



ecospecifier global
GREEN TAG[®]
green product certification
trust brands

Global GreenTag™ FAQs

1. What is GreenTag™?

GreenTag™ is a third party, ecolabel certification system (underpinned by rigorous scientific and LCA processes) that makes it simple for the market to see how ecological, safe and socially responsible a product is compared to a 'worst case, business-as-usual (BAU)' product with the same functional purpose. It comprises of 2 separate processes to Certify different aspects of the product.

- I. **LCARate Certification** uses life cycle assessment, building information modelling (BIM) and simulation processes to rate a product against the BAU comparison product. It Certifies products into different tiers LCARate Platinum, Gold Silver or Bronze.
- II. **GreenRate Certification** is the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), and NZGBC third party accredited process to determine the relevant credit point level rating for the Green Star™* Materials Calculator credits. It Certifies products into different Levels accredited by GBCA, Levels A, B and C.

GreenTag™ is the subject of an application to IP Australia and the ACCC for an Australian Certification Mark, Australia's highest recognition of Environmental Claims Certification.

2. What is LCA?

Life Cycle Assessment is the process that determines the environmental and health impacts of a product from the sourcing and refining of its raw materials, transport, manufacturing, disposal and where relevant reuse, over the whole life of the product including operations, maintenance and where relevant recycling.

LCA is the most modern and advanced tool to describe the environmental impacts of a given choice for a product from cradle to grave. LCA studies are widely used to provide the best possible information in the evaluation of products. Consequently, LCA studies must be in line with strict international standards in order to avoid manipulation by commercial or political interests. A set of ISO standards, ISO 14040 and ISO 14044, has therefore been established, securing a high level of scientific reliability and peer review by independent researchers.

Any claims about products based on LCA data should therefore make sure that the work in question is performed in accordance with these ISO standards. GreenTag™ is compliant with these and other Standards such as ISO 14065 for Greenhouse emissions, ISO 14024 Type 1 Ecolabels, and ISO 14025 Environmental Product Declarations.

* Green Star™ is a registered Mark of the Green Building Council of Australia

3. How will GreenTag™ help us in the market place?

GreenTag™ LCARate certification will make it instantly easy for potential purchasers and specifiers to see how any eco-product compares to business as usual solutions in relation to key indicators such as Greenhouse emissions, health and ecotoxicity, building synergy, biodiversity, and corporate social responsibility.

GreenTag™ GreenRate: GBCA Third Party Certification makes it instantly easy for potential purchasers and specifiers to see the level of credit points a product that will be *guaranteed* when submitted with a Green Star™ ‘Design’ or ‘As Built’ Application.

For products with ‘net positive’ carbon sink characteristics or other ‘net positive’ features- GreenTag LCARate is the only product rating system in the world designed to recognise ‘net positive sustainability’ features.

4. Will GreenTag™ increase our sales?

Green building professionals and homeowners alike are now wary of green claims by manufacturers unless they are Certified by third parties. As Green Building sector is the fastest growing sector in the Australian and Global Built Environment Sector and green buildings need green products. So while the market is actively seeking assurance that eco-products’ eco- claims are accurate as well as which products are better than others together with knowledge about how they can help gain Green Star Credits, they also want to see independent certification of those claims. In helping buyers and specifiers instantly see how a product rates against typical solutions and how many Green Star™ credits an eco-product can deliver, the GreenTag System is the best solution in the marketplace to inform and leverage your product development and marketing budgets to really drive sales upward while creating additional brand value for your products..

GreenTag LCARate is also the only product rating system in the world that takes LCA out of the 2 dimensional world of ‘reporting’ into the world of Building Information Modelling or BIM based design simulation eco-profiling at the desktop in real time with real, brand specific products to determine whole of life building impacts (ask us for our separate leaflet on GreenTag, BIM and the future of building productivity or find it at <http://www.ecospecifier.com.au/our-services/greentag-certification.aspx>

Furthermore, once a product is Certified, we include it on the www.ecospecifier.com.au website, where it becomes accessible by Green Specifiers to find via powerful Green Star™ tool and credit specific Search functions. This enables the market to find the products that assist buildings comply with Green Star™ tools easily, making the rating of buildings easier and less costly while getting your product specified.

5. How does GreenTag relate to Green Star™?

The GreenRate process relates in Australia to the Green Star™ Materials Calculators. GBCA has a new third part certification project and ecospecifier is formally recognised under this process. GreenTag™’s GreenRate system Certifies a product as Level A, B or C under the Materials Calculator Credits. Each level is intended to relate to a specific

number of credit points in individual Materials Calculators as determined by the GBCA. Materials calculators exist for Flooring, Furniture and Internal Assemblies. GreenRate advice in the form of a Technical Opinion (as per ecospecifier's current product assessment process) is also given relating to the products relevance to any other Green Star™ Credits or other relevant schemes such as BASIX, NABERS and BCA.

6. Does GreenTag™ recognize other certification schemes?

Where the data quality and scope of other schemes's Standards are equal to the GreenTag™ Standard i.e. as required by ISO 14040, ISO Guide 65 and the GBCA Product Certification scheme, existing third party certified data can be recognised within the GreenTag™ system subject to approval by the GreenTag Program Director.

7. Will I need to renew GreenTag™ Product Certification each year?

All GreenTag Listings remain current for 3 years before full re-certification is required. Annual fees do apply for maintaining Certification based on Director declarations and audits of any changes and for re-listing on the website.

8. Does my listing on ecospecifier automatically qualify me as GreenTag™ compliant?

A current single product verified product listing on ecospecifier websites does not qualify for GreenTag™ Certification. However verified products do attract a discount given they have been already assessed under the robust ES CAP health and ecotoxicity assessment process.

9. Will specifiers accept a product that has been certified by GreenTag™ in the same way they accept a GECA product?

Yes absolutely....according to GBCA's Product Certification process, from 1st July 2010 all currently certified GECA products will have to be Certified to the same new Product Certification system that GreenTag™ GreenRate is now accredited to. Most new specifications are now asking for GBCA recognised certification.

NOTE: Ecospecifier Global's GreenTag GreenRate system is a complete alternative for all GBCA nominated Green Star™ credits that require third party certification i.e.:

- ***Materials Calculators***
- ***Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) reduction***
- ***Formaldehyde Minimisation***
- ***Best Practice PVC***

10. Does my GreenTag™ Certification include a listing on the Ecospecifier.org website?

YES! For 12 months on initial certification and on each renewal on the Australian ecospecifier.org website and discounts for presence on other regional or global sites.

11. How does GreenTag™ benefit my product in Export Markets?

Just as Ecospecifier has a well established reputation in Australia for robust and reliable third party product assessment, so this reputation also exists internationally.

The new GreenTag™ Standard has been created to comply or exceed the highest international standards.

LEED® and BREEAM now both have life cycle assessment based credits or Pilot Credits that will recognise the ISO 14040 compliant LCA in GreenTag® or the ISO 14025 compliant Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) provided with each Certification.

This, when combined with ecospecifier Global's existing reputation in markets such as the Middle East, South East Asia, South Africa, India and China provides a high degree of credibility for GreenTag™ Certified products in export markets and direct credit points in over 100 different countries.

GreenTag™ GreenRate Certification is also automatically accepted by the NZ Green Building Council under the Green StarNZ™ Materials framework:
 see <http://www.nzgbc.org.nz/main/greenstar/elaboration/prodmateral/ecoLabel> .

12. What do I get with GreenTag™ Certification?

When a product is certified under GreenTag it receives:

- I. a customised GreenTag Product Logo that reflects the LCARate Tier ie Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and the GreenRate Level A, B or C and a unique Certificate number;
- II. A Product Scorecard modeled on the Food-labelling program to give summary Sustainability Assessment Criteria scores and overall weighted EcoPOINT score ;
- III. Certificate showing the LCARate and GreenRate Levels as well as the product Scorecard and any other Green Star Credits Certified.
- IV. One years listing on the ecospecifier.org website;
- V. 3 year currency with annual renewal by declaration
- VI. An EPD Summary LCA Report and Rating Tool credit relevance report for non-certifiable credits;
- VII. Green Specification Clauses;
- VIII. Newsletter and Website Homepage feature
- IX. Access to the GreenGo Advanced Market Connect program;
- X. Free advice on copy and marketing collateral content
- XI. LCA Report.

What does the LCA Process entail?

The LCA process is a very detailed analysis of all inputs, outputs and emissions of a product from raw materials through to the point of distribution in Australia and including expected service life, maintenance and where relevant disposal or recycling. Consequently the analysis depends on detailed information called Life Cycle Inventory (LCI). There are a number of stages in the process (for a more detailed explanation please ask for our Detailed LCA Process explanation):

- I. An LCI Gap analysis for relevant data within our existing multiple world wide LCI databases;
- II. Provision of an a Product Specific Questionnaire based on Gap analysis;

- III. Development of a complete LCI for the product;
- IV. Creation of the LCA Environmental Product Declaration Report- this report is provided to you and can be used for other purposes;
- V. Onsite audit of the data provided by the Manufacturer (where relevant for PLUS Level Certification);

13. What is GreenTag PLUS Certification?

GreenTag PLUS Certification recognises the LCA has been fully audited.

14. How are GreenTag PLUS Audits conducted?

Ecospecifier has engaged a renowned worldwide Auditing group with over 300 offices worldwide to undertake any required inspections and audits. This means auditors will come from the closest office to the manufacturing plant. Most likely, the auditor is only a local drive or short flight away and will speak the local language where relevant.

15. How are GreenTag™ Fees determined?

GreenTag Certification fees have 3 components:

- I. a Base GreenTag Certification fee (fixed);
- II. an LCI Development fee (where relevant); and
- III. an Audit fee (where relevant).
- IV. If agreed with the manufacturer optional services include:
 - a. EarthCheck 'Green Product Pipeline' access to up to 30,000 hotels globally;
 - b. selected other Global website/s fees may also be relevant

GreenTag™ Certification Base fees relate to individual products and then sub-product fees relate to variations of that product within a range.

LCI Development fees are provided as progressively detailed estimates.

Audit fees are also provided as progressively detailed estimates.

LCI Development fees and Audit fees may relate mainly to Detailed PLUS Level of Assessments requested for LCARate or, unless a *Complying LCA* is available from third party assessors and data has been previously audited by accredited auditors..

16. Do I need an LCA?

An LCA is not required for GreenRate although an ISO14040 compliant LCA may contribute to a product complying with GreenRate criteria and achieving a higher rating.

17. Do I need an Audited LCA?

It depends. Audited LCA is required for certain category specific products such as paints, PVC and others at the discretion of the GreenTag™ Program Director. Streamlined LCA can be undertaken for some products as part of the LCARate assessment for certain products where existing LCI is available within our Licensed National and International Databases.

18. What are the unique benefits of GreenTag™?

GreenTag is a multi-world first green building product rating scheme. Why?

It is the first product certification scheme to:

- I. combine 2 distinct rating systems into 1 unique scheme - LCA and Green Building Council 3rd party accreditation;
- II. use LCA concepts to 'go beyond LCA' to quantify 'positive benefit' not just 'damage reduction';
- III. take LCA product assessment into the BIM world;
- IV. to deliver brand specific product LCA into a live BIM based LCA rapid eco-profiling tool- LCADesign (LCADesign is the world's only BIM based LCA building simulation tool and ecospecifier has global, exclusive rights to the tool for this purpose);

Please request further information on BIM and LCADesign if you wish to know more about the whole of industry benefits derivable from this combination of GreenTag, BIM and LCADesign or see <http://www.ecospecifier.com.au/our-services/greentag-certification/lcadesign.aspx>

19. What are the Benefits of BIM and how does GreenTag relate to BIM?

BIM is sometime known as either *Building Information Modelling* or *Building Information Management*. It is the next generation CAD tool that is driving a new wave of productivity throughout the industry and is being implemented by major corporations, universities and government.

Major clients are using BIM because of the benefits it provides in using a single building model to automate processes such as quantities take off, cost surveying, structural design, MEP design and simulations such as buildability, clash analysis, thermal, daylight, artificial lighting, ventilation and smoke design. It also underpins a new generation of virtual facilities management tools and now integrates with life cycle assessment of the whole of life impacts of buildings and products.

BIM allows the same model to be used seamlessly between different software programs and consultants using a standard 'interoperability' file format called '.IFC'. This means it is a simple process for any architect or designer using programs such as ArchiCAD or Revit to save a model in .IFC format and open it in any other IFC compliant program.

One such program is the unique Australian life cycle assessment (LCA) modelling software LCADesign™ developed by the CRC for Construction Innovation (now relaunched as the Sustainable Built Environment National Research Centre). This rapid building eco-profiling software is a world first and cuts the time to undertake whole of life LCA of buildings using generic materials and products literally from years to a matter of hours.

LCADetail™ is a subset program that is used by GreenTag™ to undertake its life cycle analysis of products. So for the first time, when an LCA is conducted, the output is not just a report with graphs and massive data tables, but a live BIM file of the product LCA impacts that can be used in LCADesign to enable Brand and product specific LCA to be undertaken.

Ecospecifier has the global exclusive rights to use LCADetail™ for a green building product related rating system and to use LCADesign in Brand specific format. GreenTag™ certified product BIM files will be loaded into 'LCADesign Powered by GreenTag®' [Australia] early 2012, preparing the BIM world in Australia for the ability to use specific project design and product specifications for cost effective, rapid ecoprofiling of the whole of life impacts of buildings including embodied impacts of materials, operations (energy and water consumption are entered manually from those simulation programs), maintenance and cleaning for the first time ever.

In a carbon constrained future world, GreenTag™ and LCADesign™ will be an unbeatable team, helping quantify and minimize the carbon (and other) impacts of existing and future products, buildings, infrastructure and cities.

20. Who Assesses the GreenTag™ Scheme (ie 'who checks the checkers?')

The GreenTag Scheme has achieved and intends to achieve, various levels of approvals and audits of the quality and independence of its assessment including:

The scheme is currently Certified under:

- ***The Green Building Council of Australia*** - Third Party Certifier Scheme for Materials Calculator Credits;
- ***ISO 9001:2008*** for Quality Management Systems by DNV; and

The scheme is currently under assessment for Certification by:

- JAS/ANZ for:
 - ISO 17011 Guide 65 as Conformance Assessment Body;
 - ISO 17011 Guide 65 for Conformance Assessment Bodies;
 - ISO 14065 for Greenhouse emissions,
- IP Australia and Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for a Certification Mark and

The scheme is currently self assessed as compliant under the following self assessment Standards:

- ISO 14040 and ISO 14044 relating to LCA process established, to secure a high level of scientific reliability and peer review by independent researchers.
- ISO 14021 Type 2 Ecolabels;
- ISO 14024 Type 1 Ecolabels; and
- ISO 14025 Environmental Product Declarations.

Product Certification will be second party audited by independent auditors.