



# DEFINING THE TRUE MEANING OF GREEN

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REPRESENTING LIFE CYCLE-BASED  
TYPE 1 ECOLABELS WORLDWIDE

As concerns about climate change, toxicity and waste increase, those making responsible purchasing decisions need products with genuine environmental benefit.

## LIFE CYCLE-BASED ECOLABELS OFFER A VIABLE MARKET SOLUTION

### What Are Life Cycle-based Ecolabels?

These leadership ecolabels, classified as Type 1 by International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 14024:2018, are awarded to environmentally preferable products and services based on life cycle considerations.

### How Are Ecolabels Different?

A life cycle ecolabel indicates that a product or service has been certified against a science-based standard specific to its category. Criteria and product categories can differ, reflecting regional variables, but all life cycle-based standards address multiple environmental and health attributes and most have requirements for issues such as toxicity, air quality, energy use, recyclability, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carcinogens and other areas of concern. Standard criteria must:

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



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

- be voluntary, not regulatory
- be open and equitably applied to all potential applicants
- be awarded by an independent and unbiased third party

### Why Shop for GEN Member Ecolabels?

To be sure you're getting a product or service that:

- ✓ is certified by independent experts
- ✓ reduces the overall impact throughout product life
- ✓ is performance tested to work as expected
- ✓ encourages the manufacture of more green products
- ✓ encourages retailers to carry green products
- ✓ encourages providers to offer green services
- ✓ protects the health of you and your family
- ✓ protects our environment and our future



## What Is GEN?

The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) protects health and the environment by developing, promoting and supporting the world's leading ecolabels. It is a network of ecolabel organisations that define what green really means, linking a world of environmentally preferable products and services.

GEN was founded in 1994 to foster cooperation, information exchange and standards harmonisation among members, associates, affiliates and other ecolabelling programmes. Members are actively involved with the UN Environment Programme initiatives such as the Sustainability Development Goals.

## How Do Full GEN Members Operate?

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

GEN members who have signed a Memorandum of Understanding can negotiate joint specific activities that rest on mutual recognition of each other's programmes. GEN members also collaborate on Common Core Criteria which speeds standard development, improves quality and expands the market for similar products.

As the world increasingly sees sustainable trade through environmental eyes, especially relating to climate change, it is gratifying to see the huge efforts and progress being catalysed by GEN members. Their eagerness to help each other in our global forum is uplifting and appropriate in the spirit of our three pillars of trust, proof and understanding. As an organisation it is how we grow, serve and lead.

**Bjorn-Erik Lonn**

Chairman of the Board | Global Ecolabelling Network



# GENICES

## GENICES

This is the GEN Internationally Coordinated Ecolabelling System. It is a peer review process that benchmarks members as a basis for mutual trust and confidence. GENICES enables sharing of information among qualified members in the following ways:

- Helping new programmes start more quickly
- Facilitating ecolabelling of products that have been certified elsewhere
- Making international ecolabelling more cost-effective
- Facilitating exports of environmentally preferable products
- Addressing and allaying concerns about trade barriers

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## World Ecolabel Day



More than 50 countries around the world celebrate World Ecolabel Day in October. It's a day to focus on ecolabel products and services that are proven to be environmentally preferable and

performance tested, to ensure the best products for the health of people and the planet. Consumers, companies and communities worldwide celebrate this event by discovering the ecolabels available in their countries, buying and using third-party certified products and services.

To contact GEN member organisations, discover the product and service categories that carry their ecolabels, and learn more about the Global Ecolabelling Network visit [globalecolabelling.net](http://globalecolabelling.net).

[globalecolabelling.net](http://globalecolabelling.net)

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