

FACTSHEET

EU Ecolabel for wood-, cork- and bamboo- based floor coverings



The EU Ecolabel criteria for wood-, cork- and bamboo-based floor coverings provide consumers with high-quality products with a reduced environmental impact.

Products must meet strict requirements to be awarded with the label. For example, they must comply with **strict limitations on emissions** such as formaldehyde, in order to minimize the potential health risks posed to consumers and workers involved in their production. In order to **promote a circular economy**, the EU Ecolabel criteria set up requirements not only for the pre-use and use phases, but also for the post-use phase. Manufacturers must make sure that their **floors are easily repaired, can be dismantled quickly**, and that instructions on their end-of-life disposal clearly appear on the product.



The scope of this product group encompasses indoor floor coverings for both **private and professional use**. This includes wood, laminate, cork and bamboo floorings which are made of at least 80% of wood, cork or bamboo based materials or fibres, not containing synthetic fibres in any of the composing layers. Furthermore, the criteria do not apply to wall coverings, coverings for external use nor coverings with a structural function and levelling compounds.

Hotspots & Solutions

The EU Ecolabel addresses a number of environmental hotspots induced by the use of wood-, cork- and bamboo-based floor coverings:

Hotspots

Issue

EU Ecolabel Solution

Hotspot 1: Origin of the wood, cork and bamboo material

The material used in the production of the products may be sourced from forests which are not managed in a sustainable way, and may be prone to deforestation.

The EU Ecolabel requires that wood-, cork- and bamboo-based materials do **not originate from GMOs** and are covered by a chain of custody certificate issued by an **independent certification scheme** such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) or equivalent. All virgin wood, cork and bamboo must also be covered by valid sustainable forest management certificates issued by an independent third party certification scheme such as FSC, PEFC or equivalent.

Hotspot 2: Use of hazardous substances and mixtures

The use of toxic chemicals throughout the floor covering production chain can have severe implications for the health of consumers and their surrounding environment.

Some substances found in conventional floor coverings may cause health risks to consumers and workers. The EU Ecolabel sets **strict restrictions on these chemicals**, such as Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), thereby limiting indoor pollution. Furthermore, the presence of heavy metal in the paints and varnishes used on the floor coverings is carefully controlled. **Treatment of the floor coverings with biocidal products and use of flame retardants is not permitted.**

Hotspot 3: Formaldehyde emissions

Acting as an adhesive within wood-pressed products, this chemical can cause serious health problems when its concentration in a room is high

Using EU Ecolabel floor coverings **reduces the health risk to consumers and floor installers**, as the emissions from formaldehyde within EU Ecolabel floor coverings must be lower than 50 % of the used threshold value. This tolerance level is compatible within the E1 classification for formaldehyde-containing wood-based panels used across EU Member States.



Hotspots

Issue

EU Ecolabel Solution

Hotspot 4: Use of energy in the production process and carbon emissions

The production process of the floor coverings can be energy intensive and generate high levels of carbon emissions, which actively contributes to global warming.

The EU Ecolabel **sets a maximum threshold for electricity and fuel consumption** during the product manufacturing. This requires to take into account all energy inputs throughout the production process (including coating and packaging activities) so as to comply with the “E Score” limit of annual energy consumption. Furthermore, the EU Ecolabel criteria require the proportion of renewable energy used to be clearly demonstrated.

Hotspot 5: Generation of waste

A lack of adequate consumer information on the product repairability and on the best way to dispose of the product at end-of-life creates unnecessary waste.

The EU Ecolabel criteria require that the products be designed in a way that **simplifies their dismantling**, and that makes sure they can be **repaired, and properly disposed at end of life**. Furthermore, clear instructions regarding the disassembly and replacement of damaged components/materials must be provided to consumers, as well as information on the best cleaning and maintenance methods.



EU Ecolabel floors and furniture:

Made from sustainably and legally sourced wood
Tested for harmful substances
Free of flame retardants

#EUEcolabel
www.ecolabel.eu



For more information...

The scheme, its feature, the actors involved, the application process:
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel>

EU Ecolabel criteria for wood-, cork- and bamboo-based floor coverings:
<https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/products-groups-and-criteria.html>

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