ECO PLATFORM

ECO Platform Standards – General Remarks

Version 01 (December 2023)

Version Number	Date	Summary of changes
V 01	20.12.2023	First version of ECO Platform Standards – General Remarks as ECO Platform umbrella document

1   SCOPE

The Scope of the ECO Platform Standards covers all EPD following EN 15804 standards. The scope is to be amended in future by TEWOG following any stepwise integration of other standards and sectors.

All EPD in scope are to be published as ECO EPD in compliance with the ECO Platform Standards by the ECO EPD Programme Operators in accordance with the version valid at the time of publication.

The ECO Platform Standards consist of the following documents (the referenced ECO Platform Standards). New versions must be implemented by EPD Programme Operators in their documents within six months of the date of release.

No later than twelve months after the date of release of a new version of the ECO Platform Standards, new EPDs shall adhere to the new version of the ECO Platform Standards.

Note: new version of individual documents from the ECO Platform Standards may be released at different points in time.

Please find below a list of all documents incl. an overview of all current and earlier versions. Obsolete versions are highlighted in grey, and the end of the implementation period is listed accordingly. Technical changes in the documents are regarded as major changes, while editorial changes are assessed as minor and do not trigger an implementation of changes on PO level:

1) ECO Platform Standards - General Remarks

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	20.12.2023	20.06.2024	n.a.

2) Verification Guidelines for ECO EPD Programme Operators

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V07	20.12.2023	20.06.2024	major
V06 *Earlier version: Audit and Verification Guidelines for ECO*	03.2023	02.2024	n.a.

EPD Programme Operators			

3) Verification Guidelines for automated software systems (tools) for generating and verifying EPDs

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	20.12.2023	20.06.2024	major

4) LCA Calculation Rules and Specifications for EPDs

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	20.12.2023	20.06.2024	major

5) Quality Management Guidelines for ECO EPD Programme Operators

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.

6) Digital Data Requirements

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.

7) Specification of Connection to ECO Portal

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.

8) Audit Guidelines for ECO EPD Programme Operators

Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.
Previously, all Audit Requirements have been part of the "Audit & Verification Guidelines V6"	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

9) Audit Requirement Documents

Name of Document	Version Number	Date of Release [DD.MM.YYYY]	Implementation until [DD.MM.YYYY]	Major / Minor Changes?
Audit Requirements – GPI, Verification Guidelines & Calculation Rules	V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.
Audit Requirements - Quality Management	V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.
Audit Requirements - Digital Data Requirements	V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.
Audit Requirements – Specs. of Connection to ECO Portal	V01	Under development	n.a.	n.a.

2   INTRODUCTION

2.1   Background

The objective of ECO Platform is the development of verified environmental information of construction products, in particular Type III declarations called EPD (Environmental Product Declarations)[1]. The ECO Platform coordinates the development of consistent EPD programmes in Europe and stimulates the use of a common implementation of the EPD methodology based on EN 15804 for the European market, which will lead to a common applicability of EPD between EPD programmes. The term "EN 15804" means in this document the current version of EN 15804. However, the ECO Platform may have to introduce periods of transition between revisions or amendments of the standard.

The ECO Platform does not act as a programme operator nor supply a "European EPD". A European organization aiming to develop an EPD of its products using average European data may - for a better recognition and acceptance – use the ECO Platform network, by providing its documents using the service of a programme operator who is an audited member of the ECO Platform, thereby gaining acceptance by other programme operators of the ECO Platform.

2.1.1   ECO EPD according to EN 15804

The European standard EN 15804 is the basis for the common EPD approach by all ECO Platform members. They have committed themselves to follow a common ECO EPD approach according to EN 15804 and its annexes and recommend its interpretation by the corresponding CEN TR 16970 (Sustainability of construction works — Guidance for the implementation of EN 15804) thereby supporting the harmonisation of "core-EPD".

The ECO Platform members strive for the highest accepted level of quality of EPD based on EN 15804 and related documents that can currently be expected on the market and which can be mutually recognized.

2.2   Further explanation and examples

The representativeness of an EPD should be transparent for the user of the EPD to decide if the data are applicable in a specific situation. Scenarios may need adaptation to a specific situation and specific geographic conditions to be used in building assessments. Examples of this are: adaptation of transport distance, specific scenarios for installation or end-of-life, climate dependent service life, etc. In some cases, such specific situations are described as default scenarios in product group specific PCR. While the manufacturer who owns the EPD decides which scenarios are applied in an EPD, the programme operator who issues the EPD ensures through the verification process that the representativeness and

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EPD approach
The European standard EN 15804 is the basis for the common EPD approach by all ECO Platform members.

Transparent information in an EPD supports the assessment on building level.

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[1] www.eco-platform.org/the-mission.html

the chosen scenarios are clear. The building assessor evaluates this and where necessary adapts the given EPD data and thus brings the scenarios of the product in accordance with the scenarios relevant to the building (EN15978).

NOTE 1   Some EPD may fulfil all additional requirements and are mutually recognized for their quality level, but may not be applicable without modifications for e.g. building calculations in a specific building assessment scheme.

NOTE 2   Verified data in an EPD are for all practical purposes considered factually correct. However, they may not necessarily be applicable in other contexts than the original goal of the EPD.

NOTE 3   An EPD programme may have additional limitations for application related to the required reference databases. This may imply that also the modules A1-A3, although fulfilling the required quality level for mutual recognition, can be subject to additional requirements given in the individual EPD programmes.

Example "background data": In an EPD for carpets, provided by a carpet manufacturer producing e.g. tufted carpets from a plastic yarn, data sets for the upstream yarn production may differ depending on the database used. Since normally such EPD are most sensitive to the impacts connected to yarn production, the results will differ depending on the background data used. The proposed mutual recognition will imply that the ECO EPD – if according to EN 15804 and verified – must be recognized. However, the ECO EPD could be subject to additional requirements if the data are going to be applied in a certain context i.e. in building assessment schemes with restricted databases.

Example "background data"

Example "representativeness": An EPD for insulation materials declaring the environmental performance representing the products produced by the members of a manufacturer's association located in Germany probably does not have how the same values as technically the same insulation product produced in Norway by a Norwegian association. When the LCA is conducted correctly, the differences should describe reality closely. However, the German EPD cannot be applied substituting a Norwegian EPD for a Norwegian product unless those data dependent on regional conditions (e.g. provision of electricity and transport) are exchanged. If the German product is applied in a Norwegian building, the German EPD applies, however the transport data shall be adapted.

Example "representativeness"

It is important to declare clearly what the EPD represents by describing the representativeness of the declaration. Modules A1-A3 contain factual information as the production processes have actually happened and can be followed back in principle. However, relevant background data needs to have the appropriate data quality with respect to time and location, which is sometimes difficult to check. Furthermore, the EPD may cover different production averages e.g. association averages or an average product of a manufacturer.
The scenarios in Modules A4-C and D are not factual but are a choice of certain conditions. There the description of the scenario is important. Again, averages may be part of a scenario, in such cases it is also important to be clear about what the scenario represents.

NOTE 4   Some EPD programmes require and verify LCA indicators that are not part of the requirements in EN15804, for example toxicity indicators. If the LCA performed for the ECO EPD results in such indicators, the EPD is accepted as being verified.
This kind of information is typically additional information.

3   EXAMPLES FROM EPD PROGRAMMES

Examples for the POs from practice

3.1   Examples of implementation of mutual recognition

The *German IBU* has a mutual recognition agreement with several other POs. For this mutual recognition there were no restrictions made on the database used for upstream and downstream processes, except for the requirement of compatibility of the datasets with EN 15804.
Both programmes have equivalent verification procedures. Among the verification tasks (required by a checklist) is the task to check the quality of the data sets used for upstream and downstream processes that were not covered by specific data and which influences the outcome of the environmental performance results relevantly. To decide what is relevant is up to the verifier. The quality check can only be done, if the manufacturer lists the source of the data sets, and if the databases applying the data sets deliver easily accessible metadata.
It is the verifier's responsibility to request the metadata or refuse the verification if the data quality cannot be made plausible.
The mutual recognition process is monitored by a monitoring panel (MONPAN), which reports on a half-year basis for the time being. Later this can be reduced to a yearly report. The panel consists of a member from the respecting parties.

The *Dutch MRPI* requires the use of specific national LCI data for background processes, based on the Ecoinvent database. These data are provided to LCA practitioners on request. If the national background data are not used, the EPD data cannot be transferred to a national LCA database that will be used by building assessment tools in the Netherlands such as BREEAM-NL. A procedure is drafted to adapt EN15804 compliant EPD if the national background data are not used. This procedure includes a 'penalty' for the variations that may occur due to using different background data.

The *Spanish AENOR* has mutual recognition agreements in *IBU* and the *International EPD System*. Under these agreements EPD verified in the GlobalEPD programme might bear the double logo of *IBU* or *EPD International*. For the construction sector, compliance with EN 15804 is a basic requirement. Any programme operator can use the PCR of the other, to reduce the use of resources and enhance harmonization.