GreenTag™ International FAQs

1. What is GreenTag™?

GreenTag™ is a world first 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. For why GreenTag™ is a world first, see question 17. below. The 2 potential Certification Schemes that exist within the GreenTag™ Standard are:

I. ***LCARate Certification*** uses ISO 14040 compliant, life cycle assessment and building information modelling (BIM) and computer simulation processes to rate a product against a worst case BAU comparison product. It Certifies products into different tiers LCARate Platinum, Gold Silver or Bronze. LCARate is designed to be internationally relevant and is suitable to be called up by a National GBC in their

rating tool/s as an accredited third party certification system for issues such as IEQ (VOCs, Formaldehyde), Water, Energy, Materials (health and ecotoxicity, preferred sourcing, recycled content etc.) Emissions (pollution, ozone and greenhouse gas) and others;

II. ***GreenRate Certification*** is included in the Standard to allow development of a National Green Building Council (GBC) specific, third party process for

accreditation by a National GBC. A National GBC with a third party certifier accreditation process would enable GreenRate to be accredited to Certify relevant credit points within National Green Building Rating Tool credits. GreenRate can be developed to suit GBC Tools such as LEED®, BREEAM™, Green Mark, Estidama Pearl,

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

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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.

3. **How will GreenTag™ help 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. If LCARate is adopted directly into a GBC Rating Tool, then this is all that is needed and GreenRate need only be adopted in credit specific issues require.

GreenTag™ GreenRate: *GBC Third Party Certification* ***– once accredited by a National GBC,*** makes it instantly easy for potential purchasers and specifiers to see the credit points a product that will be *guaranteed* when submitted with a Green Building Tool 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 product sales?**

The Green Building sector is the fastest growing sector in the Global Built Environment Sector. Green Buildings need green products and the market is actively seeking assurance that eco-products' eco-product claims are accurate, which products are better than others and knowledge about how they can help gain GBC Rating Scheme Credits. In helping buyers and specifiers instantly see how a product rates against typical solutions and how many GBC Tool credits an eco-product can deliver, the GreenTag ™ Scheme will be the best solution in the marketplace to inform and leverage your product development and marketing budgets to really drive sales upward.

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 –see question 18. below.

5. **How does GreenTag relate to Green Building Rating Tools?**

LCARate is suitable to be called up directly in a GBC National Tool as evidence of a product's ecologically and health preferred status due to the highly detailed life cycle

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analysis undertaken and the ISO 14025 compliant Environmental Product Declarations created.

Furthermore, once a product is Certified, we include it on a relevant National or Global ecospecifier website, where it becomes freely accessible to find via powerful GBC Tool and credit specific search functions. This enables the market to find the products that assist buildings comply with the rating tools easily, making rating of buildings easier and less costly.

6. **Does GreenTag™ recognize other certification schemes?**

   Yes, where the data quality and scope of other schemes is equal to the GreenTag™ Standard existing third party certified data can be used within the GreenTag™ system. ecospecifier provides supportive services to a varied array of GBC's to help improve the productivity of their green building material assessment systems through its GreenRate and LCARate systems.

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?**

   Current single product Enhanced Listing on ecospecifier websites may qualify for a GreenTag™ Bronze listing subject to verification and a Certification fee given they have been subjected to the rigorous ES CAP health and ecotoxicity screening. Current listings that contain multiple products or company wide scope may not comply. To gain certification beyond Bronze, Life Cycle Analysis is required

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

   YES! For 12 months on the relevant National ecospecifier website, with discounts for listing on other regional or global sites.

10. **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. This, when combined with ecospecifier Global's existing reputation in markets such as the Middle East, South East Asia, South Africa, India and China should provide a high degree of credibility for GreenTag™ Certified products in export markets.

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

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11. 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 any agreed GreenRate Certification criteria or logo recognition relevant to the local GBC scheme as well as a unique Certificate number.

II. Certificate showing the LCARate and GreenRate Levels plus the scores in each of the Sustainability Assessment Categories and any other GBC Rating tool credits.

III. One years listing on the relevant country/region ecospecifier website;

IV. 3 year currency with annual renewal by declaration

V. An ISO 14025 compliant Environmental Product Declaration including Greenhouse Emissions.

12. 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 the manufacturer 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 (most Certifications undertaken are Plus level assessed).

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 LCA is required); and

III. an Audit fee (where relevant).

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IV. If agreed with the manufacturer optional services include:
   a. photorealistic BIM development fee and
   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 increasingly refined estimates.
Audit fees are also provided as increasingly refined estimates.
Both LCI Development fees and Audit fees relate only to Detailed PLUS Level of Assessments requested for LCARate or if required for GreenRate, unless a *Complying LCA* is available from third party assessors.

16. Does every product require an LCA?

An LCA is not required for GreenTag Bronze or GreenRate, but ISO14040 compliant LCA may contribute to a product complying with GreenRate criteria and achieving a higher rating.

17. Does my product require 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. use LCA concepts to 'go beyond LCA' to quantify 'positive benefit' not just 'damage reduction';
II. take LCA product assessment into the BIM world;
III. Use the 'Building Synergy' of a product in its interaction with other elements and systems in a building as a metric to assess products;
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.aspx

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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 for Ecospecifier [Australia]' early 2011, 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.

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20. What Third Parties verify the credibility of the GreenTag™ Scheme?

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;
- ***The New Zealand Green Building Council*** - Ecolabel Scheme for Materials 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 compliant under the following 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 14024 Type 1 Ecolabels, and
- ISO 14025 Environmental Product Declarations.

All product assessments will be second party audited by:

- DNV Certification Pty Ltd, one of the world's largest and preeminent Certification companies with over 300 offices worldwide.

DNV Certification Pty Ltd
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Ecospecifier is a member of:

- Australian Green Building Council
- South African Green Building Council
- Emirates Green Building Council
- US Green Building Council.

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