum

O26 Recycled gypsum plasterboard

At least 30% by weight of the gypsum in the product must consist of recycled gypsum*

The requirement may be documented as an annual average of the production of Nordic Swan Ecolabelled plasterboards.

**Waste gypsum from demolition, recycling stations and building construction waste. (FDG gypsum or synthetic gypsum is not defined as recycled gypsum)*

- Documentation (calculation) from the applicant showing that the requirement for share of recycled gypsum has been reached.

Background

This requirement has been adjusted compared to generation 6.

Gypsum is 100% recyclable. Waste collection and recycling systems are operational in several European countries. However, a large proportion of gypsum waste is still landfilled or backfilled³⁹. In 2019, around 600.000 tonnes of recycled gypsum from construction and demolition waste were used in plasterboard production process in Europe: with no significant progress from 2018. The recycling volumes remains low compared to the potential. There are

³⁹ www.eurogypsum.org (visited February 2023)

important discrepancies across European countries, with Nordic countries performing better on recycling rates.

Nordic Ecolabelling wants to support and effect the gypsum circularity. Data⁴⁰, ⁴¹ and dialog with several manufactures of gypsum panels shows that the average content of recycled gypsum from demolition/building construction waste is around 20%. A requirement for minimum 30% recycled gypsum in gypsum panels supports the gypsum industry in a more sustainable and circular production.

Flue gas desulfurization gypsum (FGD) is an industrial by-product generated in coal-fired power plants. As coal-fired power plants are to be phased out and replaced by environmental more friendly alternatives in Europe, the amount of FDG gypsum decreases. Nordic Ecolabelling supports the used of FGD gypsum (a waste product), but the potential lies in increasing the share of recycled gypsum from construction and demolition waste. Therefore, FGD gypsum is not part of the requirement for minimum 30% recycled gypsum.

4.6.9 Mineral wool

The requirements in this chapter comprise mineral wool (stone- and glass wool).

O27 Recycled mineral wool

At least 45% by weight of the stone wool in the product must consist of recycled materials*

At least 85% by weight of the glass wool in the product must consist of recycled materials*

The requirement may be documented as an annual average of the production of mineral wool used in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels.

*See terms and definitions

- ☒ Documentation (calculation) from the applicant showing that the requirement for share of recycled glass- or stone wool has been reached.

Background

The requirement has been strengthened compared to generation 6.

In OECD countries, the built environment is responsible for around 30% of raw materials use and up to 40% of solid waste generation⁴², ⁴³. In Europe, 57% of the insulation market is dominated by mineral wool⁴⁴ which is the general term for stone wool and glass wool. Mineral wool waste is generated both from mineral wool production and construction activities. The waste got from production stage is easier to recycle in the production company, while the latter is often not recycled due to the unknown composition and is instead landfilled or incinerated

⁴⁰ <https://www.epddanmark.dk/media/gvgnxzo3/md-22138-en.pdf> (visited February 2023)

⁴¹ <https://norgips.no/produkter/gipsplater/standard-eco> (visited February 2023)

⁴² <https://www.oecd.org/environment/waste/OECD-G20-Towards-a-more-Resource-Efficient-and-Circular-Economy.pdf>

⁴³ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/waste-and-recycling/construction-and-demolition-waste_en (visited March 2023)

⁴⁴ Sohn, J.L., Kalbar, P.P., Banta, G.T. and Birkved, M., 2017. Life-cycle based dynamic assessment of mineral wool insulation in a Danish residential building application. Journal of cleaner production, 142, pp.3243-3253.

as mixed construction waste⁴⁵. However, with the high contents of Si in X-ray amorphous mineralogy, both stone wool and glass wool have the potential to be the precursors of alkali-activated materials (AAMs). Mineral wools also have very consistent chemical and physical compositions, which make them even more attractive as raw materials for alkali activation.

Reusing mineral wool waste, which is not normally recyclable, decreases landfilling and increases the recycling rate of construction waste. Also, the consumption of primary resources is minimized by using mineral wool waste to produce new commercial mineral wool.

The potential for recycling glass wool is higher compared to stone wool as glass wool can be made from both natural and recycled glass. Therefore, the requirement for minimum share of recycled material is higher for glass wool than stone wool⁴⁶.

The proposed minimum requirements for minimum share of recycled materials are based on dialog with several stakeholders and EPDs.

O28 Additives - prohibited substances

Additives in the list below must not be added the production of mineral wool such as oils, bonding agents, and stabilisers:

- CMR substances - Carcinogenic, Germ cell mutagenicity, Reproductive toxicity category 1A or B or category 2
 - An exemption is made for titanium dioxid (CAS No. 13463-67-7) classified H351
 - An exemption is made for 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS No. 77-99-6) classified H361
- Substances on the Candidate List*
- Substances evaluated by the EU to be persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) or very persistent and very bioaccumulative (vPvB), in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH**.
- Endocrine disruptors:
 - Substances considered to be potential endocrine disruptors in category 1 or 2 on the EU's priority list of substances for further evaluation of their role in endocrine disruption. See the following link:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/endocrine/strategy/being_en.htm (Annex L, page 238 onwards)
 - Substances on the EU member state initiative "Endocrine Disruptor Lists", List I and III. See the following links:
<https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-i-substances-identified-asendocrine-disruptors-by-the-eu> and <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-iii-substances-identified-asendocrine-disruptors-by-participating-national-authorities>

⁴⁵ Müller, A., Leydolph, B. and Stanelle, K., 2009. Recycling mineral wool waste: technologies for the conversion of the fiber structure, Part 1. *Interceram*, 58(6), pp.378-381.

⁴⁶ <https://www.eurima.org/how-is-mineral-wool-insulation-made>, visited April 2023

- Halogenated organic compounds with the following exceptions:
 - halogenated organic pigments that comply with the Council of Europe recommendation "Resolution AP (89) 1 on the use of colorants in plastic materials coming into contact with food", point 2.5
- Butylhydroxytoluene (BHT, CAS No. 128-37-0)
- Aziridine and polyaziridines
- Short-chain chlorinated paraffins (C10-C13) and medium-chain chlorinated paraffins (C14-C17).
- Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs)
- Alkylphenols, alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEO) and other alkylphenol derivatives (APD)***
- Brominated flame retardants.
- Phthalates****
- Pigments and additives based on lead, cadmium, arsenic, chromium (VI), mercury and their compounds.
- Bisphenols and bisphenol derivatives
 - Bisphenol A used in the production of epoxy acrylate is not covered by the requirement.
 - Assessment of regulatory needs: Bisphenols. ECHA – 16 December 2021: Section 2.1: Bisphenols for which further EU RRM is proposed – restriction
<https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/c2a8b29d-0e2d-7df8-dac1-2433e2477b02>
- Organotin compounds.

**The Candidate List is available on the ECHA website:*

<http://echa.europa.eu/candidate-list-table>

***PBT and vPvB in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH*

****Alkylphenol derivative*

***** Phthalates are esters of 1,2 benzenedicarboxylic acid (orthophthalic acid)*

- Safety data sheet for additives in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).
- A declaration from the manufacturer of mineral wool.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7. Mineral wools may contain oils and other lubricants, added during processing to reduce dust generation from the product. An organic binder may be applied to the wools after primary fiberizing in order to hold the fibres together. The binder is often a phenol-formaldehyde resin in aqueous solution, but in the recent years, alternatives such as acrylic resins have been used. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore propose to ban CMR classified additives which means that phenol-formaldehyde resin can't be used.

For more information see chapter 4.7 Chemicals.

4.6.10 Metal - aluminium

The requirement in this chapter applies to aluminium such as aluminium used as frames in acoustic panels.

O29 Production of aluminium

The requirement can be met by documenting either A) High proportion recycled or B) Primary aluminium production. (B consist of 4 alternatives):

A) High proportion recycled

A minimum of 75% by weight of aluminium must be recycled.

Recycled aluminium is defined as both pre- and post-consumed, cf. definition in ISO 14021.

The requirement can be verified either by:

- A signed agreement between the aluminium supplier and the manufacturer of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product stating that the requirement is met, or
- eBVD or EPD based on product-specific data/data from the aluminium producer's own production specifically stating the content of recycled aluminium in the product, or
- Valid Hydro Circal certificate.

Or

B) Primary aluminium production

The requirement can be met by one of the 4 alternatives (1-4) below:

The requirement can be verified using either: direct traceability through the supply chain, mass balance approach⁴⁷ or by all major suppliers⁴⁸.

1. Aluminium production – active sustainability strategy

Aluminium used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product comes from a primary aluminium producer who has an active sustainability strategy focusing on reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy for reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions shall be quantitative and time-based, and they shall be determined by the company management.

Or

2. Aluminium production – low direct climate effecting emissions

Aluminium used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product comes from a primary aluminium producer whose direct climate-affecting emissions from primary aluminium production does not exceed 1,5 tonnes of CO₂e/ton of aluminium produced.

⁴⁷ In case of several potential aluminium producers, the supplier of the metal components can verify the requirement by using a mass balance approach if there is an account documenting the annual volumes purchased from the individual aluminium producers. The volumes must correspond to volumes sold to the producer of Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product (e.g., cannot sell a larger volume than the corresponding quantity purchased from the individual aluminium producers)

⁴⁸ All major suppliers are compliant with one of the 3 alternatives. Major suppliers are here defined as suppliers delivering 75% of the total volume (w/w) of aluminium components in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product.

or

3. Aluminium production – low electricity consumption for electrolysis

Aluminium used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product comes from a primary aluminium producer whose electricity consumption for electrolysis does not exceed 15.3 MWh / ton produced aluminium.

or

4. Aluminium production – ASI certified site

A minimum of 50% by weight of aluminium used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product comes from a production site that are certified to the ASI Performance standard⁴⁹.

High proportion recycled (A):

- Alternative 1: There must be a signed agreement between the producer of aluminium/supplier of aluminium and the manufacturer of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product stating that the requirement is met. The declaration from the supplier of aluminium can be based on purchase records/average data from several aluminium suppliers.
- Alternative 2: eBVD or EPD can be used as documentation if these are based on product-specific data/data from the aluminium producer's own production and specifically state the content of recycled aluminium in the product.
- Alternative 3: Valid Hydro Circal certificate⁵⁰.

Primary aluminium production (B):

Alternative 1:

- Enclose latest sustainability strategy report or equivalent documentation from the producer of primary aluminium showing fulfilment of the requirement. The producer of primary aluminium can also present specific targets from annual business report with reference to specific numbers and assumptions. Average numbers from the producer of primary aluminium with several steel melting plants is accepted.
- Information on type of traceability used to document the requirement.

Alternative 2:

- Declaration that the requirement is met, as well as calculation and indication of direct emissions in tonnes of CO₂e/ton of aluminium produced.
- Information on type of traceability used to document the requirement.

Alternative 3:

- Declaration that the requirement is met, as well as calculation and indication of electricity consumption in MWh/ton produced aluminium.
- Information on type of traceability used to document the requirement.

⁴⁹ <https://aluminium-stewardship.org/asi-standards/asi-performance-standard> (visited November 2022)

⁵⁰ <https://www.hydro.com/en-DK/about-hydro/publications/certificates/> (November 2022)

Alternative 4:

- ☒ Enclose valid ASI Performance certificate from the primary aluminium producer.
- ☒ Information from the supplier/manufacturer of the constituent aluminium part about which aluminium parts are from certified aluminium production (purchase records).
- ☒ Information from the supplier/manufacturer of the constituent aluminium parts on type of traceability used to document the requirement.
- ☒ Documentation from the manufacturer of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product that the requirement for share of purchased aluminium from certified aluminium producers is fulfilled – e.g., invoices or other documentation from suppliers.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7. Metal is normally not used in panels for interior use, but aluminium can be included in frames in certain types of acoustic panels. Nordic Ecolabelling has not seen examples of the use of other metals such as steel, and the requirement therefore only covers aluminium.

Using recycled metal significantly reduces the environmental impact and provides a significant climate benefit. Among other things, this is highlighted in the taxonomy work in the EU⁵¹. Nordic Ecolabelling is aware that the availability of recycled aluminium and traceability can be a challenge. But in a world with an increasing focus on circular economy, Nordic Ecolabelling believes that there will be an increased focus on this in the future. Traceability in the production chain is also a value in itself, and is important for several aspects, e.g., it provides opportunities to select suppliers based on e.g., environmental work, working conditions and quality. Demand for traceability will hopefully contribute to the industry also placing increased focus on this. For Aluminium, Hydro has launched its own traceability certification with a minimum of 75% recycled Al, Hydro Circal⁵². The industry average for EU-produced aluminium is approx. 50% recycled, while for Al outside the EU it is approx. 40%. The big environmental benefit comes from the use of post-consumer recycled aluminium.

The requirement model is based on a mandatory requirement to the aluminium producer to have an energy and greenhouse gas calculation with defined reduction targets. Certification with ASI is something that Nordic Ecolabelling see as positive initiatives for a more sustainable metal production. This is an independent certification system with a focus on both economic, social, and environmental aspects. For aluminium, the requirement can also be fulfilled by documenting direct emissions of greenhouse gases and energy efficiency in the electrolysis process, where the limits are based on values stated in the EU taxonomy report. Direct emissions are to be calculated according to the methodology used for EU-ETS benchmarks. Please note that these values may change based on the final outcome of the EU taxonomy work.

⁵¹ Taxonomy report, technical annex, EU technical expert group on sustainable finance, March 2020

⁵² <https://www.hydro.com/en/products-and-services/low-carbon-aluminium/hydro-circal-75r/> (available 2022-10-17)

4.7 Chemicals

The requirements in this chapter apply to chemical products, used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product, such as adhesives, resins and waxes, as well as to surface treatments. The chapter is divided into 2 sub-sections:

- Requirements concerning chemicals in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product, such as adhesives, resins and waxes, Section 4.7.1.
- Requirements concerning chemical products used for surface treatment*, Section 4.7.2.

**Lamination (thin layer of laminate < 2 mm, including melamine) on another panel is not considered to be surface treatment. For a wood-based panel with laminate, both elements must fulfil the requirements for the relevant panel type individually, i.e., the wood-based panel and laminate must both meet the requirements for chemicals in Sections 4.7.1.*

Chemical products used in the manufacture of paper, and to print patterns on the decor paper, are not covered by these requirements. Auxiliary substances such as lubricants and detergents are also not covered by these requirements.

Definitions

The requirements in the criteria document apply to all ingoing substances in the chemical product. Impurities are not regarded as ingoing substances and are therefore exempt from the requirements. Ingoing substances and impurities are defined as below, unless stated otherwise.

- **Ingoing substances:** All substances in the product, including additives (e.g. preservatives and stabilisers) in the raw materials. Substances known to be released from ingoing substances (e.g., formaldehyde, arylamine, in situ-generated preservatives) are also regarded as ingoing substances.
- **Impurities:** Residues from production, incl. raw material production, which remain in the chemical product at concentrations below 1000 ppm (0.1000% by weight).

Examples of impurities are reagent residue incl. residues of monomers, catalysts, by-products, “scavengers” (i.e., chemicals used to eliminate/minimise undesirable substances), cleaning agents for production equipment and “carry-over” from other/previous production lines.

4.7.1 Chemicals used in the production of panels

The requirements in this chapter concern chemicals used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product itself such as adhesives, resins or additives.

O30 Classification of chemical products

Chemical products used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product must not be classified in accordance with the table below.

CLP Regulation 1272/2008		
Hazard statement	Hazard class and category	Hazard code
Toxic to the environment	Aquatic Acute 1	H400
	Aquatic Chronic 1	H410
	Aquatic Chronic 2	H411
	Ozone	H420
Acute toxicity	Acute Tox 1 or 2	H300
	Acute Tox 1 or 2	H310
	Acute Tox 1 or 2	H330
	Acute Tox 3	H301
	Acute Tox 3	H311
	Acute Tox 3	H331
Specific target organ toxicity – single exposure/repeated exposure	STOT SE 1	H370
	STOT RE 1	H372
Carcinogenic ¹	Carc. 1A or 1B	H350
	Carc. 2	H351
Germ cell mutagenic ¹	Mut. 1A or 1B	H340
	Mut. 2	H341
Reproductive toxicity ¹	Repr. 1A or 1B	H360
	Repr. 2	H361
	Lact.	H362

¹ Including all combinations of stated exposure route and stated specific effect. For example, H350 also covers the classification H350i.

Note that responsibility for correct classification lies with the manufacturer.

Exemptions apply for:

- Classification H351 for adhesive products containing methylene diphenyl diisocyanate (MDI).
- Classifications H350, H341, H301, H311 and H331 for adhesive products and resins containing formaldehyde (CAS no. 50-00-0). Formaldehyde emissions are regulated in a separate requirement.
- Classifications H341, H301 and H331 for resins containing a maximum of 10% by weight of phenol (CAS no. 108-95-2) used in laminate and plywood.
- Classifications H301, H311, H331 and H370 for resins containing a maximum of 10% by weight of methanol (CAS no. 67-56-1).
- Classifications H351 and H361 for resins containing melamine (CAS no. 108-78-1).
- UV curing products are exempted from classification H411 under the following conditions: There must be a controlled closed process where no discharge to recipient takes place. Spillage and general waste (e.g. cleaning residue) must be collected in containers approved for hazardous waste and handled by a waste contractor.

A declaration from the chemical manufacturer or supplier. Appendix 4 may be used.

A safety data sheet for the product in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

- ☒ Exemption for UV curing products: Description of the process and how waste and general waste are handled, including information about who receives the general waste.

Background

Nordic Ecolabelling is generally committed to restricting the use of chemicals that are harmful to health and the environment, and the classification requirement prohibits the products of highest concern.

The requirement has been amended to also include the classifications Toxic to the environment (H400, H410, H411 and H420). The previous generation of the criteria contained a requirement limiting the amount of environmentally hazardous ingoing substances in the chemical products used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product. This requirement has been replaced by a complete ban on the presence of chemical products in any of the environmentally hazardous classifications listed in the requirement.

Exemptions:

An exemption is made for adhesive products containing methylene diphenyl diisocyanate (MDI). There are currently no substitute products that are widely available in the market.

The exemption for adhesives containing formaldehyde is only granted if later requirements concerning the content of free formaldehyde in adhesives and emissions from the finished product are fulfilled.

Resins containing phenol, formaldehyde, methanol and melamine are used in the production of several types of laminates to impregnate the paper. Since it is not possible to produce laminate without these resins, an exemption is made for these substances. A maximum of 10% by weight of phenol is permitted in the finished resin used in laminate and plywood – the same limit value as was used in the previous generation of the criteria. To ensure that the resins have hardened properly, a subsequent requirement is made concerning emissions from the laminate in its finished form.

The exemption for melamine was introduced during the validity period of the previous criteria, since at that time several suppliers began to self-classify it as H361 (Repr. 2). At the end of 2020, ECHA's Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) also agreed that melamine should be given the harmonised classifications H351 (Carc. 2) and H373 (STOT RE 2). The harmonised classifications will become binding on 23 November 2023. The classification H361 will not be a harmonised classification, but there may still be producers who use this self-classification alongside the harmonised classifications once they come into effect. Nordic Ecolabelling gives an exemption for both the classifications H351 and H361, as there is no substance that can replace melamine at this moment in time.

An exemption has also been introduced for UV curing products that can be used to impregnate the top paper layer. The UV curing technique is used to achieve a surface with good durability and quality, while at the same time having the advantage that the chemicals have low VOC levels.

O31 Classification of ingoing substances

Ingoing substances in the chemical product used in production must not be classified as in the table below.

CLP Regulation 1272/2008		
Hazard statement	Hazard class and category	Hazard code
Carcinogenic ¹	Carc. 1A or 1B Carc. 2	H350 H351
Germ cell mutagenic ¹	Mut. 1A or 1B Mut. 2	H340 H341
Reproductive toxicity ¹	Repr. 1A or 1B Repr. 2 Lact.	H360 H361 H362
Endocrine disruption for human health	ED HH 1 ED HH 2	EUH380 EUH381
Endocrine disruption for the environment	ED ENV 1 ED ENV 2	EUH431 EUH431
Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic properties Very Persistent, Very Bioaccumulative properties	PBT vPvB	EUH440 EUH441
Persistent, Mobile and Toxic properties Very Persistent, Very Mobile properties	PMT vPvM	EUH450 EUH451

¹ Including all combinations of stated exposure route and stated specific effect. For example, H350 also covers the classification H350i.

Exemptions apply for:

- Adhesive containing methylene diphenyl diisocyanate (MDI) classified as H351.
 - Adhesive and resin containing formaldehyde (CAS no. 50-00-0) classified as H350 and H341. Formaldehyde emissions are regulated in a separate requirement.
 - Resin containing maximum 10% by weight of phenol (CAS no. 108-95-2) classified as H341 used in laminate and plywood.
 - Resin containing melamine (CAS no. 108-78-1) classified as H351 and H361.
 - Titanium dioxide (CAS no. 13463-67-7) classified as H351.
 - 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS no. 77-99-6) classified as H361 is exempted with time limits up to and including 31.12.2024.
- A declaration from the chemical manufacturer or supplier. Appendix 4 can be used.
- A safety data sheet for the product in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

Background

A ban on CMR Category 2 substances has also been added to the requirement. Nordic Ecolabelling would like to restrict the use of substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic, and toxic for reproduction (CMR) to the greatest extent possible. This requirement now represents a further restriction on the classification since it applies to ingoing substances in the chemical product.

Exemptions are also needed in this requirement for methylene diphenyl diisocyanate (MDI), formaldehyde, phenol, and melamine. See more background about this in the previous requirement.

In addition, there are exemptions for titanium dioxide (CAS no. 13463-67-7) and 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS no. 77-99-6). Titanium dioxide is a white pigment that is used in many different types of products. 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP) is used to coat titanium dioxide to make the titanium dioxide particles disperse more easily. About 90% of all titanium dioxide is coated with TMP. There are currently no replacement substances for titanium dioxide and TMP, but work is underway to replace TMP in the industry. The exemptions are therefore time limited.

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel has included the new CLP classifications to align with the European Green Deal's goal of a toxic-free environment. This inclusion reflects the need to establish hazard identification for endocrine disruptors and addresses criteria for environmental toxicity, persistency, mobility and bioaccumulation. By incorporating these classifications, Nordic Swan Ecolabel ensures that the criteria relate to up-to-date scientific understanding and regulatory compliance. Additionally, the inclusion of PMT and vPvM substances is crucial due to their persistence, mobility and potential impact on water quality. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel aims for comprehensive hazard identification and protection of the environment and human health.

O32 Prohibited substances

The chemical product used in production must not contain the following substances:

- Substances on the Candidate List*
 - Exemption applies to melamine (CAS No. 108-78-1)
- Substances that have been judged in the EU to be PBT (Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic) or vPvB (very Persistent and very Bioaccumulative)**
- Halogenated organic compounds.
 - Exemptions apply for Bronopol, IPBC and CMIT/MIT (3:1). These are set out in requirement O35.
- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), e.g., PFOA and PFOS
- Butylhydroxytoluene (BHT, CAS No. 128-37-0)
- Aziridine and polyaziridines
- Bisphenols and bisphenol derivatives
 - Bisphenol A used in the production of epoxy acrylate is not covered by the requirement.

- Assessment of regulatory needs: Bisphenols. ECHA – 16
December 2021: Section 2.1: Bisphenols for which further EU
RRM is proposed – restriction
<https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/c2a8b29d-0e2d-7df8-dac1-2433e2477b02>
- APEO (alkylphenol ethoxylates) and APD (alkylphenol derivatives/alkylphenols) ***
- Phthalates****
- Pigments and additives based on lead, tin, cadmium, chromium VI and mercury, and their compounds
- Endocrine disruptors: Substances on the EU member state initiative “Endocrine Disruptor Lists”, List I, List II and List III, see following links:

List I: <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-i-substances-identified-as-endocrine-disruptors-by-the-eu>

List II: <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-ii-substances-under-eu-investigation-endocrine-disruption>

List III: <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-iii-substances-identified-as-endocrine-disruptors-by-participating-national-authorities>

Substances that are transferred to one of the corresponding sub-lists “Substances no longer on list” and that no longer feature on Lists I–III are not prohibited. However, this does not apply to the substances listed in Sub-List II that were evaluated on the basis of regulations or directives that do not have provisions for identifying endocrine disruptors (e.g., the Cosmetics Regulation). These substances may have endocrine disrupting properties. Nordic Ecolabelling will assess these substances on a case-by-case basis, based on the background information provided in Sub-List II.

** The Candidate List can be found on the ECHA website:
<http://echa.europa.eu/candidate-list-table>*

*** PBT and vPvB in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH*

**** Alkylphenol derivatives are defined as substances that release alkylphenols when they break down.*

***** Phthalates are esters of 1,2-benzenedicarboxylic acid (orthophthalic acid).*

- A declaration from the manufacturer/supplier of the chemical product. Appendix 4 can be used.
- A safety data sheet for the product in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

Background

The requirement is essentially the same as in generation 6 of the criteria, but is tightened in certain respects, e.g., bisphenols are generally banned (and not just Bisphenol A). In addition, the requirement concerning endocrine disruptors has changed.

Candidate List Substances and PBT, vPvB

The ban on substances on the Candidate List, substances that are PBT (Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic) and vPvB (very Persistent and very Bioaccumulative) and the ban on substances that are considered to be potential endocrine disruptors in category 1 or 2 on the EU's priority list of substances for further evaluation of their role in endocrine disruption are new in this revision. The Candidate List contains substances of very high concern, so-called SVHC substances. SVHCs (Substances of Very High Concern) meet one or more of these criteria:

- Very harmful to health: carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic for reproduction (CMR substances, category 1A and 1B), set out in REACH, Article 57 a, b, c;
- Very harmful to the environment: persistent, bio-accumulative and toxic (PBT) or very persistent and very bio-accumulative (vPvB), set out in REACH, Article 57 d, e;
- Serious effects to human health or the environment on another basis than the groups above, but that give equivalent cause for concern (e.g., endocrine disruptors and inhaled allergens), set out in REACH, Article 57 f

SVHC may be included on the Candidate List with a view to later inclusion on the Authorisation List. This means that the substance becomes regulated (ban, phasing out or some other form of restriction). Nordic Ecolabelling prohibits Candidate List substances due to their hazardous properties. Other SVHC substances are addressed via bans on the use of PBT and vPvB substances, the classification requirements, and a ban on endocrine disruptors.

PBT (and vPvB substances) are substances defined in Annex XIII of REACH, which are generally undesirable in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products.

Endocrine disruptors:

Potential endocrine disruptors are substances that can negatively affect the hormonal balance in humans and animals. Hormones control a number of vital processes in the body and are particularly important for development and growth in humans, animals and plants.

Changes in the hormone balance can have adverse effects, with a particular focus on hormones that affect sexual development and reproduction. Several studies have shown effects on animals that are probably due to changes in the hormone balance. Effluent discharges are one of the major sources of the presence and distribution of endocrine disruptors in aquatic ecosystems⁵³. Nordic Ecolabelling excludes identified and potential endocrine disruptors listed on the "Endocrine Disruptor Lists" at www.edlists.org, which is based on the EU member state initiative. Substances listed in Lists I, II and/or III are excluded.

Licensees are responsible for keeping track of updates to the lists so that their Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products fulfil the requirement throughout the entire

⁵³ Miljøstatus i Norge (2008) (Environmental status in Norway): Endocrine disruptors. <http://www.miljostatus.no/Tema/Kjemikalier/Noen-farlige-kjemikalier/Hormonforstyrrende-stoffer/#D> (dated 26 February 2009).

validity period of the licence. Nordic Ecolabelling recognises the challenges associated with new substances that are added to Lists II and III. We will evaluate the circumstances and possibly decide on a transition period from case to case.

The requirement applies to substances on the main lists (Lists I, II and III) and not to the corresponding sub-lists called “Substances no longer on list”. Substances that are transferred to one of the sub-lists and that no longer feature on Lists I–III are not prohibited. However, special attention is paid to the substances on List II that have been evaluated under the Cosmetics Regulation, for example, where there are no specific provisions to identify endocrine disruptors. It is still unclear how these substances will be handled at www.edlists.org after the evaluation (safety assessment of the substances included in cosmetics, for example) has been completed. Nordic Ecolabelling will assess the circumstances for the substances on Sub-List II on a case-by-case basis, based on the background information provided in the sub-list. By excluding both identified and prioritised potential endocrine disruptors that are under evaluation, Nordic Ecolabelling ensures a restrictive approach towards endocrine disruptors.

Halogenated organic compounds

Halogenated organic compounds that contain halogens such as chlorine, bromine, fluorine or iodine must not be present in the chemical products used. This includes halogenated flame retardants, chloroparaffins, perfluoroalkyl compounds and certain organic bleaching chemicals. Halogenated organic compounds have various properties that are not desirable in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products. They are harmful to human health and the environment, highly toxic to aquatic organisms, carcinogenic or harmful to health in other ways. The halogenated organic compounds do not break down readily in the environment, which increases the risk of harmful effects from the substances.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs), e.g., PFOA and PFOS

Fluorosurfactants and other per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) constitute a group of substances that have harmful properties. Certain per- and polyfluorinated compounds can degrade to the very stable PFOS (perfluorooctane sulphonate) and PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) and similar substances. These substances are extremely persistent and are easily absorbed by the body¹⁰. The substances are found all over the globe, from the large oceans to the Arctic. PFOS have also been found in birds and fish and in their eggs. The substances in this group impact on the biological processes of the body and are suspected to be endocrine disruptors, carcinogenic and to have a negative impact on the human immune system¹¹. PFOA, APFO (ammonium pentadecene fluoro octanoate) and certain fluoride acids are on the Candidate List due to their reprotoxicity, as well as PBT. There are new research results showing that shorter chains (2-6 carbon atoms) have been discovered in nature⁵⁴.

⁵⁴ Perkola, Noora, Fate of artificial sweeteners and perfluoroalkyl acids in aquatic environment, Doctoral dissertation Department of Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Helsinki, Finland 12.12.2014, <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/136494/fateofar.pdf?sequence=1>

Alkylphenols, alkylphenol ethoxylates and/or alkylphenol derivatives

Alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEO) and/or alkylphenol derivatives (APD) are a group of non-readily degradable surfactants that are proven endocrine disruptors. APEOs may be present in binders, dispersing and thickening agents, siccatives, foam inhibitors, pigment pastes, wax, etc. Alternatives to APEOs are available based on alkyl sulphates, alkyl ether sulphates and alcohol ethoxylates. These are readily biodegradable but also have harmful properties, being toxic to aquatic organisms and some may be bioaccumulative. However, there is an environmental gain to be made by substitution since they break down rapidly and the degradation product nonylphenol, with its endocrine-disrupting effects, is avoided.

Bisphenols

Bisphenol A is used as a monomer in epoxies, paints, varnishes and adhesives. While there was previously a ban on Bisphenol A (BPA), CAS no. 80-05-7), the ban now applies to bisphenols in general. The reason why the ban now covers all bisphenols is that other bisphenols, such as Bisphenol F and S, can be used as a replacement for BPA. In the screening programme for environmental toxins in water, sediment and biota in Norway, Bisphenol A, F and S have been found⁵⁵. These are substances that have the same properties as Bisphenol A⁵⁶. Bisphenol A can be released into the environment from the production process. BPA is identified as damaging to the eyes, irritating to the respiratory tract, skin sensitizing and may also affect reproductive performance. The substance may be endocrine disrupting and is toxic to aquatic organisms. Bisphenol A is used, for example, with Epichlorhydrin to produce Bisphenol-A-(epichlorhydrin) epoxy resin (CAS no. 25068-38-6), which is classified as allergenic and environmentally hazardous. The ban seeks to exclude the use of epoxy resins where BPA is included.

Phthalates

The ban on phthalates has not been changed. Many phthalates are harmful to the environment and human health and should not be used in ecolabelled products for a variety of reasons. Some phthalates are on the EU's priority list of substances for further evaluation of their role in endocrine disruption, and some have already been identified as endocrine disruptors. Some phthalate compounds are also on the Candidate List. All are there because they are classified as toxic for reproduction. Some are also regulated in Annex XVII of REACH, and many phthalates are on the Danish Environmental Protection Agency's "List of Undesirable Substances" and on the Norwegian Environment Agency's "List of Priority Substances".

For precautionary reasons, Nordic Ecolabelling has decided to continue to exclude phthalates as a group.

⁵⁵ Screening programme 2013: New bisphenols, organic peroxides, fluorinated siloxanes, organic UV filters and selected PBT substances, Norwegian Environment Agency, Report M-176/2014

⁵⁶ <https://tema.miljodirektoratet.no/no/Tema/Kjemikalier/Miljogifter/Bisfenol-A/>

Aziridines and polyaziridines

Aziridine and polyaziridines are classified as H350 (carcinogenic) and H340 (mutagenic) and are thus included in the ban on CMR substances. However, they are on the list of prohibited substances to make it clear that they are prohibited. The substances were also on the list for generation 6 of the criteria.

Pigments and additives based on lead, tin, cadmium, chromium (VI) and mercury, and their compounds

Nordic Ecolabelling restricts heavy metals because they are toxic to humans and other organisms, both on land and in the aquatic environment. Mercury, cadmium and lead are toxic to the human nervous system, kidneys and other organs, and the metals can accumulate in living organisms. Chromium (VI) is classified as very toxic, CMR and harmful to the environment.

O33 Antibacterial substances

Chemical products and nanomaterials* with antibacterial or disinfectant properties must not be added during production.

The term antibacterial means chemical products that prevent or inhibit growth of microorganisms, such as bacteria or fungi. Silver ions, silver nanoparticles, gold nanoparticles and copper nanoparticles are classed as antibacterial agents.

The requirement does not apply to preservatives used to preserve the chemical product, so-called in-can preservatives.

** Nanomaterials/-particles are defined according to the EU Commission Recommendation on the Definition of Nanomaterial (2022/C 229/01).*

- Declaration from the manufacturer of the product that no chemical products and nanomaterials with antibacterial or disinfecting properties have been added during production.
- Declaration from the manufacturer/supplier of the chemical product that the product does not contain nanomaterials with antibacterial or disinfecting properties. Appendix 4 may be used.

Background

Products treated with antibacterial agents are commonly marketed as preventing bacteria formation, growth and odours. Antibacterial treatment is often unnecessary and should be used with care as the substances can be harmful to health and the environment, and they risk leading to increased antibiotic resistance. For the background to nanomaterials, see the requirement concerning nanomaterials.

O34 Nanomaterials

The chemical product must not contain nanomaterials*.

Exemptions apply for:

- Pigments. This exemption does not include pigments added for purposes other than colouring.
- Naturally occurring inorganic fillers**

- Synthetic amorphous silica (SAS). This exemption applies to non-modified SAS.
- Polymer dispersions

* *Nanomaterials/-particles are defined according to the EU Commission Recommendation on the Definition of Nanomaterial (2022/C 229/01).*

** *This applies to fillers covered by Annex V point 7 in REACH.*

- ☒ A declaration from the chemical manufacturer that the chemical product does not contain any nanomaterial. Appendix 4 may be used.

Background

Due to the small size and large surface area of nanoparticles, they are usually more reactive and may have different properties than larger particles of the same material. There is concern among public authorities, researchers, environmental organisations and others about the lack of knowledge regarding the potential harmful effects on health and the environment^{57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62}. Coatings and other modifications may also alter the properties. Nordic Ecolabelling takes the concerns about nanomaterials seriously and uses the precautionary principle to rule out nanomaterials/particles in the products. Nanomaterials/-particles are defined according to the EU Commission Recommendation on the Definition of Nanomaterial (2022/C 229/01)⁶³.

Most nanomaterials on the market today have either been in use for decades or have recently been manipulated into nanoforms of existing materials⁶⁴. For example, carbon black nanoparticles and amorphous silicon dioxide (SiO₂) have been used in previous centuries. Titanium dioxide (TiO₂) has long been used as a

⁵⁷ UNEP (2017) Frontiers 2017 Emerging Issues of Environmental Concern. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi.

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/22255/Frontiers_2017_EN.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁵⁸ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2017 (2013)) Nanotechnology: balancing benefits and risks to public health and the environment. <http://semantic-pace.net/tools/pdf.aspx?doc=aHR0cDovL2Fzc2VtYmx5LmNvZS5pbmQvbnVveG1sL1hSZWYvWDJILURXLWV4dHluYXNwP2ZpbGVpZD0xOTczMCZsYW5nPUVO&xsl=aHR0cDovL3NlbWFudGljcGFjZS5uZXQvWHNsdC9QZGYvWFJlZi1XRRC1BVC1YTUwYUJERGLnhzbA==&xsltparams=ZmlsZWlkPTE5NzMw>

⁵⁹ Larsen PB, Mørck TAa, Andersen DN, Hougard KS (2020) A critical review of studies on the reproductive and developmental toxicity of nanomaterials. European Chemicals Agency.

⁵⁹ SCCS (Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety) (2019) Guidance on the Safety Assessment of Nanomaterials in Cosmetics. SCCS/1611/19.

https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_o_233.pdf

⁶⁰ Mackevica A, Foss Hansen S (2016) Release of nanomaterials from solid nanocomposites and consumer exposure assessment – a forward-looking review. *Nanotoxicology* 10(6):641–53. doi: 10.3109/17435390.2015.1132346

⁶¹ BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation et. al (2014) European NGOs' position paper on the Regulation of nanomaterials. www.beuc.eu/publications/beuc-x-2014-024_sma_nano_position_paper_caracal_final_clean.pdf

⁶² Azolay D and Tuncak B (2014) Managing the unseen – opportunities and challenges with nanotechnology. Swedish Society for Nature Conservation.

www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/sites/default/files/dokument-media/rapporter/Rapport-Nano.pdf

⁶³ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022H0614\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022H0614(01)&from=EN)

⁶⁴ EU observatory for nanomaterials and European Chemicals Agency (2019) What are next generation nanomaterials and why are regulators interested in them? Information note. https://euon.echa.europa.eu/documents/23168237/24095696/190919_background_note_next_gen_materials_en.pdf/b9178324-5a69-2e4b-1f2b-aac2c2845f45

dye in bulk form but is now manufactured as a nanomaterial for other purposes⁶⁵. Other types of engineered nanomaterials are expected to enter the market in the future⁶⁶.

In the construction panel product group, nanomaterials are used, among other things, to impregnate or seal surfaces, in order to create hydrophobic, self-cleaning, and antibacterial surfaces. These effects may, for example, come from the addition of nanometals such as silver, gold and copper or titanium dioxide. The requirement has the following exemptions:

Pigments

Pigments are finely ground, insoluble particles that are used to give the products a certain colour. There are no substitutes that can perform the function of pigments such as paint dyes, inks, fabric dyes, masterbatch, etc. and many pigments consist entirely or partially of nanoparticles. Therefore, nanosize pigments are exempted. Although clear conclusions on the safety of nanopigments cannot be drawn⁶⁷, release by decomposition of facades is very limited and the nanoparticles are probably mainly embedded in the paint matrix rather than released as individual nanoparticles^{68, 69}. Paint pigments consist of particles of individual crystals up to aggregates of several crystals. It is generally more effective to use pigments with smaller particles than larger to get the same colour. Inorganic pigments used in the paint industry, which can occur in nanosize, include carbon black and iron oxides⁷⁰. Carbon black used in paints is very finely ground and has a particle size of approximately 10–30 nm⁷¹. Iron oxide pigments can include only nanosize particles, or only a fraction of the particles may be nano. Inorganic nanopigments are also added to products for a number of purposes other than colouring. Nano-titanium dioxide, for example, is used to provide a self-cleaning effect in paint.

Naturally occurring inorganic fillers

Traditional fillers are permitted. Naturally occurring fillers, e.g. from chalk, marble, dolomite and limestone, are exempted from registration in accordance with Annex V, point 7 of REACH, as long as these fillers are only physically processed (ground, sieved and so on) and not chemically modified. An exemption

⁶⁵ European Commission, COMMISSION STAFF WORKING PAPER, Types and uses of nanomaterials, including safety aspects, Accompanying the [...] second regulatory review of nanomaterials, SWD(2012) 288 final

⁶⁶ EU observatory for nanomaterials and European Chemicals Agency (2019) What are next generation nanomaterials and why are regulators interested in them? Information note. https://euon.echa.europa.eu/documents/23168237/24095696/190919_background_note_next_gen_materials_en.pdf/b9178324-5a69-2e4b-1f2b-aac2c2845f45

⁶⁷ Hynes J, Novotný T, Nic M, Kocurkova L, Prichystalová R, Brzicová T, Bernatikova S (2018) Literature study on the uses and risks of nanomaterials as pigments in the European Union. European Chemicals Agency.

⁶⁸ Mackevica A, Hansen, SF (2016) Release of nanomaterials from solid nanocomposites and consumer exposure assessment – a forward-looking review. *Nanotoxicology*, 10(6), 641–653. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17435390.2015.1132346>

⁶⁹ Nowack B, Hincapié I, Sarret G, Larue C, Legros S (2013) Environmental fate of nanoparticles from façade coatings. NanoHouse Dissemination report N° 2013-03. [https:// DOI: 10.13140/2.1.2206.3040](https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.2206.3040)

⁷⁰ Industrial Organic Pigments; W. Herbst, K. Hunger; Third edition 2004; pp. 120–124

⁷¹ Coatings Handbook; Thomas Brock, Michael Groteklaes, Peter Mischke; 2000; p. 128

for inorganic fillers has been added as long as they are covered by Annex V, point 7 of REACH.

Synthetic amorphous silicon dioxide

Synthetic amorphous silica (SAS) is a manufactured silica (SiO₂) that has been used in industrial, consumer and pharmaceutical products for decades⁷². SAS is a nanomaterial according to the European Commission's definition and is exempted from the requirement due to a lack of alternative substances.

O35 Preservatives

The content of preservatives in the chemical product must meet the following limit values:

Preservative	Limit value
Bronopol	≤ 500 ppm (0.05% by weight)
IPBC (iodopropynyl butylcarbamate)	≤ 2000 ppm (0.20% by weight)
Mixture (3:1) of CMIT/MIT (5 chloro-2-methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one / 2-methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one)	≤ 15 ppm (0.0015% by weight)
MIT (2-methyl-2H-isothiazol-3-one)	≤ 100 ppm (0.01% by weight)
Total amount of isothiazolinones	≤ 500 ppm (0.05% by weight).

- A declaration from the chemical manufacturer or supplier. Appendix 4 may be used.
- A safety data sheet for the product in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

Background

The content of the preservatives bronopol, IPBC, CMIT/MIT and MIT is restricted via specific limit values. The content of the total amount of isothiazolinones is also limited. The exemption is the same as in generation 6 for bronopol, isothiazolinones and CMIT/MIT, while IPBC is new to the list. IPBC is a fungicide that has become more commonly used and the limit value is the same as in Nordic Ecolabelling's Criteria for Chemical building products. Water-based paints and adhesives may contain the preservative bronopol and it is difficult to find substitutes. A limited amount of bronopol is therefore permitted although it is classified as a substance of concern and hazardous to the environment. Isothiazolinones are used as a preservative in many water-based products, where they act as fungicides, biocides and algal growth inhibitors. They are toxic to aquatic organisms and can cause varying degrees of allergic reactions. It has proved difficult to avoid the use of these preservatives in water-based products, which is what Nordic Ecolabelling's criteria for chemicals indirectly promote. Preservatives also play an important role in ensuring the shelf-life of the products before they are used. Alternative preservatives to isothiazolinones include formaldehyde and/or formaldehyde-releasing substances, which are carcinogenic. In this respect, isothiazolinone and CMIT/MIT are better, even

⁷² https://www.asasp.eu/images/Publications/Nano_-_SAS_factsheet_-_201209.pdf

though they also exhibit hazardous properties. To limit the use of these substances as much as possible, the amount of the substances is restricted.

O36 Volatile organic compounds in adhesives

Volatile organic compounds (VOC), including volatile aromatic compounds (VAH), may be present in the adhesive to a maximum of 3% by weight.

VAHs may be present in the adhesive to a maximum of 0.1% by weight.

Resin used in the production of laminate is exempted from the requirement that the laminate must meet later requirements for VOC emissions.

Volatile organic compounds (VOC) are defined as any organic compound having an initial boiling point less than or equal to 250°C measured at a standard pressure of 101.3 kPa. This definition is the same as in the Paints Directive (2004/42/EC).

- Declaration from the adhesive manufacturer/supplier that the requirement is fulfilled. Appendix 4 may be used.

Background

The requirement remains unchanged. Volatile organic compounds (VOC) are of particular concern due to their inherent properties. They can be absorbed through the lungs and skin and cause damage to various organs. Prolonged exposure to certain organic solvents can cause chronic damage to the brain and nervous system, while other organic solvents can cause cancer or reproductive damage. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore limits VOC levels in adhesives. Resin used in the production of laminate is exempted from the requirement, but the laminate must meet later requirements for VOC emissions to ensure that the resin cures properly.

O37 Free formaldehyde

The content of free formaldehyde (from formaldehyde not deliberately added or from formaldehyde-releasing substances) must not exceed 0.02% by weight (200 ppm) in the chemical product.

For adhesive products, up to 0.2% by weight (2000 ppm) of free formaldehyde is permitted. The requirement applies to the pure adhesive before mixing with any hardener.

Resin used in the production of laminate is exempted from the requirement if the laminate fulfils later requirements concerning emissions of formaldehyde.

- A declaration from the manufacturer/supplier of the chemical product that the requirement is fulfilled. Appendix 4 may be used.

Background

The limit values for free formaldehyde have been made stricter compared with the previous criteria, generation 6. For chemical products other than adhesives, the limit value has been tightened from 0.2% to 0.02% by weight. The exemption for adhesive mixed with hardener has also been removed to harmonise with the criteria for Furniture and fitments, generation 5. The adhesive must contain no more than 0.2% free formaldehyde by weight, with the requirement applying to the pure adhesive.

Formaldehyde is a toxic and allergenic substance (H317) that has carcinogenic effects (H351) and should therefore be avoided as far as possible. Some free formaldehyde is permitted as an impurity and in adhesive, as it is difficult to avoid this. The purpose of the requirement is to restrict the content of formaldehyde in products in order to limit formaldehyde emissions. Nordic Ecolabelling does not want to request a specific test for this, because that would be too extensive and costly for each chemical product. Nordic Ecolabelling wants to be able to ask for a test if there is any uncertainty about the declaration.

Most of the formaldehyde present in adhesives occurs as free formaldehyde. However, formaldehyde can also originate from the components in the adhesive (such as preservatives). Adhesives emit formaldehyde during both polymerisation and the curing phase. Free formaldehyde reacts when the adhesive is applied to wood or other components, and when the adhesive has cured/dried formaldehyde can be released through degradation processes. It is possible to control and set requirements for the amount of free formaldehyde in the adhesive, in a mixture or in dried glue, but not for what actually occurs when the adhesive is applied to a surface. This is chiefly because neither the adhesive manufacturer nor Nordic Ecolabelling are able to control or influence the choice of wood/material to which the adhesive is applied.

Some in the industry have been asking why Nordic Ecolabelling has a requirement for maximum content of free formaldehyde in adhesives, when there are later requirements for emission of formaldehyde. Nordic Ecolabelling wishes to retain the requirement, as low levels are generally a good thing, and it can also be important with regard to the working environment. In our experience, the requirement has also provided positive environmental and health benefits, since there are adhesives on the market that do not meet this.

4.7.2 Surface treatment

The requirements in this chapter apply to surface treatment* products such as lacquers, oils, paints, and stains. There are also requirements for foiling with plastic. Any filler used is also covered by these requirements.

**Lamination (thin layer of laminate < 2 mm, including melamine) on another panel is not considered to be surface treatment. For a wood-based panel with laminate, both elements must fulfil the requirements for the relevant panel type individually, i.e. the wood-based panel and laminate must both meet the requirements for chemicals in Sections 4.7.1.*

O38 Plastic foiling

The type of plastic used for wrapping the surface must be stated.

Foiling with chlorinated plastics such as PVC is not permitted.

Adhesives used for foiling must fulfil the requirements in Sections 4.7.1.

State plastic type for foiling.

Background

Panels can be foiled with a thin layer of plastic. This provides a durable surface and can thus extend the life of the product. It can also reduce the use of chemicals for surface treatment. Previously, no requirements were set for such plastic foiling, and the requirement is new for this generation. A ban on PVC is a

requirement that Nordic Ecolabelling includes in many criteria. The environmental impact of PVC is associated primarily with waste management, the use of additives and dioxin emissions, for example in the manufacture and incineration of PVC. The latest membrane cell technology is considered to be the most environmentally-sound means of production, but the membranes are coated with PFAS and this represents a potential source of PFAS contamination to the environment. The mercury method is still used for the production of chlorine at some plants^{73, 74}.

O39 Classification of chemical products

The chemical products used for surface treatment must not have any of the classifications in the table below.

CLP Regulation 1272/2008		
Hazard statement	Hazard class and category	Hazard code
Toxic to the environment*	Aquatic Acute 1	H400
	Aquatic Chronic 1	H410
	Aquatic Chronic 2	H411
	Ozone	H420
Acute toxicity	Acute Tox 1 or 2	H300
	Acute Tox 1 or 2	H310
	Acute Tox 1 or 2	H330
	Acute Tox 3	H301
	Acute Tox 3	H311
	Acute Tox 3	H331
Specific target organ toxicity – single exposure/repeated exposure	STOT SE 1	H370
	STOT RE 1	H372
Respiratory sensitisation	Resp. Sens. 1, 1A or 1B	H334
Carcinogenic ¹	Carc. 1A or 1B	H350
	Carc. 2	H351
Germ cell mutagenic ¹	Mut. 1A or 1B	H340
	Mut. 2	H341
Reproductive toxicity ¹	Repr. 1A or 1B	H360
	Repr. 2	H361
	Lact.	H362

¹ Including all combinations of stated exposure route and stated specific effect. For example, H350 also covers the classification H350i.

* Exceptions are made for UV curing surface treatment products classified as environmentally hazardous if requirement O40 is fulfilled.

Note that responsibility for correct classification lies with the manufacturer.

- Safety data sheet for each chemical product used in the surface treatment (system) in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

⁷³ Chlorine and Building Materials: A Global Inventory of Production Technologies, Markets, and Pollution, Phase 1: Africa, The Americas, and Europe, Healthy Building Network, 2018

⁷⁴ Chlorine and Building Materials: A Global Inventory of Production Technologies, Markets, and Pollution, Phase 2: Asia, Healthy Building Network, 2019

- ☒ Declaration from the manufacturer of the chemical products used in the surface treatment (system). Appendix 5 may be used.

Background

The requirement has been amended to also include the classifications Toxic to the environment (H400, H410, H411 and H420), H334 and H362. The previous generation of the criteria contained a requirement limiting the amount of environmentally hazardous ingoing substances in the chemical products used in the surface treatment of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product. This requirement has been replaced by a complete ban on the presence of chemical products in any of the environmentally hazardous classifications listed in the requirement. Classification H334 (Allergenic, Respiratory sensitisation) has been added for work environment reasons and to harmonise with the Nordic Ecolabelling criteria for Furniture and fitments. H362 is a classification that did not exist when the criteria were previously revised. Nordic Ecolabelling is generally committed to restricting the use of chemicals that are harmful to health and the environment, and the classification requirement prohibits the products of highest concern.

There is an exemption for UV curing surface treatment products that are classified as environmentally hazardous. UV products have several advantages as they provide a durable surface and contain a low amount of solvents. Later requirements are placed on the amount of VOC applied, which promotes water-based UV products.

UV products contain acrylates, and more and more acrylates are being classified as environmentally hazardous or given stricter classifications. Acrylates and photo initiators are two vital components for UV products to cure. The acrylates change properties in the hardening and bind to the surface coating, so they do not pose an environmental hazard in the finished product. Setting requirements on e.g. the maximum amount of environmentally hazardous substances applied means that only UV products with a lower concentration of acrylates would meet the requirement. This has negative consequences as it leads to longer curing time and more energy-intensive curing. A surface that has not hardened also becomes less resistant and thus offers poorer quality.

O40 UV curing surface treatment system

UV curing surface treatment products must be applied to the material in a controlled closed process where no discharge to recipient takes place. Spillage and general waste (e.g., cleaning residue) must be collected in containers approved for hazardous waste and handled by a waste contractor.

- ☒ Description of the process and how waste and residual waste are handled, including information on who receives the residual waste from the performer of the surface treatment.

Background

The requirement above limiting the use of chemical products classified as environmentally hazardous contains an exemption for UV curing products. These kinds of products are often classified as environmentally hazardous due to the content of acrylates. The acrylates change properties in the hardening and bind

to the surface coating, so they do not pose an environmental hazard in the finished product. Instead, it is important that no emissions of uncured product that have the environmentally hazardous properties occur. Requirements are therefore set for the application, which must take place in a controlled closed process where no discharges to recipient take place.

O41 Classification of ingoing substances

Ingoing substances in the chemical product that is used for the surface treatment must not have the classifications in the table below:

CLP Regulation 1272/2008		
Hazard statement	Hazard class and category	Hazard code
Carcinogenic ¹	Carc. 1A or 1B Carc. 2	H350 H351
Germ cell mutagenic ¹	Mut. 1A or 1B Mut. 2	H340 H341
Toxic for reproduction ¹	Repr. 1A or 1B Repr. 2 Lact.	H360 H361 H362
Endocrine disruption for human health	ED HH 1 ED HH 2	EUH380 EUH381
Endocrine disruption for the environment	ED ENV 1 ED ENV 2	EUH431 EUH431
Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic properties Very Persistent, Very Bioaccumulative properties	PBT vPvB	EUH440 EUH441
Persistent, Mobile and Toxic properties Very Persistent, Very Mobile properties	PMT vPvM	EUH450 EUH451

1 Including all combinations of stated exposure route and stated specific effect. For example, H350 also covers the classification H350i.

Exemptions apply for:

- Photo initiators classified as H351, H341 or H361
 - Titanium dioxide (CAS no. 13463-67-7) classified as H351
 - 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS no. 77-99-6) classified as H361 is exempted with time limits up to and including 31.12.2024.
 - Mequinol (CAS no. 150-76-5) classified as H361
 - The hardener in two-component UV products can be exempted from the requirement if the following is met: it must be documented that the workers are not exposed to the components, e.g. by using safety equipment when mixing or that the mixing takes place automatically without exposure of the workers and that the application of the finished two-component system is done in a closed system.
- Safety data sheet for each chemical product used in the surface treatment (system) in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).
- A declaration from the manufacturer of the chemical product(s) used in the surface treatment. Appendix 5 may be used.

- Exemption for two-component products: description of the application system and how workers are protected from exposure.

Background

The requirement has been tightened to now include Category 2 substances. An exemption applies for photo initiators. They may be present in UV products. They are present in small amounts but are necessary to speed up the hardening process.

An exemption has also been introduced for the hardener in two-component UV products if it can be documented that workers are not exposed, and application takes place in closed systems. After curing, the hardener no longer has these properties. Nordic Ecolabelling generally wants to limit the use of chemicals with these properties as much as possible, but in some cases, it is difficult to find good substitutes. As these are industrial processes that take place under controlled conditions, the consumer will not be exposed to these substances.

Exemptions have also been added for titanium dioxide (CAS no. 13463-67-7), 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP, CAS no. 77-99-6) and mequinol (CAS no. 150-76-5). Titanium dioxide is a white pigment that is used in many different types of products, including being used in almost all pigmented surface treatments. 1,1,1-Trimethylolpropane (TMP) is used to coat titanium dioxide to make the titanium dioxide particles disperse more easily. About 90% of all titanium dioxide is coated with TMP. Mequinol is used as a diluent in binders for UV surface treatments. All three substances are necessary for use in surface treatment products and have recently been classified as CMR category 2, either as a harmonised classification or self-classification. There are currently no good substitutes and exemptions have therefore been given. However, the exemption for TMP is time-limited since the industry is working to substitute the substance.

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel has included the new CLP classifications to align with the European Green Deal's goal of a toxic-free environment. This inclusion reflects the need to establish hazard identification for endocrine disruptors and addresses criteria for environmental toxicity, persistency, mobility and bioaccumulation. By incorporating these classifications, Nordic Swan Ecolabel ensures that the criteria relate to up-to-date scientific understanding and regulatory compliance. Additionally, the inclusion of PMT and vPvM substances is crucial due to their persistence, mobility and potential impact on water quality. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel aims for comprehensive hazard identification and protection of the environment and human health.

O42 Prohibited substances

The chemical product must not contain the following substances:

- Substances on the Candidate List*
- Substances that have been judged in the EU to be PBT (Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic) or vPvB (very Persistent and very Bioaccumulative)**
- Halogenated organic compounds with the following exceptions:
 - The preservatives bronopol, IPBC and CMIT/MIT (3:1). These are addressed in a separate requirement, see O45.

- Halogenated organic pigments that comply with the Council of Europe recommendation “Resolution AP (89) 1 on the use of colourants in plastic materials coming into contact with food”, point 2.5
- Epoxy acrylate used in UV curing surface treatment products
- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), e.g., PFOA and PFOS
- Aziridine and polyaziridines
 - An exemption is made for aziridines/polyaziridines if the substance is not classified as carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic from any manufacturer or in ECHA.
- Bisphenols and bisphenol derivatives
 - Bisphenol A used in the production of epoxy acrylate is not covered by the requirement.
 - Assessment of regulatory needs: Bisphenols. ECHA – 16 December 2021: Section 2.1: Bisphenols for which further EU RRM is proposed – restriction
<https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/c2a8b29d-0e2d-7df8-dac1-2433e2477b02>
- APEO (alkylphenol ethoxylates) and APD (alkylphenol derivatives)/alkylphenols ***
- Phthalates****
- Pigments and additives based on lead, tin, cadmium, chromium VI and mercury, and their compounds
- Volatile aromatic hydrocarbons (VAH). They are permitted in the chemical product as an impurity at a level of not more than 1% by weight
- Endocrine disruptors: Substances on the EU member state initiative “Endocrine Disruptor Lists”, List I, List II and List III. See links below.
 - An exemption is made for BHT that is included in UV curing lacquers and paints. If BHT receives a harmonised classification that means the substance does not meet the requirements in the criteria document, the exemption will lapse.

List I: <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-i-substances-identified-as-endocrine-disruptors-by-the-eu>

List II: <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-ii-substances-under-eu-investigation-endocrine-disruption>

List III: <https://edlists.org/the-ed-lists/list-iii-substances-identified-as-endocrine-disruptors-by-participating-national-authorities>

Substances that are transferred to one of the corresponding sub-lists “Substances no longer on list” and that no longer feature on Lists I–III are not prohibited. However, this does not apply to the substances listed in Sub-List II that were evaluated on the basis of regulations or directives that do not have provisions for identifying endocrine disruptors (e.g. the Cosmetics Regulation). These substances may have endocrine disrupting properties. Nordic Ecolabelling will assess these substances on a case-by-case basis, based on the background information provided in Sub-List II.

* *The Candidate List can be found on the ECHA website:
<http://echa.europa.eu/candidate-list-table>*

** *PBT and vPvB in accordance with the criteria in Annex XIII of REACH*

*** *Alkylphenol derivatives are defined as substances that release alkylphenols when they break down.*

**** *Phthalates are esters of 1,2-benzenedicarboxylic acid (orthophthalic acid).*

- Safety data sheet for each chemical product used in surface treatment in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).
- Declaration from the manufacturer of the chemical product(s) used in the surface treatment. Appendix 5 may be used.

Background

The requirement is largely the same as in Section 3.6 with the exception of VAH. In addition, there are now specific exemptions that are relevant for surface treatment products.

Volatile aromatic hydrocarbons (VAH)

The previous generation of the criteria limited the amount of VAH only in adhesive products. The limit has now been changed to also cover chemical products for surface treatment. This is the case in other Nordic Ecolabelling criteria, e.g. Furniture and fitments. Volatile aromatic hydrocarbons (VAH) are volatile organic compounds where one or more benzene rings are contained within the molecule, e.g. toluene, benzene and xylene. VAHs are very stable and have a specific impact on the environment and human health, including damage to DNA. Exposure to these products should be minimised. For this reason, no more than 1% by weight is permitted in the chemical product.

Paint pigments:

Halogenated paint pigments are used in the paint industry and an exemption is made if they meet the EU's requirements concerning colourant pigments in food packaging under Resolution AP (89) item 2.5. PCBs have been found in analyses of paints containing organic pigments. PCBs are not added but can be formed in the production process by reactions between different chlorinated solvents and the organic pigment. Nordic Ecolabelling does not really want to allow PCBs, but since it is not possible to set a zero limit for the pigments, Nordic Ecolabelling has chosen the same level that is approved in food packaging (Resolution 89 point 2.5). This threshold has been set because it is an established method in the industry and the low threshold allowed in food packaging is considered strict enough for indoor surface treatment products. The exemption for these pigments is necessary to enable the manufacturers to make products with good colour fastness and not use pigments that are even more damaging to the environment.

Epoxy acrylate in UV curing surface treatment products

A side reaction can occur during the manufacture of epoxy acrylate which results in a small amount of chlorine remaining inside the molecule. The chlorine that is

bound in the molecule is relatively stable and will not react further while polymerisation continues. The ban on ingoing substances in the form of halogenated organic compounds applies to the chlorine because it becomes part of the molecule. The quantity of oligomers is normally below 1000 ppm. According to the manufacturers of surface finishing products, however, it is not possible to state an exact quantity. Nordic Ecolabelling does not want to ban epoxy acrylate that is used in UV curing surface treatment products, as such products have multiple environmental benefits. The chlorine in the molecules is not added intentionally for a specific purpose and is therefore exempted. Bisphenol A is also used in the manufacture of epoxy acrylate. It has thus been made more explicit that Bisphenol A used in this manufacturing process is exempt from the requirement.

BHT in UV curing lacquers and paints

BHT is included in the EU member state initiative “Endocrine Disruptor Lists”, List II Substances under evaluation for endocrine disruption under EU legislation. BHT has an important function in UV curing lacquers and paints and is difficult to replace, therefore an exemption has been introduced with a maximum limit in the chemical product. Nordic Ecolabelling does not want to prohibit the use of UV curing lacquers and paints, as they have other positive properties. If BHT receives an official harmonised classification that is not permitted in these criteria, the exemption is no longer valid.

Exemption for aziridine/polyaziridines

Aziridines and polyaziridines are on the list of prohibited substances as they are often classified as CMR. Polyaziridines are used as crosslinks in surface treatment systems. Product developments are constantly being made in the field of surface treatment, including the development of new types of aziridines as crosslinks. If it can be documented that the aziridine compound used is not classified as carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic by any manufacturer or ECHA, it is exempted from the requirement.

O43 **Antibacterial substances**

Chemical products and nanomaterials* with antibacterial or disinfectant properties must not be added to the finished product.

The term antibacterial means chemical products that prevent or inhibit growth of microorganisms, such as bacteria or fungi. Silver ions, silver nanoparticles, gold nanoparticles and copper nanoparticles are classed as antibacterial agents.

The requirement does not apply to preservatives used to preserve the chemical product, so-called in-can preservatives.

** Nanomaterials/-particles are defined according to the EU Commission Recommendation on the Definition of Nanomaterial (2022/C 229/01).*

- Declaration from the manufacturer of the product that no chemical products and nanomaterials with antibacterial or disinfecting properties have been added to the finished product.

- Declaration from the manufacturer/supplier of the chemical product that the product does not contain nanomaterials with antibacterial or disinfecting properties. Appendix 5 may be used.

Background

Products treated with antibacterial agents are commonly marketed as preventing bacteria formation, growth and odours. Antibacterial treatment is often unnecessary and should be used with care as the substances can be harmful to health and the environment, and they risk leading to increased antibiotic resistance. For the background to nanomaterials, see the requirement concerning nanomaterials.

O44 Nanomaterials

The chemical product must not contain nanomaterials*.

Exemptions apply for:

- Pigments. This exemption does not include pigments added for purposes other than colouring.
- Naturally occurring inorganic fillers**
- Synthetic amorphous silica (SAS). This exemption applies to non-modified SAS.
- Polymer dispersions

* *Nanomaterials/-particles are defined according to the EU Commission Recommendation on the Definition of Nanomaterial (2022/C 229/01).*

** *This applies to fillers covered by Annex V point 7 in REACH.*

- A declaration from the chemical manufacturer that the chemical product does not contain any nanomaterial. Appendix 5 may be used.

Background

Due to the small size and large surface area of nanoparticles, they are usually more reactive and may have different properties than larger particles of the same material. There is concern among public authorities, researchers, environmental organisations and others about the lack of knowledge regarding the potential

harmful effects on health and the environment^{75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80}. Coatings and other modifications may also alter the properties. Nordic Ecolabelling takes the concerns about nanomaterials seriously and uses the precautionary principle to rule out nanomaterials/particles in the products. Nanomaterials/-particles are defined according to the EU Commission Recommendation on the Definition of Nanomaterial (2022/C 229/01)⁸¹.

Most nanomaterials on the market today have either been in use for decades or have recently been manipulated into nanoforms of existing materials⁸². For example, carbon black nanoparticles and amorphous silicon dioxide (SiO₂) have been used in previous centuries. Titanium dioxide (TiO₂) has long been used as a dye in bulk form but is now manufactured as a nanomaterial for other purposes⁸³. Other types of engineered nanomaterials are expected to enter the market in the future⁸⁴.

In the construction panel product group, nanomaterials are used, among other things, to impregnate or seal surfaces, in order to create hydrophobic, self-cleaning, and antibacterial surfaces. These effects may, for example, come from the addition of nanometals such as silver, gold and copper or titanium dioxide.

⁷⁵ UNEP (2017) Frontiers 2017 Emerging Issues of Environmental Concern. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi.

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/22255/Frontiers_2017_EN.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁷⁶ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2017 (2013)) Nanotechnology: balancing benefits and risks to public health and the environment. <http://semantic-pace.net/tools/pdf.aspx?doc=aHR0cDovL2Fzc2VtYmx5LmNvZS5pbnQvbnVlZG1sL1hSZWYvWDJILURXLWV4dHluYXNwP2ZpbGVpZD0xOTczMCZsYW5nPUVO&xsl=aHR0cDovL3NlbWFudGljcGFjZS5uZXQvWHNsdc9QZGYvWFJlZi1XRRC1BVC1YTUwyJERGLnhzbA==&xsltparams=ZmlsZWlkPTE5NzMw>

⁷⁷ Larsen PB, Mørck TAA, Andersen DN, Hougaard KS (2020) A critical review of studies on the reproductive and developmental toxicity of nanomaterials. European Chemicals Agency.

⁷⁷ SCCS (Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety) (2019) Guidance on the Safety Assessment of Nanomaterials in Cosmetics. SCCS/1611/19.

https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_o_233.pdf

⁷⁸ Mackevica A, Foss Hansen S (2016) Release of nanomaterials from solid nanocomposites and consumer exposure assessment – a forward-looking review. *Nanotoxicology* 10(6):641–53. doi: 10.3109/17435390.2015.1132346

⁷⁹ BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation et. al (2014) European NGOs' position paper on the Regulation of nanomaterials. www.beuc.eu/publications/beuc-x-2014-024_sma_nano_position_paper_caracal_final_clean.pdf

⁸⁰ Azolay D and Tuncak B (2014) Managing the unseen – opportunities and challenges with nanotechnology. Swedish Society for Nature Conservation.

www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/sites/default/files/dokument-media/rapporter/Rapport-Nano.pdf

⁸¹ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022H0614\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022H0614(01)&from=EN)

⁸² EU observatory for nanomaterials and European Chemicals Agency (2019) What are next generation nanomaterials and why are regulators interested in them? Information note. https://euon.echa.europa.eu/documents/23168237/24095696/190919_background_note_next_gen_materials_en.pdf/b9178324-5a69-2e4b-1f2b-aac2c2845f45

⁸³ European Commission, COMMISSION STAFF WORKING PAPER, Types and uses of nanomaterials, including safety aspects, Accompanying the [...] second regulatory review of nanomaterials, SWD(2012) 288 final

⁸⁴ EU observatory for nanomaterials and European Chemicals Agency (2019) What are next generation nanomaterials and why are regulators interested in them? Information note. https://euon.echa.europa.eu/documents/23168237/24095696/190919_background_note_next_gen_materials_en.pdf/b9178324-5a69-2e4b-1f2b-aac2c2845f45

The requirement has the following exemptions:

Pigments

Pigments are finely ground, insoluble particles that are used to give the products a certain colour. There are no substitutes that can perform the function of pigments such as paint dyes, inks, fabric dyes, masterbatch, etc. and many pigments consist entirely or partially of nanoparticles. Therefore, nanosize pigments are exempted. Although clear conclusions on the safety of nanopigments cannot be drawn⁸⁵, release by decomposition of facades is very limited and the nanoparticles are probably mainly embedded in the paint matrix rather than released as individual nanoparticles^{86, 87}. Paint pigments consist of particles of individual crystals up to aggregates of several crystals. It is generally more effective to use pigments with smaller particles than larger to get the same colour. Inorganic pigments used in the paint industry, which can occur in nanosize, include carbon black and iron oxides⁸⁸. Carbon black used in paints is very finely ground and has a particle size of approximately 10–30 nm⁸⁹. Iron oxide pigments can include only nanosize particles, or only a fraction of the particles may be nano. Inorganic nanopigments are also added to products for a number of purposes other than colouring. Nano-titanium dioxide, for example, is used to provide a self-cleaning effect in paint.

Naturally occurring inorganic fillers

Traditional fillers are permitted. Naturally occurring fillers, e.g. from chalk, marble, dolomite and limestone, are exempted from registration in accordance with Annex V, point 7 of REACH, as long as these fillers are only physically processed (ground, sieved and so on) and not chemically modified. An exemption for inorganic fillers has been added as long as they are covered by Annex V, point 7 of REACH.

Synthetic amorphous silicon dioxide

Synthetic amorphous silica (SAS) is a manufactured silica (SiO₂) that has been used in industrial, consumer and pharmaceutical products for decades⁹⁰. SAS is a nanomaterial according to the European Commission's definition and is exempted from the requirement due to a lack of alternative substances.

O45 Preservatives

The content of preservatives in the chemical product must meet the following limit values:

⁸⁵ Hynes J, Novotný T, Nic M, Kocurkova L, Prichystalová R, Brzicová T, Bernatikova S (2018) Literature study on the uses and risks of nanomaterials as pigments in the European Union. European Chemicals Agency.

⁸⁶ Mackevica A, Hansen, SF (2016) Release of nanomaterials from solid nanocomposites and consumer exposure assessment – a forward-looking review. *Nanotoxicology*, 10(6), 641–653. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17435390.2015.1132346>

⁸⁷ Nowack B, Hincapié I, Sarret G, Larue C, Legros S (2013) Environmental fate of nanoparticles from façade coatings. *NanoHouse Dissemination report N° 2013-03*. [https:// DOI: 10.13140/2.1.2206.3040](https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.2206.3040)

⁸⁸ *Industrial Organic Pigments*; W. Herbst, K. Hunger; Third edition 2004; pp. 120–124

⁸⁹ *Coatings Handbook*; Thomas Brock, Michael Groteklaes, Peter Mischke; 2000; p. 128

⁹⁰ [https://www.asasp.eu/images/Publications/Nano - SAS factsheet - 201209.pdf](https://www.asasp.eu/images/Publications/Nano_-_SAS_factsheet_-_201209.pdf)

Preservative	Limit value
Bronopol	≤ 500 ppm (0.05% by weight)
IPBC (iodopropynyl butylcarbamate)	≤ 2000 ppm (0.20% by weight)
Mixture (3:1) of CMIT/MIT (5 chloro-2-methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one / 2-methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one)	≤ 15 ppm (0.0015% by weight)
MIT (2-methyl-2H-isothiazol-3-one)	≤ 100 ppm (0.01% by weight)
Total amount of isothiazolinones	≤ 500 ppm (0.05% by weight).

- A declaration from the chemical manufacturer or supplier. Appendix 5 may be used.
- A safety data sheet for the product in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

Background

The content of the preservatives bronopol, IPBC, CMIT/MIT and MIT is restricted via specific limit values. The content of the total amount of isothiazolinones is also limited. The exemption is the same as in generation 6 for bronopol, isothiazolinones and CMIT/MIT, while IPBC is new to the list. IPBC is a fungicide that has become more commonly used and the limit value is the same as in Nordic Ecolabelling's Criteria for Chemical building products. Water-based paints and adhesives may contain the preservative bronopol and it is difficult to find substitutes. A limited amount of bronopol is therefore permitted although it is classified as a substance of concern and hazardous to the environment. Isothiazolinones are used as a preservative in many water-based products, where they act as fungicides, biocides and algal growth inhibitors. They are toxic to aquatic organisms and can cause varying degrees of allergic reactions. It has proved difficult to avoid the use of these preservatives in water-based products, which is what Nordic Ecolabelling's criteria for chemicals indirectly promote. Preservatives also play an important role in ensuring the shelf-life of the products before they are used. Alternative preservatives to isothiazolinones include formaldehyde and/or formaldehyde-releasing substances, which are carcinogenic. In this respect, isothiazolinone and CMIT/MIT are better, even though they also exhibit hazardous properties. To limit the use of these substances as much as possible, the amount of the substances is restricted.

O46 Free formaldehyde

The content of free formaldehyde in each individual chemical product used for surface treatment must not exceed 0.02% by weight (200 ppm).

- Declaration from the manufacture of the chemical product(s) in the surface treatment system. Appendix 5 may be used.

Background

For further background information about free formaldehyde, see Section 4.7.1.

O47 Application method and quantity applied – surface treatment

The following information must be given for each surface treatment system used:

- a) Name of surface treatment product and manufacturer of surface treatment product
- b) Quantity applied (g/m²), number of coats and application method(s) used
- c) The following efficiency rates must be used when calculating VOC quantities in subsequent requirements:
 - Automated spray with no recycling: 50%
 - Automated spray with recycling: 70%
 - Spray application, electrostatic: 65%
 - Spray application, bell/disk: 80%
 - Roller coating: 95%
 - Curtain coating: 95%
 - Vacuum coating: 95%
 - Dipping: 95%
 - Rinsing: 95%

The efficiency rates are standard values. Other efficiency rates may be used if they can be documented.

- Description from the performer of the surface treatment of each surface treatment system used, in line with the requirement.

Background

The requirement is new since the previous generation of the criteria did not take into account the efficiency of the application method. This change has been made to harmonise with other Nordic Ecolabelling criteria, e.g. Furniture and fitments and Floor coverings. Information about applied quantities, number of coats and method of application is required to calculate applied quantities of VOCs in subsequent requirements.

O48 Quantity of applied volatile organic compounds (VOC)

In the surface treatment system, the chemical products that are used must meet one of the following alternatives in each surface treatment system:

- a) The total VOC content must not exceed 5% by weight, or
- b) The total amount of VOCs applied must not exceed 10 g/m² treated surface.

The total amount of VOCs in option b) is calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Applisert mengde av overflatebehandlingsprodukt} \left(\frac{\text{g}}{\text{m}^2} \right) \times \text{Andel VOC i overflatebehandlingsproduktet} (\%)}{\text{Overflatebehandlingsens virkningsgrad}(\%)}$$

For both alternatives, it is the VOC content of the chemical products in their uncured form that must meet the requirement. If the chemical products require dilution, the calculation must be based on the content in the diluted product.

- Safety data sheet for each chemical product used in the surface treatment system in compliance with current European legislation (Annex II of REACH, Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006).

- ☒ Declaration from the manufacturer/supplier of the chemical products in the surface treatment system, detailing the quantity of VOCs in each product.
- ☒ A calculation from the performer of the surface treatment showing that alternative b) in the requirement is met if the surface treatment system does not meet alternative a).

Background

The reason for this requirement is that VOCs contribute to the formation of ozone and can have adverse health effects in the workplace and indoor climates.

The limit values remain unchanged in the requirement, since they are still considered to be strict. One change that has been made is inclusion of the efficiency rate of the application method. This is described in more detail in the background to the previous requirement.

4.8 Emissions

The requirements in this chapter cover different types of emissions. Emissions from the product (4.8.1), from the production process (COD 4.8.2) and in the working environment (4.8.3) are subject to requirements.

4.8.1 Emissions from the product

O49 Formaldehyde and VOC emissions

Formaldehyd emissions from panels

The requirement covers all panels and boards containing formaldehyde-based additives. The test shall be carried out in accordance with the test method* EN 16516 or ISO 16000-3 or other equivalent standardised test conditions and determination methods.

The average emission of formaldehyde must not exceed the limit value for the type of panel according to table below:

Type of panel	Limit value after 28 days** (mg/m ³) according to EN 16516.
Wood-based panels and panels based on non-renewable raw materials	0,06 mg/m ³
Laminates***	0,02 mg/m ³

VOC emissions from panels

Emissions from panels must not exceed the limit values according to table below. The test shall be carried out in accordance with the test method EN 16516 or ISO 16000-3:201188 or other equivalent standardised test conditions and determination methods.

Substance or group of substances	Limit value after 28 days** (mg/m ³) according to EN 16516.
TVOC (C6-C16)	0,16
SVOC (C16-C23)	0,03
Carcinogenic VOC in category 1A and 1B	0,001

** The methods and limit values are based on the EU commission published regulation amending Annex XVII of the REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006. This requirement will be updated following the development of this regulation.*

*** If the limit values in the table are met for a period shorter than 28 days, this is accepted.*

***Emissions from panels coated with laminate (including melamine), HPL, compact laminate, surface-treated panels/mouldings and panels based on lignocellulose raw materials, such as straw or linen.*

- ☒ Analysis report, including measurement methods, results and measurement frequency. It must be clearly stated which method/standard was used, the laboratory that conducted the analysis, and that the analysis laboratory is an independent third party. Other analysis methods than those stated in the requirement may be used, provided that the correlation between the test methods can be verified by an independent third party.

Background

The requirement has tightened compared to generation 6. Emissions for formaldehyde and VOCs are now compiled on the same requirement.

This requirement is relevant since building materials have a major impact on the indoor environment of a building, and it is important to ensure that Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels contribute to a good indoor environment. Formaldehyde is a toxic, sensitising, and carcinogenic substance and Nordic Ecolabelling wants to restrict its use to the greatest extent possible from an occupational health and safety point of view and to reduce emissions in the use phase. Adhesive systems containing formaldehyde are often used in the manufacture of panels.

VOCs are organic compounds that have a high vapor pressure at room temperature. Some VOCs are dangerous to human health or cause harm to the environment. Most VOCs are not acutely toxic, but may have long-term chronic health effects.

On 1 January 2020, Germany introduced a new legal requirement which means that the reference method for measuring formaldehyde and VOCs emission has been changed from the previous EN 717-1 to EN 16516. The EU commission published regulation amending Annex XVII of the REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 refers to this reference method as well. Other test methods may be approved if an independent third party (e.g., a test institute) has established a correlation.

The limit values have been established based on the limits defined in the EU commission published regulation amending Annex XVII of the REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006. These values will be monitored as well as the future additional information in relation to reference methods and this requirement will be updated if necessary.

The limit values for VOC and SVOC have not been tightened and therefore remain the same. The review of results from emission testing of Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products and the limit values of other certification schemes indicated that the limit values for the Nordic Swan Ecolabel remain strict and relevant. Limit values for Carcinogenic VOC in category 1A and 1B have been added in correlation to the EU commission.

Laminates panels have a specific, low limit value on 0,02mg/m³ to make these panel types compatible with BREAAAM-NOR v.6.0. A shift to 0,02mg/m³ formaldehyde is considered sufficiently strict for this generation of the criteria, which sets many other requirements in areas other than the indoor environment.

4.8.2 Emissions from the production – COD

O50 Emissions of COD from wet processes

The requirement covers wet processes in panel production. COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand) emissions to water must be maximum 20 g COD/kg product (unfiltered sample).

A description of the preparation and analysis methods is given in Appendix 1.

- Measurement results including information on sampling programmes and measurement methods for the past 12 months and measurement frequency.

Background

The energy requirement is unchanged compared to generation 6 of the criteria.

Panel production using a wet process produce emissions to water of oxygen-demanding organic matter (COD). Microorganisms consume oxygen to break down the organic matter. This may lead to low oxygen concentrations in the water and, in some cases, anaerobic conditions. A benefit of panels produced using a wet process is that they usually do not contain any adhesive – the lignin already in the wood is enough to hold the material together. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore wishes to allow panel production with a wet process, but it is important to ensure low levels of COD emissions.

4.8.3 Emissions from the production – working environment

O51 Emissions to air from production of laminate in HPL and compact laminate

Laminate produced with resins containing formaldehyde and phenol must adhere to the following hygienic limit values for emissions to air in the workplace*:

- The average value during an 8-hour period must not exceed:
- 0.3 ppm (0.37 mg/m³) for formaldehyde
- 2 ppm (8 mg/m³) for phenol.
- The average value during a reference period of 15 minutes must not exceed:
- 0.6 ppm (0.74 mg/m³) for formaldehyde
- 4 ppm (16 mg/m³) for phenol.

** If the legislation in the country in question has lower limit values than those stated in the requirement, the legal limit values must be fulfilled.*

- Test report showing compliance with the requirement. The report shall contain information about measurements, sampling programmes, measurement methods and measurement frequency. For analysis methods, see Appendix 1.

- Alternative documentation showing the legal requirements of the country in which production takes place. If the legislation in the individual country has lower limit values than those stated in the requirement, no further documentation is necessary.

Background

Laminate consists of kraft paper and decor paper impregnated with resins containing phenol, formaldehyde and other substances. During the manufacturing process for the laminate, before the resin has fully cured, emissions to air of phenol and formaldehyde occur. The aim of the requirement concerning hygienic limit values for emissions to air in the workplace is to ensure that the air is measured and that levels are low. This generation of the criteria has a tighter requirement than before concerning emissions of formaldehyde, during both an 8-hour period and a reference period of 15 minutes. The new, stricter limit values are at the same level as the legal requirements in Sweden and Germany, for example, and those set out by the EU Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL). The limit values for phenol in the previous generation of the criteria already matched the levels identified in the examined legislation, and they have therefore not been tightened.

O52 Emissions of dust

The following limit values for emissions to indoor air must not be exceeded during the manufacture of panels/mouldings in relation to the working environment.

The requirement relates to panels/moulding in which the content of mineral raw materials or wood raw materials individually accounts for more than 5 % by weight of the panel/moulding:

- Mineral dust, inert: 10 mg/m³
- Mineral dust, inert, breathable: 5 mg/m³
- Mineral wool: 1 fibre/cm³
- Wood dust, breathable: 2 mg/m³
- Organic dust, total: 5 mg/m³

If the legislation in the individual country has a lower limit value than stated in the requirement, the legal limit value must be complied with

- Test report showing compliance with the limit value. The report shall contain information about measurements, sampling programs, measurement methods and measurement frequency. For analysis methods, see Appendix 1.
- Alternative documentation showing the legal requirement in the country where production takes place. If the legislation in the individual country has lower limit values than those stated in the requirement, no further documentation is necessary.

Background

The requirement remains unchanged. The requirement seeks to ensure that working conditions in relation to dust emissions are acceptable, regardless of where the panel is produced.

Production in countries where the official mandatory emission requirements are at the same or a stricter level than this requirement is exempted from the requirement. No limit values have been defined for the indicated emission types in the EU Commission directives (Commission Directive 2000/39/EC, Commission Directive 2006/15/EC, Commission Directive 2009/161/EU) of relevance to the area. On the other hand, all working environment authorities in the Nordic countries have defined limit values for mineral dust, wood dust and organic dust generally, which are relevant for panel production systems in the product group.

4.9 Climate and energy

This chapter contains requirements for the energy consumption in the production of the different types of panels and specific type of raw materials used in the panels.

The energy consumption is calculated as MJ/kg panel/product produced, and encompasses all energy used from **gate to gate** (phase A3 in EPDs) at the panel production site. Energy consumption also needs to be calculated for specific type of raw materials such as pulp/paper, resin/glue, laminate, cement, and mineral wool used in panels.

The requirements must be documented in the form of energy consumed (actual energy used in production) without the use of primary energy factors.

The requirement may be documented either just for the specific production of the ecolabelled panel or for the company's total annual production.

System boundary for the requirement: Energy consumption for extraction of raw materials, transports of raw materials is not part of the energy requirement. The energy requirements do not apply to raw materials that are included by less than **5 wt%** of the panel.

Further descriptions of how the energy calculation should be carried out can be found in Appendices 3.

4.9.1 Panels made from renewable raw materials

The requirements apply to energy consumption in the production of; kraft paper and paper pulp used in HPL, compact laminate, wood-based panels, panels made from other lignocellulose raw materials, CLT, glulam and solid wood panels/mouldings.

O53 Energy consumption in the production of kraft paper and pulp that is included in HPL, compact laminate, acoustic- or gypsum plasterboards

The requirement covers pulp and paper used in the production of kraft paper.

The requirement does not cover the production of decor paper.

The following requirements must be met:

$$P^*_{\text{electricity}(\text{total})} < 2.5$$

$$P^*_{\text{fuel}(\text{total})} < 2.5$$

For paper consisting solely of TPM/GW* produced on-site, the limit value for

$$P_{\text{fuel}(\text{total})} \text{ is } 1.25$$

**P is the energy score for the paper and pulp production. The energy scores from the production of both the paper and the pulps are included in $P_{electricity(total)}$ and $P_{fuel(total)}$. A more detailed description of how the calculation should be carried out can be found in Appendix 2.*

TMP/GW = Thermomechanical pulp/groundwood

- ☒ If pulp that has been checked in accordance with Nordic Ecolabelling’s Basic Module for paper is used: Description of the producer, production site and name of the pulp.
- ☒ Calculation from the producers of the paper and pulp showing that the point limit is fulfilled. A calculation sheet has been developed for the energy calculation, which can be obtained from Nordic Ecolabelling.

O54 Energy consumption – laminate production

Energy consumption in the production of laminate must not exceed the following limit values:

Panel type	Energy consumption MJ/kg panel
Compact laminate HPL ≥ 2 mm included	14 MJ/kg
Other types of laminate ≤ 2 mm HPL ≤ 2 mm included	8 MJ/kg

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- ☒ Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O55 Energy consumption – wood-based panels

Energy consumption in the production of these panels must not exceed the limit values given in the table below:

Panel type	Energy consumption MJ/kg panel
Particleboard	6 MJ/kg
MDF and HDF	7 MJ/kg
Wood-based panels – wet process	13 MJ/kg
OSB	4 MJ/kg
Plywood	9 MJ/kg
LVL	9 MJ/kg
SWP	5 MJ/kg

If a type of wood-based panel is laminated, the wood-based panel must fulfil the requirement limit here, while the laminate must fulfil the requirements for laminate in O54 Melamine-coated wood panels must only fulfil the requirement limit here.

Mouldings in same materials as shown in the table are also covered by the requirement limits.

A detailed description of how to perform the energy calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- ☒ Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O56 Energy consumption – panels made from other lignocellulose raw materials

Energy consumption in the production of panels based on other renewable raw materials, such as straw, linen or hemp, must not exceed 1 MJ/kg.

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- ☒ Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O57 Energy consumption - CLT and glulam (cross and glued laminated timber)

The energy consumption in production of CLT and Glulam must not exceed 5 MJ/kg.

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- ☒ Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must include information about suppliers, the quantity from each supplier and the consumption of electricity and fuel, as well as the fuel sources used.

O58 Energy consumption - Solid wood panels and mouldings

The energy consumption in production of solid wood panels/mouldings must not exceed 1350 MJ/m³. The calculation includes energy consumption for drying, sawing and planing wood that is included in the solid wood panel/moulding.

The limit value can be met per supplier or as an overall average of the suppliers.

- ☒ Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must include information about suppliers, the quantity from each supplier and the consumption of electricity and fuel, as well as the fuel sources used.

Background

The requirement has been tightened in generation 7. All the proposed energy requirements for the different types of panels made from renewable raw materials have been pre-consulted from October-December 2022. The received feedback in the pre-consultation has not resulted in an adjustment of the requirements.

The most environmentally friendly energy is the energy that is not used. Energy-efficient production is generally important in reducing the environmental impact from the use and production of energy. In a complex world where lack of energy might become more prominent in the future, it is important that everyone makes an effort to reduce their own consumption. Energy consumption also directly affects greenhouse gas emissions. Energy-efficient production and lower energy consumption will thus also reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Nordic Ecolabelling is therefore committed to setting requirements concerning maximum use of energy wherever possible. The RPS analysis shows that there is generally high

environmental relevance in setting requirements for energy consumption, for both ingoing materials and the panel production itself. Several of the production lines use processes that involve a great deal of heat or pressure. Differentiated energy requirements have been set, as the production processes differ, which thus also results in differences in energy consumption. It will also make it possible to separate out the production lines that perform well on energy within each product type.

For panels based on renewable raw materials, a high proportion of renewable fuels is often used. This may be from waste wood that is not of sufficient quality to be included in the panels. But there are also manufacturers that use electricity or fossil raw materials in the form of gas or oil.

In panels where paper makes up a high proportion of the material composition, the paper contributes a significant part of the panel's total energy load. There are therefore energy requirements for pulp and paper production for the paper types included in the panel, in addition to energy requirements for the actual panel production. The manufacturer of the pulp and paper must document the energy consumption. The requirement does not cover decor paper, as it is a little further back along the supply chain, making documentation more difficult to obtain. In addition, it constitutes a relatively small proportion of the product's ingoing paper. An HPL panel may contain around 50–60% kraft paper and 2–15% decorative paper. Energy requirements and calculation methods for pulp and paper are taken from Nordic Ecolabelling's Basic Module for paper. The Basic Module does not contain specific requirements for the type of paper used in laminate, kraft paper, and the reference value for the production of this paper type has therefore been specifically developed for and adapted to this product group.

Energy requirements for solid wood products such as panels and mouldings are new to this generation. Here, energy consumption is mainly related to the drying and processing of wood, such as sawing and planing, with the drying process as the process with the highest consumption. Nordic Ecolabelling has had limited information on which to base the requirements. Investigations have focused on literature, EPDs and contact with the industry. There are some EPDs, but it is difficult to compare the information available there and use it to find a relevant requirement level. Information from studies shows that sawmill energy consumption is about 1500 MJ/m³^{91, 92, 93}. It appears that there is great variation between different companies. A specific reason for this has not been identified, but the type of drying process used is most likely a key factor for energy efficiency. In a batch kiln, batches of sawn timber are placed inside, the doors are closed and the heating begins, with moisture also added to the air. Gradually during the process, the air humidity is changed to create a drier climate. In a progressive kiln, sawn timber is conveyed continuously through different climate zones. The climate is kept constant in each zone, with the wood moving through the different zones over the course of the drying time. Since the progressive kilns have a constant climate, they are ideal for the installation of heat exchangers,

⁹¹ Silje Wærp et al., *Livsløpsanalyser av norske treprodukter, MIKADO*, Sintef Byggforsk, 2009. Norway.

⁹² Jungmeier, G. et al, *Allocation in Multi Product Systems – Recommendations for LCA of Wood-based Products*

⁹³ Henning Horn, 2008: *ENØK i varme- og tørkeanlegg i trelastindustrien, Rapport 72*, 2008, Tretknisk

and will thus consume less energy. Because this is a continuous process, it also avoids the energy hungry warm-up period that is required in a batch kiln.

For products consisting of solid wood and adhesive, such as CLT and glulam, a new energy requirement has also been introduced. The requirement has been set on the basis of dialogue with stakeholders. It was also possible to label CLT in the previous generation of the criteria, but there was no specific requirement for this type of product.

4.9.2 Panels made from mineral- and non-renewable raw materials

The requirements apply to energy consumption in the production of; wood plastic composite panels, gypsum plaster boards, mineral wool, mineral wool based panels, cement, cement-based panels and panels made from other materials.

O59 Energy consumption - Wood Plastic Composite panels (WPC)

The energy consumption in production of wood plastic composite panels must not exceed 1 MJ/kg.

The requirement includes energy use (electricity and heat) from gate to gate at the production site e.g., pumping, refining, forming, heating, pressing, drying, cutting and packaging. For more information, see Appendix 6.

- Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O60 Energy consumption - gypsum plasterboards

The energy consumption in production of gypsum plasterboard must not exceed 3 MJ/kg plasterboard.

The requirement includes energy use (electricity and heat) from gate to gate at the production site e.g., pumping, refining, forming, heating, pressing, drying, cutting and packaging. The requirement does not include extraction of resources and transport. Paper or mineral wool has its own energy requirements in O53.

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O61 Energy consumption - mineral wool

The requirement covers part A) energy consumption in mineral wool production such as glass- and stone mineral wool and part B) fossil fuels.

A) Energy consumption

The energy consumption in production of stone wool must not exceed 11 MJ/kg board.

The energy consumption in production of glass wool (incl. fiber glass) must not exceed 15 MJ/kg board.

The requirement does not include extraction of resources and transport.

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

B) Fossil fuels

Fossil oil and coal must not be used as fuels* for production of process heat in the production of glass- and stone wool.

Necessary use of fossil oil e.g., in planned maintenance stops, emergency maintenance stops, as a reserve and tip fuel (peak load fuel) or at start-ups for regulation of the combustion temperature in a heat and co-generation boiler is allowed.

**Use of natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is allowed.*

- A) Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of mineral wool panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.
- B) The mineral wool manufacturer shall confirm that fossil oil and/or coal are not used as fuels to produce process heat in the production of glass-and stone wool.

O62 Energy consumption - mineral wool-based panel (incl. facing/finishing)

The energy consumption in production of mineral wool-based panels must not exceed 4 MJ/kg panel.

The requirement includes energy use (electricity and heat) from gate to gate at the production site e.g., cutting, facing the mineral wool, surface coating and packaging. Manufacturing of mineral wool or fleece/glass fleece and transport is not part of the requirement.

- Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O63 Energy consumption - Cement

Cement defined according to EN 197-1 must comply with the following requirements, A and B:

A) The total global warming potential (GWP) for system boundaries A1 (Raw material supply), A2 (Transport), A3 (Manufacturing) according to EN 15804+A2 shall not exceed the values given in table below.

Table 1: Limit values for product-specific emissions for cement. Product specific GWP_{tot} for the cradle to gate system boundary (A1-A3)

Cement/hydraulic binder type	GWP _{tot}
White cement clinker	0.973tCO ₂ e/tonne white cement clinker
Grey cement clinker	0.722tCO ₂ e/tonne grey cement clinker
Lime	0.746tCO ₂ e/tonne lime

B) Fossil oil and coal must not be used as fuels* for production of process heat in the production of cement.

Necessary use of fossil oil e.g., in planned maintenance stops, emergency maintenance stops, as a reserve and tip fuel (peak load fuel) or at start-ups for regulation of the combustion temperature in a heat and co-generation boiler is allowed.

**Use of natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is allowed.*

- A) Product-Specific Type III Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) in accordance with EN 15804+A2 & ISO 14025 / ISO 21930 and PCR/c-PCR showing that the GWP limit is met.
- B) The cement manufacturer shall confirm that fossil oil and/or coal are not used as fuels to produce process heat in the production of cement.
- Documentation from the license holder showing that the specific cement is used in the product.

O64 Energy consumption - cement-based panels

The energy consumption in production of fibre cement flat sheets must not exceed 2 MJ/kg panel.

The energy consumption in production of wood wool boards/panels must not exceed 3 MJ/kg board/panel.

The requirement includes energy use (electricity and heat) from gate to gate at the production site e.g., pumping, refining, forming, pressing, drying, cutting and packaging. Manufacturing of cement and transport is not part of the requirement.

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

O65 Energy consumption - panels made from other materials

The energy consumption in production of panels made from other materials* must not exceed 4 MJ/kg panel.

** Other material covered by the criteria such as plastic, textile or aluminium.*

The requirement includes energy use (electricity and heat) from gate to gate at the production site e.g., site e.g., pumping, refining, forming (production of felt board), pressing, drying, gluing/laminating different types of material layers together, cutting and packaging. Manufacturing of polymer/PET granulate/PET fibre production is not part of the requirement.

A detailed description of how to perform the calculation is given in Appendix 6.

- Calculation showing compliance with the requirement. The calculation must contain information about the quantity of panels produced, electricity and fuel consumed, and which fuel sources have been used.

Background

WPC:

This is a new requirement in generation 7 of the criteria.

Wood–plastic composites (WPCs) are a form of composite combining wood-based elements with polymers. The processes for manufacturing WPCs include extrusion, injection molding, and compression molding or thermoforming (pressing). The extruder is the core of a WPC profile processing system, and the primary purpose of the extruder is to melt the polymer and mix the polymer, wood, and additives in a process referred to as compounding.

For the environmental impact of the composite material, the plastic component is crucial. In general, the plastic raw material can be recycled or newly produced. If the plastic raw material is recycled, energy use and climate impact are reduced. Nordic Swan Ecolabelled WPC panels must consist of 100% post-consumer recycled plastic and wood fibres.

The energy consumption in production of wood plastic composite panels must not exceed 1 MJ/kg panel. The proposed energy limit is based on dialog with stakeholders.

Gypsum plasterboard:

The requirement has been tightened from 4 MJ/kg to 3 MJ/kg plasterboard in generation 7. In a life cycle perspective, the energy impact in the materials contribute more or less the same as the actual panel production, if 100% natural gypsum is used. The greater the proportion of recycled gypsum in the panel, the greater relative significance the actual panel production will have from a pure energy point of view.

Gypsum plasterboards with a high content of recycled appear to have the greatest energy relevance for the production of plasterboards. Production is not particularly energy-intensive, but many heat-using processes are applied, which thus give a potential for optimising energy efficiency of production. In the actual panel production, approximately 90-95% of the energy applied is heat energy and the remainder is electricity. Fossil-based fuel energy is the main source used, in the form of natural gas and, rarely, biomass.

The proposed energy limit on 3 MJ/kg plasterboard is based on dialog with stakeholders and EPD's.

Mineral wool:

The requirement has been tightened from 20 MJ/kg to 15 MJ/kg glass wool and 11 MJ/kg stone wool produces panels.

Mineral wool production is a high temperature energy intensive process. Glass wool is produced from borosilicate glass at a temperature around 1400 °C, while rock wool is produced from melting volcanic rocks at about 1500 °C. The three most important energy sources for glass production are natural gas, fuel oil and electricity. The manufacturing process shares many similarities but special the fiberising process for glass wool is more energy demanding than for stone wool. Therefore, two different energy requirements have been proposed for glass and stone wool. Data from Ecofys⁹⁴ shows that the total energy consumption in production of glass wool varies between 9-20 MJ/kg and for stone and slag wool 7-14 MJ/kg.

The proposed energy limit is based on dialog with stakeholders and EPD's.

Nordic Ecolabelling wishes to encourage fossil-free manufacturing, and therefore a ban on the use of fossil oil and coal as main fuels for production of process heat in mineral wool factories is introduced. However, necessary use of fossil oil e.g. in

⁹⁴ Ecofys: Methodology for the free allocation of emissions allowances in the EU ETS post 2012 - sector report for the mineral wool industry, November 2009

planned maintenance stops, emergency maintenance stops and as a reserve or tip fuel (peak load fuel) is allowed. Use of coal is, however, completely prohibited.

Tip fuel is peak load fuel that is only used for short periods, e.g. when it is really cold. What is meant with reserve fuel can sometimes be a bit unclear. Reserve fuel can e.g. be defined in mineral wool factories environmental permits issued by the authorities. Therefore, it has not been defined in more detail in the criteria itself, but the use of reserve fuel should be calculated in days.

At this point, it is not possible to exclude all fossil fuels in mineral wool manufacturing and therefore, use of natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is still allowed.

Mineral wool-based panels - acoustic panels:

The requirement has been changed compared to generation 6 where it was integrated in the mineral wool requirement. The requirement covers all the energy used (electricity + heat) at the production site (gate to gate, or phase A3 in EPDs). Mineral wool constitutes by far the largest material part in mineral wool-based acoustic panels (70-80%)^{95, 96}. As manufacturing of mineral wool contributes the highest energy impact in the panels' life cycle this is covered by a separate requirement. Other materials used in the process of facing of mineral wool covers fleece/glass fleece, glue, and coating.

The requirement includes energy use (electricity and heat) from gate to gate at the production site e.g., cutting, facing the mineral wool, surface coating and packaging. The proposed energy limit is based on dialog with stakeholders and EPD's.

Cement:

This is a new requirement in generation 7 of the criteria. Portland cement is a key ingredient in different types of cement-based panels/acoustic panels but also one of the major sources of greenhouse gases globally. The cement industry accounts for 5% of the global carbon dioxide emissions⁹⁷. According to estimates, 900 grams of CO₂ emerge from the manufacturing of 1000 grams of cement, resulting in 3.24 billion tons of CO₂ being generated annually⁹⁸. Therefore, requirements are set out to reduce the energy demand, to limit the anthropogenic emissions of CO₂⁹⁹.

The specific limits for the different types of cement and hydraulic binders are derived from the average value of the top 10% of installations based on the data collected in the context of establishing the EU Emissions Trading System (EU

⁹⁵ <https://www.ecophon.com/uk/about-ecophon/sustainability-we-can-all-believe-in/download-centre/> (visited March 2023)

⁹⁶ <https://www.rockfon.dk/siteassets/commerce/dk/tiles/documents/documentation/miljoevaredeklaration-epd/miljoevaredeklaration-epd---loftplader---vaegpaneler.pdf> (visited March 2023)

⁹⁷ The Cement Sustainability Initiative: <https://docs.wbcsd.org/2016/12/GNR.pdf> (visited 2022-05-30)

⁹⁸ Hendriks, C. A., Worrell, E., De Jager, D., Blok, K., & Riemer, P. (1998, August). Emission reduction of greenhouse gases from the cement industry. In Proceedings of the fourth international conference on greenhouse gas control technologies (pp. 939-944). IEA GHG R&D Programme Interlaken, Austria.

⁹⁹ Antunes, M., Santos, R. L., Pereira, J., Rocha, P., Horta, R. B., & Colaço, R. (2021). Alternative Clinker Technologies for Reducing Carbon Emissions in Cement Industry: A Critical Review. *Materials*, 15(1), 209.

ETS) industrial benchmarks for the period of 2021-2026 and calculated in accordance with the methodology for setting the benchmarks set out in Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC¹⁰⁰.

Cement-based panels:

The requirement has been changed compared to generation 6 where the energy requirement covered all materials used in the cement-based panel. The main material in cement-based panels is cement. The content of cement in fibre cement flat sheets is around 65-80%^{101, 102, 103} and around 50-60%^{104, 105} in wood wool panels. To simplify the requirement, the energy requirement now covers the manufacturing of cement and the production of the panels. As the manufacturing of cement contributes the highest energy impact in the panels' life cycle it has an impact on the energy consumption in board production due to variation in share of cement. Fibre cement flat sheets has a higher content of cement and thus a lower content of wood fibres compared to wood wool panels. The energy requirement has therefore been divided into two separate requirements for each type of panel. The energy consumption in production of wood wool boards/panels must not exceed 2 MJ/kg board/panel and 3 MJ/kg wood wool panel.

The proposed energy limit is based on dialog with stakeholders and EPD's.

Panels made from other materials:

This is a new requirement in generation 7 of the criteria and covers panels made from other materials such as textile, plastic or aluminium. This will typically be acoustic panels made from polyester, PET, canvas, or cotton. The requirement covers the energy used to manufacture the acoustic panel (gate to gate, and not energy to produce raw materials such as fibres e.g., polyester fibres or textile/fabrics. However, the production of felt board (often done in PET/polyester) is part of the requirement and involves the process of crossing of PET fibres to create a web of fibres, hardening with heat/pressure, rolling/calendaring and cutting to size. These types of acoustic panels can consist of different types of materials glued/laminated together to create different types of surface-looks e.g., felt board covered with velour or textile.

The proposed energy limit is based on dialog with stakeholders and EPD's.

4,09 Alsfar (PET)¹⁰⁶

4,3 MJ/kg¹⁰⁷ (PET)

¹⁰⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0447&rid=1>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.epddanmark.dk/media/w5ld1aty/md-21010-en.pdf> (visited March 2023)

¹⁰² <https://forzes.dk/produkter/cementsp%C3%A5nplader> (visited March 2023)

¹⁰³ www.cewood.com (visited March 2023)

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.troldtekt.dk/viden/dokumenteret-baeredygtighed/> (visited March 2023)

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.baux.com/sustainability/> (Visited March 2023)

¹⁰⁶ https://www.greenbooklive.com/filelibrary/EN_15804/EPD/BREGENEPD000363.pdf

¹⁰⁷ https://cdn.scscertified.com/products/cert_pdfs/SCS-EPD-05286_EzoBord_022619.pdf

4.10 Circularity

The requirements in this chapter concern resource efficiency that have the function to increase the circularity of panels and mouldings. These requirements deal with instructions, maintenance and take-back systems.

O66 Information for consumers

Consumer means both private consumers and professional operators.

The following product information should accompany the product and/or be available for download on the manufacturer's website:

- How the product is to be stored before assembly, e.g., at the construction site.
- Instructions for assembly and instructions for any surface treatment after installation.
- Information about which materials are used in the panels (raw materials and chemicals).
- Specify the standards by which the product is tested.

The information must be available in the language of each country in which the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product is marketed.

Product information intended for customers.

Background

It is important that instructions concerning storage and assembly are accompanied the product and/or is available for download on the manufacturer's website to ensure that the panel is handled and used correctly. Information on which materials is made of is relevant when the product is to be discarded/recycled to make it easier to sort material in to correct fractions. Most types of panels in these criteria are covered by harmonised standards which ensure that the panels live up to industry-approved qualities. This information gives the customer assurance of the product's quality.

O67 Maintenance

For products that are used as the outermost layer on e.g., a wall or ceiling or otherwise have a surface directly facing the consumer, the following must be included:

- Cleaning instructions
- Information on maintenance that includes which care products are suitable for the product (paints, oils, etc.) and how often these products should be used.
- The information can either be supplied with the product or consumers can be referred to information on the manufacturer's website.

Cleaning and maintenance instructions and how these are communicated to the customer.

Background

Proper maintenance is important for a long product life span. The information can either be supplied with the product or the consumer can be referred to information on the manufactures' webpage.

It is important that instructions concerning assembly and maintenance are included to ensure that the panel is used correctly and to contribute to the service life of the product. In order to improve the opportunities for correct waste sorting, information about ingoing raw materials must also be included, as well as whether the manufacturer takes back old panels or panels that were not used in the construction process.

O68 Take-back system

This requirement does not include panels collected in already functioning return systems such as wood-based panels and gypsum plasterboards.

The manufactures of panels must:

- offer a system for taking back products, e.g., old used panels, incorrect deliveries, faulted product, panels not used in the construction process and so on,
or
- be in a process/test/pilot face to establish a system for taking back products, e.g., old used panels, incorrect deliveries, faulted product, panels not used in the construction process and so on.

Description of the offered take-back system or planned/tested take-back system.

Background

The requirement is new in generation 7. Product take-back systems are fundamental for Circular Economy (CE) and focus on recovering value by taking back products to be recycled, re-manufactured or refurbished. In theory, the expected value from CE is undeniable. However, in practice product take-back systems are often in small scale but the interest in CE is increasing in the entire panel industry due to several benefits such as stronger customer relationship, lower cost of goods sold due to secondary material supply, alternative supply of critical raw materials and reduces environmental impacts.

Due to the different types of panels covered by this criteria and difference in how well these are intergraded in existing waste systems, the manufacture of panels must offer a take-back system for taking back products or be in a process/test/pilot face to establish a system for taking back products. There is no requirement for how the manufacture uses the collected products e.g., remanufactured into new equivalent products. Companies that have an established take-back system where the collected products are remanufactured into new equivalent products have the opportunity to meet the requirement for innovation.

4.11 Innovation

The requirement in this chapter covers various areas where Nordic Ecolabelling sees an opportunity to promote manufacturers that contribute to innovation, e.g.

by using bio-based raw materials for adhesive production; to the circular economy or reduced greenhouse gas emissions; and to measures concerning biodiversity. One of the points must be fulfilled, and the manufacturer can decide which measure they wish to fulfil. This offers flexibility. Nordic Ecolabelling would also like to provide signals as to what may become mandatory in the next revision of the criteria.

O69 Innovation in production

The applicant/producer must fulfil at least one of the following 10 options:

Area	Requirement
Chemicals	Adhesives and/or surface treatment products, such as paints, lacquers, or stains, used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product are Nordic Swan Ecolabelled.
	No adhesives based on urea-formaldehyde or isocyanate are used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product.
	The binder in the adhesive used in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product contains one or more components that are made of renewable raw materials.
Raw materials and biodiversity	A minimum 100% by weight of the wood raw material, bamboo and cork used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product (production line) comes from forests that are managed in accordance with sustainable forestry management principles/recycled wood raw material as defined by FSC or PEFC and is covered by a valid Chain of Custody certificate in accordance with the FSC/PEFC schemes.
	A minimum 55% by weight of the wood raw material, bamboo and cork used in the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product (production line) is post-consumer* recycled wood/paper raw material.
Climate	The production (production line) of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product, is fossil-free*. * Fossil-free means that the energy used for the production of heat, steam or pressure on the production line is not based on fossil energy sources such as oil, diesel and natural gas. Electricity is not covered by the requirement.
	Energy consumption in the production of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product is at least 10% lower than the limit values specified in section 3.9.
	The manufacturer has its own energy production, e.g., solar panels, solar collectors or its own wind turbine, which is used for the manufacturing of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels, mouldings or glulam. This does not apply to heat pumps.
	100% of the purchased electricity is ecolabelled according to Bra Miljöval, EKO Energy or similar*
End of life - circular economy	The manufacturer of panels has a fully operational take-back system and new panels contains min. 5% post-consumer recycled material from reprocessed own products collected via the system.

* Ecolabels for electricity are assessed according to the guidelines which are located here ([link](#)). Bra Miljöval and EKO Energy are assessed and approved.

- Documentation in relation to the above-mentioned alternatives in the requirement.

Background

This is a new requirement in generation 7. Nordic Ecolabelling sees this requirement as a possibility to promote manufacturers who take innovative action and who contribute in various ways to reducing the overall environmental impact from production, either related to the product itself or to the conditions on the production line.

5 Licence maintenance

The purpose of the licence maintenance is to ensure that fundamental quality assurance is dealt with appropriately.

070 Customer complaints

The licensee must guarantee that the quality of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product does not deteriorate during the validity period of the licence. Therefore, the licensee must keep an archive over customer complaints.

Note that the original routine must be in one Nordic language or in English.

- Upload your company's routine for handling and archiving customer complaints.

Background

Nordic Ecolabelling requires that your company has implemented a customer complaint handling system. To document your company's customer complaint handling, you must upload your company's routine describing these activities. The routine should be dated and signed and will normally be part of your company's quality management system.

If your company does not have a routine for customer complaint handling, it is possible to upload a description of how your company perform these activities. During the on-site visit, Nordic Ecolabelling will check that the customer complaint handling is implemented in your company as described. The customer complaints archive will also be checked during the visit.

071 Traceability

The licensee must be able to trace the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products in the production. A manufactured / sold product should be able to trace back to the occasion (time and date) and the location (specific factory) and, in relevant cases, also which machine / production line where it was produced. In addition, it should be possible to connect the product with the actual raw material used.

You can upload your company's routine or a description of the actions to ensure traceability in your company.

- Please upload your routine or a description.

Background

Nordic Ecolabelling requires that your company has implemented a traceability system. To document your company's product traceability, you must upload your company's routine describing these activities. The routine should be dated and signed and will normally be part of your company's quality management system.

If your company does not have a routine for product traceability, it is possible to upload a description of how your company perform these activities. During the on-site visit, Nordic Ecolabelling will check that the product traceability is implemented in your company as described.

6 Changes compared to previous generation

Below is a short list of the key changes compared with the previous version of the criteria:

Table 2: Comparison of requirements for Panels and mouldings for interior use in criteria generation 6 and 7.

Proposed requirement generation 7	Requirement generation 6	Same req.	Changed	New req.	Comment
O1 Description of the product	O1	x			The requirement is unchanged
O2 Quality and properties	O34	x			The requirement is unchanged
O3 Acoustic performance				x	New requirement for testing sound absorption
Raw materials					
O4 Tree species – restrictions	O5		x	x	The requirement has been updated with Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements concerning tree species that are prohibited or restricted.
O5 Traceability and certification	O6		x		The manufacturer of the product is required to be CoC certified.
O6 Chemicals – recycled wood raw material				x	New requirement for testing of chemicals in recycled wood raw material.
O7 lignocellulose raw materials				x	Requirement introduced for other renewable raw materials such as straw or hemp.
O8 Ecolabelled paper				x	New requirement for Nordic Swan- and EU ecolabelled paper
O9 Tree species - restrictions			x	x	The requirement has been updated with Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements concerning tree species that are prohibited or restricted. The requirement concerning raw material used in paper production is new.
O10 Paper raw material	O5		x		The requirement has been tightened in that the laminate manufacturer must be CoC certified and the limit for certified raw material is now 70%.
O11 Chemicals used in manufacturing of pulp and paper			x	x	Updated according to generation 3, basic module for pulp and paper
O12 Emissions of COD from the production of pulp and paper – HPL and compact laminate	O9	x			The requirement remains unchanged, but with clarification on how the calculation should be made when several pulps are included.

O13 Ecolabelled textile				x	New requirement for Nordic Swan- and EU Ecolabelled textile
O14 Cotton, other natural seed fibres and wool				x	New requirement for organic, recycled, GOTS or SCI certified fibres or wool
O15 Recycled fibres - synthetic fibres				x	New requirement - must comprise of recycled materials
O16 Recycled fibres - test for harmful substances				x	New requirement for test of recycled fibres according to Oeko-Tex 100 class I-III
O17 Recycled plastic				x	Plastic must consist of recycled materials.
O18 Chemicals in recycled plastics				x	New requirement for flame retardants and heavy metals
O19 Additives - prohibited substances				x	Prohibited additives added to recycled plastics
O20 Manufacture of polyurethane foam				x	Halogenated organic compounds must not be used in blowing agents.
O21 Wood fibre and plastic in WPC				x	Plastic and wood/cellulose fibres must be post-consumer recycled materials.
O22 Additives - prohibited substances				x	Prohibited substances I WPC production
O23 Material recovery in WPC				x	Possibility to recycled WPC
O24 Responsible sourcing of virgin mineral raw materials				x	Supply chain policy and code of conduct for responsible sourcing of virgin mineral raw materials.
O25 Heavy metals in mineral raw materials		x			Mineral raw materials must be tested for heavy metals
O26 Recycled gypsum			x		The requirement for share of recycled gypsum has been adjusted
O27 Recycled mineral wool			x		The requirement for share of recycled mineral wool has been tightened
O28 Additives - prohibited substances				x	Prohibited additives added to manufacturing of mineral wool
O29 Production of aluminium				x	High proportion of recycled aluminium or from responsible aluminium production
Chemicals in production					
O30 Classification of chemical products	O19		x		Prohibition of chemicals classified as environmentally hazardous has been added.

O31 Classification of ingoing substances	O20		x		Prohibition against CMR category 2 added.
O32 Prohibited substances	O21		x		The requirement has been updated, e.g. referring the requirement for endocrine disruptors to other lists, and the substances that are prohibited have also been expanded
O33 Antibacterial substances	O22	x			
O34 Nanomaterials	O23	x			
O35 Preservatives	O22		x		Requirement limit for MIT has been tightened
O36 Volatile organic compounds in adhesives	O26	x			
O37 Free formaldehyde	O28		x		The requirement limit for formaldehyde content has been tightened.
Chemicals - surface treatment					
O38 Plastic foiling				x	
O39 Classification of chemical products (surface treatment)	O19		x		A ban on chemicals classified as environmentally hazardous has been added (with an exemption for UV curing products). Prohibition of H334 (allergenic) has been added.
O40 UV curing surface treatment system				x	
O41 Classification of ingoing substances (surface treatment)	O20		x		Prohibition against CMR category 2 has been added.
O42 Prohibited substances (surface treatment)	O21		x		See O32. Some other exemptions are granted.
O43 Antibacterial substances	O22	x			
O43 Nanomaterials	O23	x			
O45 Preservatives	O22		x		Requirement limit for MIT has been tightened
O46 Free formaldehyde (surface treatment)	O28	x			
O47 Application method and amount – surface treatment				x	
O48 Amount of volatile organic compounds (VOC) applied	O27		x		The requirement limit has not been changed, but the calculation now takes the application method into account.
Emissions					
O49 Formaldehyde and VOC emissions	O32 and O33		x		The requirement limit has been tightened. New requirement limit for carcinogenic VOC in category 1A and 1B

O50 Emissions of COD from wet processes	O29	x			
O51 Emissions to air from production of HPL and compact laminate	O30	x			
O52 Emissions of dust	O31	x			
Climate and energy					
O53 Pulp and paper	O12		x		The requirement has been updated in accordance with Nordic Ecolabelling's Basic Module for pulp and paper, generation 3. The nominal limit has been removed, and only relates to kraft paper.
O54 Laminate (energy)	O13		x		Requirement limits have been tightened.
O55 Wood-based panels	O14		x		The requirement limits have been tightened
O56 Panels from lignocellulose raw materials				x	New req.
O57 CLT and glulam					New req.
O58 Solid wood panels and mouldings				x	New req.
O59 Wood Plastic Composite				x	New req.
O60 Gypsum plasterboards			x		The requirement limit has been tightened
O61 Mineral wool			x		The requirement has been changed and limits has been tightened
O62 Mineral wood-based panels			x		The requirement has been changed and limits has been tightened
O63 Cement				x	
O64 Cement-based panels			x		The requirement has been changed and limits has been tightened
O65 Panels made from other materials				x	New req.
Circularity					
O66 Information to costumer	O35	x			The previous requirement has been divided into two (O3 and O4).
O67 Maintenance	O35	x			The previous requirement has been divided into two and some new points have been introduced, including information about the manufacturer's take-back arrangement.
O68 Take-back system				x	
Innovation					
O69 Innovation requirement				x	

O70-O71 Other requirements		x			The requirements have been updated in accordance with Nordic Ecolabelling's current standard formulation.
Removed requirements in gen. 7					
Dust emissions from refining mineral raw materials	O3				
Radioactive substances in panels	O4				

Appendix 1 Laboratories and methods for testing and analysis

General requirements for test and analysis laboratories

Tests must be carried out in a correct and competent way. The analysis laboratory/test institute must be impartial and professional.

If accreditation is not separately required, the test and/or analysis laboratory must comply with the general requirements of the EN ISO 17025 standard for the quality control of test and calibration laboratories or have official GLP status.

The applicant's laboratory can be approved if it is accredited and complies with the requirements of the standard EN ISO 17025.

When testing quality and performance properties, the applicant's own laboratory can be approved even if it is not accredited. The following applies:

- The laboratory has a certified quality system (ISO 9001) which includes testing, and
- The laboratory can show that the test results obtained are similar to the results from an accredited test laboratory through initial tests performed as parallel tests. Parallel tests must as a minimum be performed when test standards are updates, and
- The laboratory performs the tests in accordance with an established plan for the current test standard and documents the selection of products in a product series for worst case tests, and
- An independent inspection body shall, on the basis of test reports, confirm that the manufacturer's test results are consistent with the results of an accredited laboratory. This can, for example, be evaluated as part of an inspection of the laboratory's quality system carried out by the inspection body for certification of the quality system.

Emissions of formaldehyde and VOC from panels O49

The test shall be carried out in accordance with the test method* EN 16516 or ISO 16000-3 or other equivalent standardised test conditions and determination methods.

* The methods and limit values are based on the EU commission published regulation amending Annex XVII of the REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006. This requirement will be updated following the development of this regulation.

Test method for COD emissions (wet process) O50

COD content shall be tested in accordance with ISO 6060 (Water quality — Determination of the chemical oxygen demand) or equivalent. If another analysis method is used, the licensee must show that it is equivalent. An analysis of PCOD or BOD may also be used as verification if a correlation with COD can be demonstrated. The method for measuring TOC is ISO 8245 Guidelines for the determination of total organic carbon (TOC) and dissolved organic carbon (DOC).

Sample frequency: Emissions to water are calculated as the annual average value and are based on at least one representative daily sample per week.

Alternatively, a sampling frequency set by the authorities may also be approved.

Sampling: Water samples must be taken after the process wastewater has been treated in any internal water treatment plant. The flow at the time of sampling must be indicated. If the process wastewater is externally purified with other wastewater, the analysis result should be reduced by the documented efficiency of the COD in the external water treatment plant. The analyses must be carried out on unfiltered and unsedimented samples in accordance with standard ISO 6060.

Working environment – emissions to air O51 and O52

Air measurements must be carried out in accordance with standardised test methods in this area, such as EN 689 Workplace exposure – Measurement of exposure by inhalation to chemical agents – Strategy for testing compliance with occupational exposure limit values; EN 482 Workplace exposure – Procedures for the determination of the concentration of chemical agents – Basic performance requirements; or equivalent method approved by Nordic Ecolabelling.

EN 14042 Workplace atmospheres – Guide for the application and use of procedures for the assessment of exposure to chemical and biological agents.

Appendix 2 Energy requirements for pulp and paper production

Energy calculation guidelines

Use of energy in the form of fuel and electricity is subject to requirements. Through information on the actual energy consumption during production in relation to set reference values, an energy point is calculated.

The energy calculation covers the entire paper product; both the paper production and the pulps used. Fillers in paper and transport of raw materials as well as within the factory area shall not be included in the energy calculation.

Non-integrated pulp mill

Electricity

The calculations must include both purchased and on-site produced electricity.

Electricity = on-site produced electricity + purchased electricity - sold electricity.

The calculation of electricity consumption must be based on invoices and readings from electricity meters. On-site produced electricity is documented using readings from electricity meters. The requirement covers all processes from debarking to drying the pulp. An exemption applies to electricity for offices or lighting in the factory area. The average electricity consumption can be used for all pulps if the pulp mill only produces pulps of equivalent quality using the same type of process.

Fuel

The calculation must include both purchased fuel and fuel produced at the plant, divided into renewable and fossil fuels. The pulp producer must report the fuel used for on-site generated electricity and should deduct the fuel for electricity before reporting it to the paper manufacturer. The paper manufacturer deducts the fuel consumption from internally produced electricity using a factor of 1.25 in its own energy calculation.

Fuel pulp = fuel produced at the plant + purchased fuel - sold fuel * (sold fuel and/or heat/0,8)

The amount of fuel purchased must be adjusted to the quantities at the start and end of the current year. Consumption of internally produced fuel from bark, shavings and other wood residues is calculated using the thermal values for the fuels used or measured.

**Excess energy*

Excess energy sold in the form of electricity, steam or heat is subtracted from the total consumption. The amount of fuel used to produce electricity or heat is calculated by dividing the sold electricity or heat by 0.8. This is equivalent to an average efficiency for the total production of electricity and heat.

Alternatively, the actual efficiency of the plant in the conversion of fuel to heat energy can be used.

Verification

An overview of the factory's energy supply system showing the number of boilers, with information about the boiler effect and which fuel is used.

Report on the amount of purchased, on-site produced and sold electricity.

Report on the amount of purchased, on-site produced and sold fuel/heat

Conversion factors and efficiency must be stated if thermal energy has been re-calculated to fuel.

The calculation sheet produced by Nordic Ecolabelling can be used.

Non-integrated paper mill

Electricity

The calculations must include both purchased and on-site produced electricity.

Electricity = on-site produced electricity + purchased electricity - sold electricity.

The calculation of electricity consumption must be based on invoices and readings from electricity meters. On-site produced electricity is documented using readings from electricity meters. The requirement covers all processes from pulping to drying the base paper. An exemption applies to electricity for offices or lighting in the factory area. The average electricity consumption can be used for all paper if the paper mill only produces paper of equivalent quality using the same type of process.

Fuel

All purchased fuel must be included in the calculations, divided into fossil and renewable fuels.

Fuel paper = purchased fuel - sold heat converted to excess energy*

The amount of purchased fuel must be adjusted to the quantities at the start and end of the current year.

**Excess energy*

Excess energy sold in the form of electricity, steam or heat is subtracted from the total consumption. The amount of fuel used to generate electricity or heat that is sold off is calculated by dividing the sold electricity or heat by 0.8. The coefficient of 0.8 is equivalent to the average energy efficiency for total heat and electricity production. Alternatively, the actual energy efficiency of the plant in the conversion of fuel to heat energy can be used.

Verification

An overview of the paper machinery's energy supply system showing the number of boilers, with information about the boiler effect and which fuel is used.

Report on the amount of purchased, on-site produced and sold electricity.

Report on the amount of purchased, on-site produced and sold fuel/heat

Conversion factors and efficiency must be stated if thermal energy has been re-calculated to fuel.

The calculation sheet produced by Nordic Ecolabelling can be used.

Steam

If excess steam from another production process is used (e.g. from another industry), the energy content of the steam must be included in the calculation. In this case, Table 1, the steam table should be used. If steam from electric boilers is used, the energy content must be converted to fuel in the same way, but the energy content must be multiplied by 1.25.

Energy calculation, paper production*Energy score for paper production*

Energy scores for $P_{\text{paper(electricity)}}$ and $P_{\text{paper(fuel)}}$ for paper production are calculated using the following formulas:

$$P_{\text{paper_electricity}} = \frac{\text{Electricity}_{\text{consumed}}}{\text{Electricity}_{\text{reference}}}$$

$$P_{\text{paper_fuel}} = \frac{\text{Fuel}_{\text{consumed}} - 1.25 \cdot \text{in-house generated electricity}}{\text{Fuel}_{\text{reference}}}$$

The following reference values for kraft paper must be used:

$\text{Electricity}_{\text{reference}} = 1600 \text{ kWh/ADt}$

$\text{Fuel}_{\text{reference}} = 2100 \text{ kWh/ADt}$

Verification

Calculation of energy score. The calculation sheet produced by Nordic Ecolabelling can be used.

Energy score when a mixture of different pulp types are used

The following formulas are used to calculate the energy score when a mixture of different pulp types are used:

$$P_{\text{pulp_electricity}} = \sum_{i=1}^n P_{\text{pulp_electricity}_i} \cdot \text{pulp}_i$$

$$P_{pulp_fuel} = \sum_{i=1}^n P_{pulp_fuel_i} \cdot pulp_i$$

$Pulp_i$ is the percentage of the individual pulp relative to the total pulp mixture. Due to wastage and differences in water content, the sum total of the pulp may be greater than 1. $P_{pulp(electricity)_i}$ is the energy score for electricity for pulp i . $P_{pulp(fuel)_i}$ is the energy score for fuel for pulp i .

Verification

Calculation of energy score. The calculation sheet produced by Nordic Ecolabelling can be used.

Total energy score for paper and pulp production

The total energy score for both electricity and fuel consumption for the paper production, including pulp production, is calculated using the formulas below:

$$P_{electricity} = P_{electricity_pulp} + P_{electricity_paper}$$

$$P_{fuel} = P_{fuel_pulp} + P_{fuel_paper}$$

The amount of fuel used to produce electricity in the pulp mill must be deducted by the paper manufacturer from the values received from the pulp producer using a factor of 1.25.

Worst case calculations must be included to show that each pulp recipe meets the requirements if no specific calculations are reported for each pulp mixture.

Verification

The documentation must include calculations with sub-totals. The base values used for consumed fuel and electricity must be stated. Worst case calculations must be included to show that each pulp recipe meets the requirements if no specific pulp-mixture calculations are reported for each pulp mixture present. The calculation sheet produced by Nordic Ecolabelling can be used.

Energy score for pulp production

Energy scores for $P_{pulp(electricity)}$ and $P_{pulp(fuel)}$ for paper production are calculated using the following formulas:

$$P_{pulp_electricity_i} = \frac{Electricity_{consumed}}{Electricity_{reference}}$$

$$P_{pulp_fuel_i} = \frac{Fuel_{consumed} - 1.25 \cdot in-house\ generated\ electricity}{Fuel_{reference}}$$

The table below shows the reference values for electricity and fuel:

Table 1 Reference values pulp

Process	Fuel kWh/t, Ref. value	Electricity kWh/t, Ref. value
Bleached chemical pulp	3600	650
Dried, bleached chemical pulp	4600	700
Unbleached chemical pulp	3200	550
Dried, bleached chemical pulp	4200	600
NSSC	3200	700
Dried NCCS	4100	750
CTMP	N/A	1500
Dried CTMP	900	1500
DIP	300	450
Dried DIP	1200	500
TMP	N/A	2200
Dried TMP	900	2250
Slip	N/A	2000
Dried slip	900	2050

Verification

Calculation of energy score. The calculation sheet produced by Nordic Ecolabelling can be used.

Table 2 Steam table

Enthalpy in gauged steam, h'' , as a function of absolute pressure, p or temperature, t . Enthalpy is divided by an efficiency of 0.9 and added to the heat consumption.

p Bar	t 0C	h'' KJ/kg	p bar	t 0C	h'' KJ/kg
0.50	81.3	2646.0	16.0	201.4	2791.7
0.60	86.0	2653.6	17.0	204.3	2793.4
0.80	93.5	2665.8	18.0	207.1	2794.8
1.00	99.6	2675.4	19.0	209.8	2796.1
1.20	104.8	2683.4	20.0	212.4	2797.2
1.40	109.3	2690.3	22.0	217.2	2799.1
1.60	113.3	2696.2	24.0	221.8	2800.4
1.80	116.9	2701.5	26.0	226.0	2801.4
2.00	120.2	2706.3	28.0	230.1	2802.0
2.50	127.4	2716.4	30.0	233.0	2802.3
3.00	133.5	2724.7	32.0	237.5	2802.3
3.50	138.9	2731.6	34.0	240.9	2802.1
4.00	143.6	2737.6	36.0	244.1	2801.7
4.50	147.9	2742.9	38.0	247.3	2801.1
5.00	151.8	2747.5	40.0	250.3	2800.3
6.00	158.8	2755.5	45.0	257.4	2797.7
7.00	165.0	2762.0	50.0	263.9	2794.2
8.00	170.4	2767.5	55.0	269.9	2789.9
9.00	175.4	2772.1	60.0	275.6	2785.0
10.00	179.9	2776.2	65.0	280.8	2779.5
11.00	184.0	2779.7	70.0	285.8	2773.5
12.00	188.0	2782.7	80.0	295.0	2759.9
13.00	191.6	2785.4	90.0	303.3	2744.6
14.00	195.0	2787.8	100.0	311.0	2727.7
15.00	198.3	2789.9	110.0	318.1	2709.3

Source: *Thermal Engineering Data, which refers to Schmidt, E.: Properties of water and Steam in SI.Units, 1969. Springer-Verlag and R. Oldenbourg 1969.*

Appendix 3 Energy calculations

Energy calculation for production of panels made from renewable raw materials; wood- and lignocellulose based panels, CLT, glulam and laminate.

The following applies to the energy calculation in the production of wood- and lignocellulose panels and mouldings, CLT, glulam and laminate:

1. Energy consumption is calculated as an annual average for either just the ecolabelled production or for the whole enterprise that is relevant for Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels, CLT, glulam and laminate.
2. Energy consumption calculated as MJ/kg per panel/product must include the primary panel production and production of the main raw materials contained in the panel/product. The main raw materials are raw materials that make up more than 5% by weight of the finished panel/product (e.g., wood fibre and adhesive).
3. Processes included in the calculation:
Chipping, refining, drying, blending (production of any adhesive; see 4), forming, pressing, any lamination of the panel, cooling, trimming, sanding, and packaging. If any drying process of the wood raw materials takes place at subcontractors (sawmills) this should be part of the calculations.
4. In the case of the production of chemical products, for example adhesive, the energy accounts must be based on data for production. The energy content of the raw material must not be included in the calculation. In exceptional cases a standard value of 15 MJ/kg (solution for use) for adhesive may be used, broken down as 12 MJ/kg for fuel and 3 MJ/kg for electricity purchased from an outside supplier (4:1).

Example of a calculation using the standard value for adhesives:

A panel contains 12% adhesive (solution for use). This represents 0.12 kg of adhesive solution for use per kilogram of panel. Applying the standard value in the calculation of energy points for adhesive results in 0.12 kg adhesive / kg panel x 15 MJ/ kg adhesive = 1.8 MJ/ kg panel.

5. Energy consumption in the production of laminate (compact laminate and HPL) includes the production of resin/glue, the process of handling paper (dipping in resin/drying process), stacking of paper/laminate, pressing, heating, cooling, trimming, sanding and packaging. Production of paper has its own requirement.
6. The calculation includes the actual energy consumed (electricity and heat) in production without the use of primary energy factors. Self-produced energy and excess energy that is sold off should be stated but does not count as consumed energy in the calculation.

System boundary for the requirement: Energy consumption for obtaining raw material, transport of raw materials to sawmill/panel and any surface treatment (paint) is not included in the calculation.

Energy calculation for production of panels made from mineral- and non renewable raw materials; WPC-panels, gypsum plasterboards, mineral wool-based acoustic panels, cement-based panels, panels made from other materials and production of mineral wool and cement.

The following applies to the energy calculation in the production of WPC-panels, gypsum plasterboards, mineral wool-based acoustic panels, cement base panels, panels made from other materials and production of the raw materials: mineral wool, cement, paper and laminate.

1. Energy consumption is calculated as an annual average for either just the ecolabelled production or for the whole production site that is relevant for Nordic Swan Ecolabelled panels.
2. The energy consumption is calculated as MJ/kg product produces, and encompasses all energy used from **gate to gate** (phase A3 in EPDs) at the panel production site. Energy consumption also needs to be calculated for production of the following raw materials: cement, mineral wool, paper, and laminate (if they comprise more than 5 wt% of the plate).
3. Processes included in the calculation:
Raw material preparation (crushing/grinding/chipping), refining, blending, forming, heating, pressing, gluing/laminating different types of material layers together, facing the panels (paint), cooling, trimming, and packaging.
4. The calculation includes the actual energy consumed (electricity and heat) in production without the use of primary energy factors. Self-produced energy and excess energy that is sold off should be stated but does not count as consumed energy in the calculation.
5. **System boundary for the requirement:** Energy consumption for extraction of raw materials and transports of raw materials is not part of the energy requirement. The energy requirement for production of raw materials do not apply to raw materials that are included by less than **5 wt%** of the panel.

Appendix 4 RPS analysis

The RPS analyses is based on existing RPS analysis from generation 6 of criteria for Nordic Ecolabelling of Construction and facade panels, and mouldings.

RPS analysis for wood-based panels

Overall priority	Area and level indication (high – medium – low) for R, P and S	Comments
High	Resources – wood raw material High R, high P, high S	High RPS for requirement for sustainable virgin- or recycled wood raw material.
	Energy – material and panel production High R, medium to high P, medium to high S	High RPS has been identified for the energy impact of panel production and drying of wood raw material. The actual adhesive production also contributes a significant part of the energy impact. Here it is the production of the raw materials that requires energy, not the mixing of the adhesive. Steerability is therefore only medium, as there are several links further back in the product chain and the potential has been unclear.
	Chemicals – general High R, medium P, high S	The chemical requirements apply to all chemical products used in panel production. Here the assessment is that formaldehyde, VOC and isothiazolinones in the binders have the highest relevance. Also ensuring low content of problematic chemicals in surface treatments, e.g. VOC, flame inhibitors, heavy metals in pigments. Also a high RPS for requirements limiting the use of nanoparticles, for instance in surface treatments.
	Chemicals – formaldehyde High R, high P, high S	Here there is high RPS for requirements concerning formaldehyde, both in the form of reduced formaldehyde emissions in the use phase and reduced free formaldehyde in the chemical products used, e.g. adhesives.
	Quality and properties High R, high P, medium S	Here there is RPS for ensuring conformity between the properties and functions for which the panels are marketed and the performance declarations drawn up as part of the CE marking. There is also RPS for ensuring that panels not covered by harmonised product standards also have documentation for the properties and functions for which the panel is marketed.
Medium	Resources – bio-based adhesives High R, low P, low S	There is a low to medium RPS for requirements for bio-based adhesives. Work is ongoing to develop bio-based adhesives. These are not particularly widespread yet, and the potential and steerability are therefore judged to be low at the present time. This will be a possible future requirement.
Low	Resources – waste phase High R, medium to low P, low S	Wood-based panels have a generally high calorific value (17–20 MJ/kg) and are suitable for incineration with energy recovery. For some types of wood-based panels, material recovery will be relevant.

RPS analysis for HPL panels

Overall priority	Area and level indication (high – medium – low) for R, P and S	Comments
High	Resources – wood raw material High R, high P, high S	High RPS for requirement for sustainable virgin- or recycled wood raw material in the paper.
	Energy – material production (wood raw material) High R, medium to high P, medium S	In Nordic Ecolabelling's experience, there is RPS for energy for paper, and therefore specific energy requirements can be set for the paper used.
	Energy – panel production High R, medium to high P, high S	Here, high relevance has been identified for energy impact from panel production. HPL panel production is a very energy-intensive production type. At the same time, high potential has been identified for reducing energy consumption in production.
	Chemicals – pigments, VOC, biocides and other High R, medium P, high S	The chemical requirements are applied to all chemical products used in panel production. Here it is assessed that formaldehyde, VOC and isothiazolinones in the binders have high relevance, as does ensuring low content of problematic chemicals in the surface treatment, e.g. VOC, flame inhibitors, heavy metals in pigments. Also a high RPS for requirements limiting the use of nanoparticles, for instance in the surface treatments.
	Quality and properties High R, high P, medium S	Here there is RPS for ensuring conformity between the properties and functions for which the panels are marketed and the performance declarations drawn up as part of the CE marking. There is also RPS for ensuring that panels not covered by harmonised product standards also have documentation for the properties and functions for which the panel is marketed.
Medium	Energy – material production (resin) High R, low to medium P, medium to low S	High relevance has been identified in relation to energy impact from material production, including raw material extraction. All the constituent materials are highly processed, with correspondingly high energy consumption. The potential for energy reduction in the production of phenolic and melamine resin is unclear. The different HPL production systems use much the same material types without wide variations in material proportions.
	Chemicals – resins High R, low to medium P, medium to low S	No potential or steerability has been identified for substituting the phenolic and melamine resins used, as these are essential for the panel type. However, requirements can be set to ensure low emission values during production.
Low	Resources – waste phase High R, medium to low P, low S	HPL panels have a generally high calorific value (17–20 MJ/kg) and are suitable for incineration with energy recovery. Material recovery is not considered very relevant for HPL, as the materials are strongly combined in the lamination process, making such recovery difficult. The lamination process is essential for the panel type, so no great potential for further resource requirements is envisaged, other than requirements for energy and sustainable or recycled wood raw material.

RPS Analysis for plasterboards

Overall priority	Area and level indication (high - medium - low) for R, P and S	Comments
High	Emissions - dust emissions High R, medium P, medium to high S	There is high RPS for requirements for dust emissions from the production of mineral raw materials.
	Energy - panel production	

	<p>Medium to high R, medium to high P, high S</p> <p>Chemicals - VOC, biocides and other High R, medium P, high S</p> <p>Quality and properties High R, high P, medium S</p> <p>Resources - gypsum extraction High R, high to medium P, medium S</p>	<p>Here, medium to high RPS has been identified in relation to energy impact from panel production. There is a potential for recycling heat from production processes.</p> <p>The chemicals requirements are applied to all chemical products used in panel production. Here there is judged to be high relevance for substances such as the additives and coatings used in the plasterboard. E.g. formaldehyde, VOC and isothiazolinones in binders.</p> <p>Here there is RPS for securing conformity between the properties and the functions for which the panels are marketed and the performance declarations drawn up in relation to the CE marking. There is also RPS for ensuring that panels not covered by harmonised product standards also have documentation for the properties and functions for which the panel is marketed.</p> <p>The R and P for responsible sourcing of virgin mineral raw materials from quarries are high. The mineral industry has been working with both traceability- and biodiversity management and rehabilitation plans for several years. Certification schemes for sustainable mining are however still under development and S has therefor been assessed as medium.</p>
Medium	<p>Resources - water Medium R, medium P, medium to high S</p> <p>Resources - gypsum raw materials - feedstock High R, medium P, low to medium S</p> <p>Resources - wood raw materials Low to medium R, high P, high S</p> <p>Resources - gypsum raw materials - waste phase High R, medium to low P, low S</p>	<p>There is medium RPS for setting requirements for a recycling system for water in panel production. Water is used in plasterboard production both as a binder and as a mixer.</p> <p>Here there is medium RPS for setting requirements for a minimum proportion of recycled gypsum from demolition and refurbishment of buildings in panel production. This will ensure that the production system can handle recycled gypsum and ensure that recycled gypsum is not used for other purposes with less environmental benefit, e.g., composting. The quantity of recycled gypsum from coal-fired power plants (FDG gypsum) is strongly reduced in the market due to the power plants use of alternative raw materials than coal.</p> <p>For paper where more than 5% by weight is used. High RPS for requirement for sustainable or recycled wood raw materials in the paper.</p> <p>Here there is judged to be medium RPS for encouraging reuse of the plasterboard material after final use and for providing information to customer that plasterboard waste can be reused, as can any dismantled old plasterboard.</p>

RPS analysis of mineral wool panels

Overall priority	Area and level indication (high - medium - low) for R, P and S	Comments
High	<p>Resources - mineral raw materials High R, high P, high S</p> <p>Resources - wood raw materials High R, high P, high S</p> <p>Energy - materials production (wood raw materials) High R, medium to high P, medium S</p> <p>Energy - panel production High R, medium to high P, high S</p>	<p>High RPS for requirement for recycled mineral raw materials in the panel.</p> <p>High RPS for requirement for sustainable virgin- or recycled wood raw materials in the paper.</p> <p>In Nordic Ecolabelling's experience, there is RPS for energy for paper, and therefore specific energy requirements can be set for the paper used. RPS for requirements where more than 15% by weight is used.</p> <p>High RPS has been identified for the energy impact of panel production and the actual mineral wool production.</p>

	<p>Emissions - dust emissions High R, medium P, medium to high S</p> <p>Chemicals - pigments, VOC, biocides and other High R, medium P, high S</p> <p>Resources - mineral raw materials High R, medium P, medium S</p> <p>Quality and properties High R, high P, medium S</p>	<p>There is high RPS for requirements for dust emissions from the production of mineral raw materials.</p> <p>The chemicals requirements are applied to all chemical products used in panel production. Here it is assessed that formaldehyde, VOC and isothiazolinones in the binders have the highest relevance. Also securing a low content of problematic chemicals in the surface treatment, e.g. VOC, flame inhibitors, heavy metals in pigments.</p> <p>There is medium to high RPS for requirements for radioactive substances and heavy metals in virgin mineral raw materials for acoustic panels. Controllability is slightly lower for recycled mineral raw materials and waste raw materials such as slag and fly ash, but the relevance is still high and there is an overall medium to high RPS.</p> <p>Here there is RPS for securing conformity between the properties and the functions for which the panels are marketed and the performance declarations drawn up in relation to the CE marking. There is also RPS for ensuring that panels not covered by harmonised product standards also have documentation for the properties and functions for which the panel is marketed.</p>
Medium	<p>Resources - binders Medium R, medium P, medium to low S</p> <p>Energy - materials production (resin) Medium R, low to medium P, medium to low S</p>	<p>There is medium RPS for replacing fossil fuel binders with bio based binders in the panel. Potential and controllability are currently unclear. There must be a focus on this for a requirement in the future.</p> <p>There is a total low to medium RPS for energy requirements for binders. Here no requirements are set in this version of the criteria.</p>
Low	<p>Resources - waste phase High R, medium to low P, low S</p>	<p>Materials reuse is found to be of high relevance and takes place with some panels. The controllability of encouraging this further with a requirement is low. Instead, the controllability lies in ensuring that no problematic substances are included by means of the chemical requirements.</p>

RPS analysis of cement-based panels

Overall priority	Area and level indication (high - medium - low) for R, P and S	Comments
High	<p>Resources - mineral raw materials High R, high P, high S</p> <p>Resources - renewable raw materials High R, high P, high S</p> <p>Resources - wood raw materials High R, high P, high S</p> <p>Energy - materials composition High R, medium to high P, medium S</p> <p>Energy - panel production High R, medium to high P, high S</p>	<p>High RPS for requirements for a high proportion of recycled mineral raw materials in the panel.</p> <p>High RPS for requirements for a certain proportion of renewable or recycled raw materials in the panel.</p> <p>Here a high RPS has been identified for ensuring that the wood fibres are either certified, sustainable or recycled.</p> <p>High RPS has been identified for energy requirements affecting both material production and panel production. The highest RPS for material production is found to exist in relation to the actual material composition, as here a high potential can be identified for reducing the use of the most energy and CO2 intensive materials.</p> <p>Here, high RPS has been identified for energy impact from panel production.</p>

	<p>Chemicals - dust emissions High R, medium P, medium to high S</p> <p>Chemicals - pigments, VOC, biocides and other High R, medium P, high S</p> <p>Resources - mineral raw materials High R, medium P, medium S</p> <p>Quality and properties High R, high P, medium S</p>	<p>There is high RPS for requirements for dust emissions from the production of mineral raw materials.</p> <p>The chemicals requirements are applied to all chemical products used in panel production. Here it is assessed that formaldehyde, VOC and isothiazolinones in the binders have the highest relevance. Also securing a low content of problematic chemicals in the surface treatment, e.g., VOC, flame inhibitors, heavy metals in pigments. Also, a high RPS for requirements limiting the use of nano particles, for instance in the surface treatments.</p> <p>There is medium to high RPS for requirements for radioactive substances and heavy metals in virgin mineral raw materials for acoustic panels. Controllability is slightly lower for recycled mineral raw materials and waste raw materials such as slag and fly ash, but the relevance is still high and there is an overall medium to high RPS.</p> <p>Here there is RPS for securing conformity between the properties and the functions for which the panels are marketed, and the performance declarations drawn up in relation to the CE marking. There is also RPS for ensuring that panels not covered by harmonised product standards also have documentation for the properties and functions for which the panel is marketed.</p>
Medium		
Low	<p>Energy - materials production High R, high P, low S</p> <p>Resources - waste phase High R, medium to low P, low S</p>	<p>Low to medium RPS has been identified for a requirement for production-specific energy consumption for all constituent materials.</p> <p>Materials reuse is found to be most relevant and takes place with some panels. However, this is mainly as down cycling to road fill. The controllability of encouraging this further with a requirement is low. Instead, the controllability lies in ensuring that no problematic substances are included by means of the chemical requirements.</p>