

# GreenTag Top 30 Frequently Asked Questions



**GREENGO**

advanced connect program  
trust brands

# GreenTag Top 30 FAQs:

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# 1. What is Global GreenTag?

- a) Global GreenTag is an Australian and USA Regulator (ACCC or the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and US Patents and Trademarks Office respectively) approved Certification Mark and ISO 14024 Type 1 (Third Party) Ecolabel that provides the required evidence for products seeking engagement in green building rating tools and for manufacturers wanting to differentiate their products based on the health and sustainability benefits or characteristics and communicate this simply and effectively to end users and green professionals.
- b) GreenTag provides appropriate evidence for the 4 most common product Credits or Features requirements in green project rating tools worldwide:
  - i. Indoor Environment Quality- VOCs: Volatile Organic Compound emissions certification including formaldehyde;
  - ii. Sustainable Products (Third Party) Certification; GreenTag GreenRate and LCARate schemes;
  - iii. Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs): GreenTag produces ISO and EU compliant Life Cycle Analysis summary data reporting;
  - iv. Material Health Transparency, Ingredient Hazard and Optimization reporting: GreenTag Product Health Declarations (PhDs) provide banned ingredient assessment and optimisation of ingredient content.HealthRATE™ TAGs rate the 'healthiness in use' for end user communications.
- c) GreenTag is also an approved verifier for:
  - i. Best Environmental Practice PVC: Scheme owner- The Vinyl Council of Australia;
  - ii. MyHIJAU Program: Malaysia Government's GreenTech Agency's own ecolabel.
- d) GreenTag also provides a range of end user focused 'EcoRating' Marks for individual environmental and health product claims including:
  - i. HealthRATE™; and
  - ii. CarbonRATE™
- e) Also available are a series of third party GreenTag Manufacturer Claim Verifications Tags and Certificates and Marks to assist marketing communications especially including those recognizing the existence of Declarations or Specific Characteristics such as:
  - i. VOC Approved;
  - ii. EPD Available; and
  - iii. PhD Available;
  - iv. Post Consumer Recycled Content;
  - v. Local Manufacture; etc.
- f) Each of the above are available in both English and Mandarin (on request) as well as other languages (on special request).

## 2. How is it recognized, where is it compliant and how do I find it?

- a) Different services are recognised or compliant with different rating tools around the world as follows:
  - i. Recognised: LEED®+ (168+ countries), The WELL™ Building Standard (WELL - 38+ countries), Green Star®\* (Australia), Green Star NZ®\*\*, Green Star Africa®\*\*\* (Green Star Total 58 countries) HomeStarNZ\*\*, Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) Rating Tool\*## (Australia, NZ and China), EarthCheck®### (70+ countries), LOTUS Vietnam, MyHIJAU+++ Malaysia, EnviroDevelopment## (Australia), Green Mark International++ (Outside Singapore -10 countries), BREEAM®# International (ISO 14025 EPDs, 77+ countries).
  - ii. Compliant: LEED®+ (168+ countries), BREEAM (EN 15804 EPDs), DGNB (Germany), The European Common Market EPD requirements, Estidama++++ (Abu Dhabi).
  - iii. Approved: GreenTag is also 'mindful Materials™' (mM) approved;
  - iv. Found on: the US and Global datahubs ORIGIN.build,& Ecomedes.com; SustainableMinds.com and Rate-it-Green.com; as well as
  - v. GreenTag Websites: are also present in each country or region as appropriate via dedicated websites managed from a single API enabled web-interface as follows:
    - i. globalgreentag.us (North America);
    - ii. globalgreentag.cn (China and Hong Kong);
    - iii. globalgreentag.com (Australia and New Zealand);
    - iv. globalgreentag.co.za (Africa);

### 3. What does it cost?

- The cost of certification differs depending on the type of services required and the number of countries the certification is to be provided for. While GreenTag Type 1 Ecolabel Certification can start from as little as US\$3000-5000 (AU\$3900-6500) for reduced scope assessments, or Product Health Declarations in isolation, GreenTag Services are individually quoted based on the amount of work required to complete the project.
- The scope of work for Life Cycle Assessments and EPDs is very detailed and varies greatly with each product and range, so is only quoted based on the amount of work required to complete the project.
- | Obtaining a quote requires only the completion of a Quotation Application scoping questionnaire and we will undertake a pre-approval screen and prepare with no obligation a free proposal.
- Note, there is no application fee or pre- assessment fee.
- Importantly, there are also no percentage based turnover fees or royalties.

### 4. Does this vary from country to country?

- Global GreenTag takes its ethics and sustainability seriously and supports equal access to global green building markets for developing and developed nations and large and small manufacturers no matter where they are, so where possible we subsidize assessment and certification fees for developing countries and micro manufacturers in those countries.

### 5. Are separate certificates required for different countries?

#### Sometimes. The reasons for this are as follows:

- a) GreenTag is predicated on proven product 'fitness for purpose' and this is assessed based firstly on successful certification against Nationally mandated standards and if none are available then secondly on international or industry association developed standards as hence different certificates and assessment processes may be required in different countries. This is not always the case.

So where different standards exist – different country centric certificates will be required.

Similarly, country centric certificates can be required where the in-country supplier is not the same company as that originally certified.

- b) Some green building rating schemes do not recognise one or other of the GreenTag certification programs in isolation, they recognised them at different levels depending on the level of achievement and whether Life Cycle Assessment has been undertaken as part of LCARate or not e.g. GBCSA in Green Star SA. In this instance GBCSA have issued a recognition matrix with different combinations of GreenRate and LCARate recognised at different levels. Hence in South Africa the Global GreenTag Mark specifies SOUTH AFRICA as well as GBCSA Level A, B, or C result. This result is then unique to Sth Africa.

As a result country centric product LCARate™ Certificates are generally required.

### 6. What is an EPD?

An EPD is an Environmental Product Declaration (Type III Declaration) under the international Standard ISO 14025. In effect it is a summary life cycle assessment report. This standard is used across all sectors and countries and is the peak standard for EPDs. There are a number of standards that govern EPDs and while some harmonization is underway currently 3 standards are in common use:

ISO 14025 is also recognised in the building sector in many rating tools and countries, including Green Star and China. GreenTag standard EPDs are based on this standard.

EN 15804 is additionally required in the EU for building construction materials. It has specific and much more detailed requirements for how Life cycle assessments for construction products will be undertaken, reviewed and reported in 20 separate life cycle stages. It also requires a different level of external third party peer review. It is recognised for EPD credits in Green Star, LEED, BREEAM and others.

ISO 21930 is an International standard for building construction products, currently being updated. EN 15804 is likely to be merged with ISO 21930 in this review process. It is currently recognised for EPD credits in LEED only in addition to EN 15804.

Currently EN 15804 EPDs are globally the most portable and recognised option and best for companies marketing into many different countries and wanting maximum relevance to the global green project rating tools and EU legislation.

If you would like an EN 15804 EPD or update to your existing ISO 14025 GreenTag EPD, please ask for a quotation.

## 7. Will GreenTag help my product to be specified more?

- As a trusted and recognised brand itself, Global GreenTag can help your product get specified more for a variety of reasons:
  - v. GreenTag's explicit brand recognition in key green building, interiors, building operations and infrastructure rating tools means that your certified product have preference in projects using those rating tools to get market recognition in their own rights. Hence GreenTag becomes a 'Key to the procurement door' of projects using these rating tools;
- In Australia and NZ there are more than 2000 projects that have or are using one of more of the major rating tools Green Star, IS Rating Tool, WELL and LEED;
- In China there are more than 3500 projects that have or are using one of more of the major rating tools LEED, WELL or BREEAM;
- In the USA and North America there are tens of thousands of projects;
- Globally there are more than 110,000 projects using LEED, 2.8 million using BREEAM, and over 500 using WELL and a value in the many billions of dollars.
  - vi. GreenTag's Marks and Certificates instill a higher degree of trust in your product messaging because your product claims are third party certified as true and correct, hence purchasers and specifiers are more likely to believe the claims as a result, so your marketing messages gain more 'cut through';
  - vii. Sustainable product assessment is typically a complex and time consuming process and GreenTag does all the 'heavy lifting' for them drastically speeding up the selection and certification process and improving their profitability.  
According to the recognised Green Building and PassivHaus expert, Architect Andy Marlow of Envirotecure, "GreenTag can save our practice up to 600 hours in product selection on a major green building project" being certified under one of the major green building rating schemes.
  - viii. Not only does GreenTag save architects, designers, builders and facility managers time, but it drastically reduced their legal and professional indemnity risk;
  - ix. GreenTag's different certification and declaration services provide easy ways to communicate the complexity of health and sustainability. This gives green professionals the edge in communicating to clients and end users.

## 8. Why is GreenTag Trusted so much?

- a) One of the Top 25 Most Recognised Ecolabels in Australia. The Living LOHAS® Market Research Survey in 2018 showed GreenTag in the Top 25 Ecolabels nationally, from a consumer market recognition point of view;
- b) One of the Top 100 Most Trusted Australian Brands: Voted by readers of A&D Magazine GreenTag is consistently in the Top 100 Most Trusted Australian Brands in the A&D and building construction sectors over numerous years;
- c) 24% of the Top 100: GreenTag in 2017 certifies 23 of the Top 100 Most Trust Brands in Australia (24% including GreenTag).
- d) ACCC & US Patent & Trademarks Office (USP&TO) Approved: GreenTag was the first building sector ecolabel approved by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission as a Certification Mark (the ACCC is the Australian Legislative Agency and the USP&TO is the USA responsible Agency for approving both the Standards and Qualifications of Assessors under each countries' Certification Mark Program);
- e) Externally Certified: GreenTag has both externally certified ISO 9001 Quality Managements System and Third Party Audited and Verified by DNV-GL (a JAZ-ANZ Certified and one of the world's leading Conformance Assessment Bodies) as compliant with ISO 14024 Third Party (Type 1) Declarations and ISO 17065 Conformance Assessment Standard. This means we have high levels of internal process quality control and operate under world's best practice certification body standards and are held to the same independent third party review standards that we certify our clients to.
- f) Recognised by so many expert organisations: Global GreenTag has been scrutinized and approved by many experts and expert processes as part of the recognitions we have achieved. These include the United States Green Building Council, the WELL™ Building Institute's, Green Building Council of Australia, NZ Green Building Council and Green Building Council of South Africa's, The Government of Malaysia's Agency GreenTech Malaysia's, Singapore Green Building Council, Vietnam Green Building Council, BRE Global, Urban Development Institute of Australia, and the Infrastructure Sustainability Consortium of Australia.
- g) Expert & Internal Peer Review of all Assessments: In addition to the above external Certification whole process reviews, every one of our product ingredient Health and Ecotoxicity Hazard and Risk Assessments and Product Health Declaration (PhD) Material Health reports are externally peer reviewed by a highly qualified Consultant Toxicologist, and LCAs are both internally and externally peer reviewed. Whatsmore every assessment is internally peer reviewed by an Assessor not involved with the project.
- h) Premier Banksia Award: Awarded the Top Australian Sustainability Award in the Building Sector in 2013, just three years after launch, for our contribution to sustainability in the construction sector.

## 9. What is the difference between LCARate and GreenRate?

GreenRate is standards based product health and sustainability rating system similar to other Type 1 Ecolabels that also includes Local Sourcing and Ethical Labour and Supply Chains Criteria. It rates the performance of products on three levels; Level A, B, and C and was originally developed to comply with the GBCA's Product Certification Scheme recognition criteria and in fact involves 44 sub-schemes (27 Level A and 8 Level Band C schemes). The benefit of the sub schemes is to recognise the great work already done by manufacturers that is recognised for each of the GBCA Levels and thereby minimise the amount of unnecessary work a manufacturer has to do to maximize their result. GreenRate has since been recognised by numerous other rating schemes (see FAQ #2.). In Green Star, Level A equates to 100% of the credit points available, Level B equates to 75%, and Level C equates to 50%.

GreenRate v4 and above certified products are also able to access the optional GreenTag Product Health Declaration (PhD) material health and ingredient transparency reporting service and make use of the HealthRATE rating marks designed for end-user targeted 'health in use' marketing claims.

LCARate is a world first performance based assessment and certification with a process based on fully quantified ISO 14040 and ISO 14044 and peer reviewed Life Cycle Analysis process. It does use the same deep health and toxicology and ethical sourcing and supply chain criteria that GreenRate does to supplement the depth of the LCA. It scores each of 6 Sustainability Assessment Criteria and creates a weighted score called the GreenTag EcoPOINT that is used to determine the rating outcome i.e. whether the product achieves Bronze, Silver Gold or Platinum outcomes. LCARate is also the world's Net Positive metric for products.

The fact that LCARate is based on true LCA, means that unlike from GreenRate we can also produce ISO and EN compliant Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

LCARate v4 and above certified products are also able to access the optional GreenTag Product Health Declaration (PhD) material health and ingredient transparency reporting service and make use of the HealthRATE rating marks designed for end-user targeted 'health in use' marketing claims.

Additionally LCARate allows the optional provision of the GreenTag CarbonRATE rating mark, again for easy end-user marketing of carbon and climate benefits delivered by the product compared to a Business as Usual (BaU) benchmark product.

## 10. How long does the process take?

GreenRate: Once you have provided all the data we request and finished answering our questions, the process usually takes around 4-6 weeks.

LCARate: This is a more complex process and typically requires factory audit. Once you have provided all the data we request, undergone an in-factory audit or elected a Facilitated Audit process that assists and streamlines the information gathering and auditing process, and finished answering any outstanding questions, the process usually takes around 4-6 months.

EPDs: Typically take approximately 1 month in addition to LCARate certification, subject to your approval times.

CarbonRate: on request optional CarbonRate marks can be issued with EPDs.

PhDs: Typically take approximately 2-4 weeks in addition to GreenRate, LCARate or if a standalone service is requested- GreenRate service times apply, subject of course to your approval times. PhDs are automatically issued with HealthRATE marks at the same time.

## 11. Aren't you the same as other Type 1 Ecolabels?

The Global GreenTag Certification Scheme is a fully compliant ISO 14204 Type 1 Ecolabel with several rating schemes and a number of additional Product Declarations and Individual Issue rating Marks. The major certifications have full Type 1 compliance externally audited and verified by DNV-GL as follows:

GreenTag GreenRate is indeed a Standards based Type 1 Ecolabel not unlike other Type 1 ecolabels like GECA, the EU Flower and GEN ecolabels including Blue Angel, Sirim in Malaysia and the China Green Label.

In Australia GECA is recognised by GBCA in some standards as Level A only and some as Level A and B. It has no Level C recognised schemes. GreenRate enables certification to all Levels A, B and C. Furthermore GreenRate has a 'reduced scope Assessment' option for GreenRate Level C only that is substantially quicker, less complex and less expensive than any other certification option.

LCARate is a totally unique Type 1 Ecolabel in that it is a Performance based comparative rating ecolabel based on full LCA and that also has Supplementary Standards that each product has to pass. See FAQ #8 for a full explanation of LCARate.

Typically, GEN and other Type 1 ecolabels do not assess the full health and ecotoxicological impacts of all ingredients and undertake life cycle stage risk assessments of the hazards (if any) that result from ingredients and finished product at a) raw materials stage, b) worker health within the factory, and c) as a finished product in use.

Both GreenTag GreenRate and LCARate schemes assess products under schemes that include all these.

Furthermore, LCARate indeed goes on to actually quantify:

- a) the products' whole of life environmental footprint including greenhouse and water footprints using detailed Life cycle analysis;
- b) the physical biodiversity impacts of the products;
- c) the potential ability of the product to drive synergistic design outcomes to reduce the cost of sustainable building outcomes;
- d) Detailed Product Scorecards and individual Sustainability Metrics;
- e) Specific Product EcoPOINT scores that enable manufacturers to make comparative product sustainability claims between their products and like function competitor products on a 'whole of life' whole of sustainability' basis.

IN SUMMARY: No other Type 1 ecolabels offer any equivalents to the following GreenTag Services in helping manufacturers make 'risk free' health and sustainability marketing claims with unique Third Party documentary evidence including:

- a) LCARate performance based rating ecolabels and scorecards;
- b) Sustainability criteria metrics;
- c) LCA product assessment;
- d) EPD reporting;
- e) PhD reporting
- f) CarbonRATE product certification
- g) HealthRATE product certification
- h) Manufacturer Claim Verification

## 12. If I have a Life Cycle Assessment will this reduce the cost?

If you have an existing LCA or EPD from another provider:

GreenRate: you will likely get a higher score in the GreenRate system because the availability of Greenhouse and Water footprints is one of 2 optional criteria that is required for Level A certification. It does not however reduce the cost, only improve the outcome.

LCARate: requires the Cradle to Grave comparison of a product's LCA to a benchmark product's LCA. Most existing EPDs by other providers are Cradle to Gate in scope. Hence if you have an LCA one of two scenarios is required:

- a) your existing provider will need to also assess the benchmark product specific by GreenTag and provide BOTH results to us; or
- b) you can provide us with the information you provided the other LCA provider and we will create the LCA that will enable us to compare it to the existing benchmark product LCA. This is the best result because it then enables better accuracy when customers compare your product with certified competitor products, AND it enables us to provide additional services like PhDs & HEalthRATE and EPDs and CarbonRATE to amplify your sustainability and health marketing effectiveness.

## 13. Does GreenTag need to be renewed?

GreenTag Certifications and PhDs are approved for a 3 (three) year period, but renewed annually with Manufacturer ingredient and supply chain consistency declarations and review.

GreenTag EPDs have a 3 (three) year currency and no annual renewals, but an annual membership fee. EPDs can be revoked if annual review show changes to the product or its supply chain.

## 14. Best Case / Worst Case Figures in the Quotation - What does this mean?

The Global GreenTag Terms and Conditions [ <http://www.globalgreentag.com/greentag-terms-conditions> ] set out the detail of how this works, but in summary, the 'Best Case' is a quotation based on the information requests being answered within 90 days of the payment date. If the 90 day timeframe is exceeded, GreenTag reserves the right to issue an additional invoice for the 'Worst Case' amount. If the information flow is consistent and the client is responsive to questions or requests we are unlikely to send the Worst case invoice. However Worst Case invoicing is entirely at GreenTag's discretion. The instance or Worst Case invoices are typically less than 5% of projects.

## 15. We have many other Certifications. Do you recognize them?

We recognise many certifications and strive to ensure that if you have a third party certifying your product for some standard that we require for certification, then we don't have to re-audit. If your product has components that have undertaken other ecolabelling programs then we may be able to recognise them .e.g. in the furniture category, worktops, tabletops and fabrics with ecolabels allow a GreenRate Level B certified 'white furniture' certificate to be upgraded to Level A.

We also recognised FSC, RSPO, PEFC, Green Guard, FloorScore, CRI Green Label and GreenLabel Plus, Organic Certification (numerous), GEN labels etc.

## 16. We have existing certification/s already, why do I need more?

This is a very common question from manufacturers. Typically it is as a result of changes to the rating tools or an incomplete understanding of the rating tools and sometime (but rarely) GreenTag's own standard. There are many relevant certifications and a huge number of permutations and combinations so we will deal with a question we were asked many times in China at the Shanghai DOMOTEX expo not so long ago:

'We have LEED certification already with FloorScore/GreenGuard, why do I need other certifications?'

This question is usually asked in the context of a specific green building rating tool such as LEED or WELL, or indeed Green Star.

The simple answer is rating tools have a variety of criteria and each criteria needs a different type of evidence or documentation for a product to comply. Evidence of VOC compliance is a current VOC product testing report compliant with a correct Standard OR a recognised third party certificate like Global GreenTag.

There are 4 typical types of credit criteria which the project tries to gain rating tool points for. Every rating tool has at least one and usually more of the following:

a) Indoor Environmental Quality –Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)

Evidence: VOC Test certificate like FloorScore, Green Guard or GreenTag GreenRate and/or LCARate Certificate.

b) MR: Third Party Sustainable Product

Evidence: GreenTag GreenRate or LCARate Certificate depending on the rating tool.

c) MR: Life Cycle Impact Minimisation- a comparative Life Cycle Assessment study

Evidence: ISO 14025 or EN 15804 EPD depending on the product type, rating tool or legislative requirements (e.g. EU).

d) MR: Material Health

i. Product Ingredient Transparency - Ingredient Hazard Reporting

ii. Product Ingredient Optimisation – Hazardous Ingredient Minimisation Reporting

Evidence: Material Health report like GreenTag's Product Health Declaration (PhD).

In the case of LEED, all 4 types of evidence are required or relevant to different aspects of the 4-5 various product related credit criteria,

So if you already have only FloorScore or GreenGuard VOC certification, you can see you meet the VOC criteria, but if that's all you have, then you are not addressing several other credit criteria and are missing out offering clients many points missed by just VOC Certification.

## 17. What is a GreenTag PhD?

A GreenTag PhD is a two page report usually in digital format, but it can be printed. Its main purpose is transparency of ingredients and their hazards. PhDs come with a GreenTag 'PhD Available' white Tags for use in marketing and on labels.

Most Material Health Declarations report on, and rating tool require only the consideration and reporting of the chemical hazards of the raw material ingredients as reported by the EU REACH and Globally Harmonised System (GHS) for chemical risk assessment and identification, before they are made into the product.

In the case of many materials e.g. polymers, the precursors can be toxic to both humans if exposed in a way that is shown to be an issue and to the natural environment if they escape. In these assessments they show significant 'red flags' in typical health declarations and transparency reports.

The downside of this approach is that these theoretical red flags are waved and then the industry is left to interpret and understand if it can what, if anything they mean to the safety of the products.

PhDs can be issued at 2 levels:

a) Specific Ingredient Detailed WELL and LEED recognised;

b) Functional Description of Ingredients only: WELL Recognised and compliant with some LEED credits.

Let us explain in a bit more detail:

a) A GreenTag PhD delivers much more than the minimum required by rating tools with ingredient hazard transparency requirements.

b) Global GreenTag goes further: To date no other scheme takes ingredient level hazards further into assessing ACTUAL impact of the chemicals and how they are used and delivered in the factory on WORKERS and then even further again and assess and transparently report on the known health impacts of the products IN USE. GreenTag is unique in undertaking these practical and needed short cuts for the industry, so the whole global architecture, design and construction industry doesn't have to become environmental and human health toxicologists!

## 18. How are Global GreenTag's Product Health Declarations (PhDs) different to other Material Health Declarations or Transparency Reports?

GreenTag PhDs:

- a) Prove to the world that your products are healthy;
- b) Interprets product toxicity data so professionals don't have to;
- c) Uses simple easy to understand colour key to explain risk;
- d) Identifies risk and how it is mitigated (or not);
- e) Provides plain language explanations of any health or environmental toxicity implications
- f) But ALSO is the ONLY tool globally that looks beyond ingredient hazards to the healthiness of products IN USE; GreenTag's PhD are recognised by WELL™ and LEED®.

## 19. What is in a GreenTag PhD?

Front Page:

**HealthRATE™ Mark:** In the top right corner is the HealthRATE Mark rating result. This shows a rating of how healthy the product is IN USE.

HealthRATE ranks products into 4 healthy product categories: BronzeHEALTH, SilverHEALTH, GoldHEALTH and PlatinumHEALTH with each higher category increasing the scope of product and ingredient healthiness both in and beyond the 'in use' stage.

**Product, Manufacturer and Certificate Details:** The first section on the top of the report provides product and manufacturer details, factory location and validity date.

**Health Summary Statements:** The next section shows simple statements about how healthy the product is in relation to:

1. User;
2. Worker; and
3. Environmental health.
4. Specific statements for certification to rating tools e.g. WELL and LEED.

It is important to understand that GreenTag bans products that contain REACH listed Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) and the SVHC Candidate list chemicals as well as many other toxic and endocrine disrupting chemicals so that ANY GreenTag certified product was healthy in use and protected workers during manufacture.

**Hazard Colour Bands:** The next section shows THREE HAZARD COLOUR BANDS with potentially:

RED (problematic target to phase out), ORANGE (moderate risk), YELLOW (medium to low risk) and GREEN (very low to no risk) bands of individual 1 percent increments.

- The first band shows the relative percentages of individual INGREDIENT HAZARDS by colours;
- The second band shows the relative percentages of each individual WORKER HEALTH by colours;
- The third band shows the relative percentages of each individual IN USE HEALTH by colours;

Back Page:

**Colour Key:** The rear of the PhD provides the colour key to the ingredient Hazards.

**Risk Assessment Hazard Category Changes Explained:** The final section lists each ingredient contained in the product in the first column, its function in the second column, then in the third and fourth columns, the 'Before' and 'After' Risk Assessment Hazard Category Colours. The final fifth column provides a plain language explanation of the reasons and justification for how and why the Hazard Category changed during the risk assessment process. This last aspect is just another unique feature of GreenTag's PhDs. It makes it especially easy to understand how products with apparently toxic ingredients in them can be considered safe for use.

**PhD CASE STUDY:** In the case study included on the rear of the PhD brochure here, the certified product is the Australian export 'Weathertex Natural Flat Sheet and Weatherboards'.

Weathertex basically has only a few simple ingredients predominantly Australian certified hardwood fibre and paraffin wax.

The Top Ingredient Hazard band shows a mostly red (high hazard) assessment under REACH because inhaled wood fibre under long term workplace exposure is a class 1 Carcinogen.

This is the extent of reporting competitor schemes (and LEED) requires. Left at this point the product looks dangerous and non toxicological professionals left to draw their own conclusions might tend to shy away.

But GreenTag's onsite audit shows it is essentially a completely wet process and cleared all OH&S risks-in fact, the generation

of the fibre stage is completely enclosed in a pressure vessel, so the Red Level Risk flag, while required by the rules of the various rating tools to be shown as such, never actually exists, hence, after GreenTag's Risk Analysis the second green mostly green band on the PhD shows worker health is safe.

When the product is manufactured it essentially is remade into slightly more waterproof hardwood via just heat and pressure. It is then completely safe in use- hence the predominantly green IN USE band and the resultant PLATINUM HealthRATE Tag award.

The results of the assessment and reasons for changing from red or hazardous to green or safe is explained in plain language for each ingredient on the back of the PhD.

Hence unlike competitor programs GreenTag PhDs take the mystery and work out of ingredient hazard reporting and are unique in enabling professionals and end users to see at a glance how healthy a product in use from the companion HealthRATE Mark results on the Top of the PhD (BronzeHEALTH, SilverHEALTH, GoldHEALTH and PlatinumHEALTH ratings).

## **20. Our formulation is highly confidential why should we trust you?**

We have successfully and securely certified some of the world's largest companies and most confidential formulae. We are happy to sign a binding Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA) with you up front. All staff and contractors are tightly bound with confidentiality agreements and only assessment staff have password access to the confidential server on which client information is stored.

We use VPN access to access a virtual private server that is fully encrypted end to end and data is encrypted while stored. GreenTag servers use the Carbon Black Predictive Security Cloud.

The Carbon Black Predictive Security Cloud is the world's leading, nextgen data security service...its key benefits are:

1. BEST INCIDENT RESPONSE & THREAT HUNTING
2. IT IS THE ONLY PREDICTIVE CLOUD SECURITY SYSTEM
3. IT INTEGRATES SEAMLESSLY WITH OTHER SECURITY MEASURES

There has never been a security breach relating to any of our client files or data storage. Our unblemished track record over 8 years is your peace of mind. The confidentiality and security of your data is the foundation of our business.

## **21. We need this completed very quickly is it possible?**

Once you have all the GreenTag information requests and supplier declarations signed and returned and any questions we might have answered, GreenRate certifications and PhDs can be fastracked more readily than LCARate and EPDs.

## **22. Why does LCARate take so long?**

LCA and Life cycle inventory (LCI) development involve highly detailed and complex research and quantification of every impact of every ingredient at every stage of its extraction, raw material supply, manufacture, packaging, cleaning, maintenance and disposal or recycling. It also involves up to 2 different external third party organisations to undertake the LCA and EPD Peer Reviews. We do LCA more accurately and with more client specific LCI data development than most LCA practitioners that just use the data in the software tools they licence.

This additional accuracy is to your benefit as we are using LCA to enable comparisons between competing products, that last thing we want to do is use generic or proxy data as this tends to make competitors look the same even when they use different and often better processes.

## **23. Can we use any logos to show that we are certified?**

Once you are certified, you will receive the appropriate Certification Mark graphic files for the type and level of your certification, as well as the GreenTag permissible Marketing Marks relevant to any declarations or certifications we have provided e.g. 'LCARate', 'GreenRate', 'HealthRATE', 'CarbonRATE' or 'BEP-PVC'. These must be used in accordance with GreenTag's 'Rules for the Use of the Mark' document, available on request and supplied with the initial Certification Notification email from the Assessment Team after Certification has been approved.

## **24. Is there any logo or similar that we can use whilst we are under Certification?**

Once we have received a full and complete ingredients declaration as necessary for our health and toxicity cautionary assessment Processes (ESCAP or GCAP) and approved the outcome, we can issue the GreenTag 'Under Certification' logo. In dire cases where a project supply contract is hinging on certification, we can subsequently (and discretionally) also issue individual letters to builders or designers to the effect that certification will be forthcoming (no guarantee of level outcome though) with specific timeframe/s.

## 25. Is there any possibility that our product may not pass?

There is always a possibility a product will not pass. That said, we do a lot to ensure that this doesn't happen in all finality, including:

- a) Undertaking a free pre-assessment even before we provide a quotation. Our ability to do this effectively is based on the accuracy and detail of the information you provide us in the Quotation Application Scoping Questionnaire;
- b) Notifying you as soon as we find an issue,
- c) Advising you of the issue specifics; and
- d) Providing a reasonable time for you to make appropriate changes to the product or processes, to ensure you can comply;
- e) For issues that will take longer than 90 days to resolve we are willing to suspend further assessment for a reasonable longer period until the necessary changes can be made.

## 26. Can you provide any training to our sales team so that they understand what this all means?

Yes, we are happy to provide free training to sales teams or design offices when we are already in any given city. If we have to travel specifically to align with your specific time or event, fees may apply. If you have any needs, please just call us to request a presentation.

## 27. We don't have much funding can we do Certification in stages?

It is possible to pay certification, life cycle inventory development and audit fees in stages in special circumstances, on request subject to Directorial approval.

## 28. Why do manufacturers need EPD and PhD?

EPDs and PhDs are just different forms of Life Cycle Assessment information and evidence of health impacts respectively, in report form. They are required by projects trying to gain credit points under different green project rating schemes when covering off a specific type of credit.

- a) EPDs are typically needed by projects undertaking Life Cycle Impact Reduction type credits (e.g LEED, Green Star, BREEAM);
- b) PhDs are Material Health Transparency reports typically required for rating tool credits or features seeking ingredient hazard assessment, ingredient optimization or hazard reduction and elimination of certain chemicals or categories of chemicals or elements (e.g. LEED, WELL).

## 29. Why is health not just about VOC emissions?

There are a number of other health related aspects of products beyond VOCs that are reflected in the various global green building rating systems that can create additional sales opportunities for manufacturers by achieving additional points for projects that buy them, IF they have the additional evidence to prove compliance:

- a) VOCs or volatile organic compounds are often toxic, gaseous emissions from compounds within a product from products containing carbon. They are typically emitted from glues, lacquers, binders, sealers, paints, petroleum and natural based oils and their components and other sources.

VOCs are the subject of specific VOC Minimisation credits in most green building rating tools internationally including WELL, LEED, BREEAM, Green Star, Green Mark, LOTUS, BEAM and many others.

- b) Formaldehyde: is a carcinogen. It is a common misunderstanding to think that Formaldehyde emissions from products are covered by the VOC tests. While sometimes they are presented together, strictly speaking Formaldehyde and aldehydes in general are tested separately because they are not organic compounds (ie they don't contain carbon).

Formaldehyde is also the separate subject of specific Formaldehyde Minimisation credits in most green building rating tools internationally including WELL, LEED, BREEAM, Green Star, Green Mark, LOTUS, BEAM and many others. This is a strong reason to ensure you also get your products tested for formaldehyde especially if it is a composite wood product.

- c) Healthy Product Certification: Toxic ingredients added during manufacture can sometimes still be present in the finished products; e.g, BPA in epoxies and polycarbonates, some phthalates in PVC products, and residual monomers in plastics like polyurethanes, ABS and polystyrenes..

Third party product certification like GreenTag's GreenRate and LCARate provide peace of mind that a product is healthy in use at known safe levels.

## 30. What countries does GreenTag operate in?

Global GreenTag is headquartered in Brisbane Australia, but has businesses in the United States (for the Americas) South Africa (for Africa), Malaysia (for SE Asia), and Sales and Marketing Licensees in EU/UK for PHDs, China/Taiwan/Hong Kong and Malaysia for all services.

- \* Green Star® is a registered Trade Mark of the Green Building Council of Australia
- \*\* Green Star NZ® is a registered Trade Mark of the New Zealand Green Building Council  
HomeStar NZ® is a registered Trade Mark of the New Zealand Green Building Council
- \*\*\* Green Star SA® is a registered Trade Mark of the Green Building Council of South Africa  
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- \*# The Infrastructure Sustainability Rating Tool is a registered Trade Mark of the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia
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- + LEED® is a registered Trade Mark of the US Green Building Council
- ++ Green Mark International++ ® is a registered Trade Mark of the Building Construction Authority of Singapore
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## My Notes ...

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