



The New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust

Licence Criteria for Environmental Leadership Products and Services

EC-34-14

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Specification change history

Minor clarifications, corrections or technical changes made since the specification was last reviewed and issued in November 2014.

Date	Version	Change

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Table of contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Background	5
3	Interpretation	6
4	Category definition	6
5	Environmental criteria	6
	5.1 Legal requirements	6
	5.2 Energy Management	7
	5.3 Waste Management	7
6	Product/Service characteristics	7
7	Product/Service specific criteria	8
	7.1 Core Requirements	8
	7.2 Process to develop product or service-specific criteria	8
8	Requirements and notes for licence holders	10

Attachment 1: Flowchart for process to set product or service specific criteria

Attachment 2: Information required for an Application for a Licence for an Environmental Leadership product or Service

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1 Introduction

Environmental Choice New Zealand (ECNZ) is an environmental labelling programme which has been created to help businesses and consumers find products and services that ease the burden on the environment. The programme results from a New Zealand Government initiative and has been established to improve the quality of the environment by minimising the adverse environmental impacts generated by the production, distribution, use and disposal of products, and the delivery of services. The programme is managed by the New Zealand Ecolabelling Trust (The Trust).

ECNZ operates to the ISO 14024:1999 standard "Environmental labels and declarations – Type 1 Environmental labelling - Principles and procedures" and The Trust is a member of the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) an international network of national programmes also operating to the ISO 14024 standard.

ISO 14024 requires environmental labelling specifications to include criteria that are objective, reasonable and verifiable. It requires that interested parties have an opportunity to participate and have their comments considered. It also requires that environmental criteria be set, based on an evaluation of the environmental impacts during the actual product or service life cycle, to differentiate product and services on the basis of preferable environmental performance.

The life cycle approach is used to identify and understand environmental issues (adverse or beneficial impacts) across the whole life of a product or service (within a defined product or service category). This information is evaluated to identify the most significant issues and from those to identify the issues on which it is possible to differentiate environmentally preferable products or services from others available in the New Zealand market. Criteria are then set on these significant and differentiating issues. These must be set in a form and at a level that does differentiate environmentally preferable products or services, is attainable by potential ECNZ licence applicants and is able to be measured and verified. As a result of this approach, criteria may not be included in an ECNZ specification on all aspects of the life cycle of a product or service. If stages of a product or service life cycle are found not to differentiate environmentally preferable products or services, or to have insufficient data available to allow objective benchmarking in New Zealand, those stages will not generally be included in criteria in the specification. For some issues, however, (such as energy and waste) criteria may be set to require monitoring and reporting. These criteria are designed to generate information for future reviews of specifications.

The Trust is pleased to publish this ECNZ specification for Environmental Leadership Products and Services. The specification provides a means to recognise products and services that are demonstrably environmentally preferable but are not covered by an existing ECNZ specification.

This specification sets out the requirements that an environmental leadership product or service must meet in order to be licensed to use the ECNZ Label. The requirements include some environmental criteria and product or service characteristics that are generally applicable to a wide range of products or services and which are common to other ECNZ specifications. The requirements also define a process to set appropriate product or service-specific criteria. The environmental leadership product or service will need to meet the generally applicable requirements and the product or service-specific criteria.

The process set out in the proposed specification will require the ECNZ Licence applicant to provide a significant amount of information which will be subjected to independent technical review. Information will be required that is of sufficient quality for The Trust to set criteria that differentiate the product or service on the basis of environmental preference across the product or service life-cycle. If sufficient information is available, it will be used to prepare a new ECNZ specification for the product or service category. The proposed new product or service

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specification will be notified for public comment and at the same time the applicant will be granted a Licence under this new specification. The Licence will be granted with the condition that future compliance and supervision of the licensed products or services will be based on the finalised new product or service-specific specification. Applicants for Licences under this Environmental Leadership specification need to be aware that the criteria their products or services will be required to meet when a final new products or service specification is published (following public notification and submissions) may differ from those on which their Licence is initially granted.

This specification will be valid for a period of five years. Twelve months before the expiry date (or at an earlier date if required), The Trust will initiate a further review process for the specification.

2 Background

The Trust regularly receives enquiries from companies that provide products and services that are not covered by existing ECNZ specifications. Often these products or services have features that could potentially be regarded as environmentally preferable over similar products or services available in the New Zealand market. This specification provides a means for those companies to take, and be recognised as having taken, a leadership role in extending the range of product and service categories covered by ECNZ specifications. It also provides a means for The Trust to be responsive to growing interest and market demands for credible environmental labels on products or services available in New Zealand.

Since its first publication in 2008, The Trust has received and processed a number of applications under EC-34 Environmental Leadership Products and Services. Several have successfully resulted in The Trust publishing new ECNZ specifications and granting ECNZ Licences for new products and services. Several have also not progressed to the point that The Trust has been able to prepare and publish proposed product or service-specific criteria and therefore not issue ECNZ Licences. The reason for this has been that there is not sufficient life-cycle based information provided or available to demonstrate environmental preference of applicant's products or services over other similar products or services in the New Zealand market. Often this has been because applicants have focussed on a single issue innovation.

The Trust's experience since 2008 is that the processes outlined in EC-34 have been effective. They have provided a means for suppliers of products or services that may demonstrate environmental leadership to test this proposition and make an application to The Trust for an ECNZ Licence. They have allowed The Trust to:

- complete a robust and rigorous assessment of whether sufficient credible information is available to support the proposition that products or services are environmentally preferable across their life cycle;
- provide a clear assessment of information provided by applicants and confidential feedback where the information is not sufficient for The Trust to prepare product or service-specific ECNZ licence criteria;
- prepare and publish proposed product or service-specific criteria based on life cycle information;
- finalise and publish new ECNZ specifications after transparent public notification and review of submissions; and
- grant ECNZ Licences recognising environmental leadership products and services.

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Accordingly, The Trust is proposing to reissue this specification with limited change to the requirements.

3 Interpretation

GEN means the Global Ecolabelling Network

ISO means International Organisation for Standardisation.

Label means the Environmental Choice New Zealand Label.

4 Category definition

This category includes products or services that:

- are not covered by an existing ECNZ specification; and
- can demonstrate environmental preference over other products or services that are available in New Zealand and perform the same function.

To demonstrate environmental preference and be licensed to use the Label, an environmental leadership product or service will be assessed against:

- the generally applicable environmental criteria and product or service characteristics set out in clauses 5 and 6; and
- the product or service-specific criteria developed using the process set out in Clause 7.

5 Environmental criteria

5.1 Legal requirements

Criteria

The environmental leadership product or service must comply with the provisions of all relevant laws and regulations that are applicable during the product's or service's life cycle.

Verification Required

Conformance with this requirement shall be demonstrated by providing a written statement on regulatory compliance, signed by the Chief Executive Officer or other authorised representative of the applicant company. This statement shall be supported by documentation identifying the applicable regulatory requirements and demonstrating how compliance is monitored and maintained.

Explanatory Notes

Relevant laws and regulations could, for example, include those that relate to:

- producing, sourcing, transporting, handling and storing raw materials and components for manufacture

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- manufacturing processes
- handling, transporting and disposing of waste products arising from manufacturing
- transporting product within and between countries
- using and disposing of the product.

The documentation required may include, as appropriate:

- procedures for approving and monitoring suppliers and supplies
- information provided to customers and contractors regarding regulatory requirements.

It is not intended to require licence holders to accept increased legal responsibility or liability for actions that are outside their control.

5.2 Energy Management

Criteria

The applicant company must have effective energy management policies and procedures and/or an energy management programme covering the company's operations.

Verification Required

Conformance with this requirement shall be stated in writing and signed by the Chief Executive Officer or other authorised representative of the applicant company. This statement shall be accompanied by documentation that describes the energy management policies, procedures and programmes.

5.3 Waste Management

Criteria

The applicant company must have effective waste management policies and procedures and/or a waste management programme covering the company's operations.

Verification Required

Conformance with this requirement shall be stated in writing and signed by the Chief Executive Officer or other authorised representative of the applicant company. **This statement shall be accompanied by documentation that** describes the waste management policies, procedures and programmes.

6 Product/Service characteristics

Criteria

The environmental leadership product or service shall be fit for its intended use or purpose and conform, as appropriate, to relevant product or service performance standards.

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Verification Required

Conformance with this requirement shall be demonstrated by providing a written statement of compliance, signed by the Chief Executive Officer or other authorised representative of the applicant company. This statement shall be supported by documentation:

- identifying the applicable standards and or consumer/customer requirements; and
- demonstrating how compliance is monitored and maintained.

7 Product/Service specific criteria

7.1 Core Requirements

Criteria

- a Product or service-specific criteria shall be developed and published following the process described in this clause and illustrated in the flow chart included as Attachment 1.
- b At the time an ECNZ Licence is granted under this specification, the environmental leadership product or service must meet the relevant product or service-specific criteria that are contained in the product or service-specific specification formally notified for comments.
- c The environmental leadership product or service must meet the relevant product or service criteria in the final published product or service-specific specification, following The Trust's normal transition procedures for existing licensed product affected by changes to ECNZ specifications.

7.2 Process to develop product or service-specific criteria

The following process shall be followed to set and then notify product or service-specific criteria.

Step One:

The applicant for an ECNZ Licence for an environmental leadership product or service completes the form appended to this specification and provides the relevant supporting documents and information.

(Note: The relevance and quality of the information is more important than quantity. Unsubstantiated or purely promotional information should not be included.)

Step Two:

The applicant must identify any information that is provided on a commercially confidential basis.

(Note: Applicants should carefully consider how much information they can provide without commercial confidentiality restrictions. The Trust will need to be able to provide supporting information to explain and justify any criteria that are eventually published. Where the information provided cannot be used publicly to support criteria, the criteria can only be formalised if other independent, publicly available resources can be found and cited.)

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Step Three:

The Trust appoints an independent technical reviewer from The Trust's ECNZ register of assessors and specification writers.

Step Four:

The independent technical reviewer completes an initial review of the information provided and advises The Trust on whether sufficient information has been (or is likely to be able to be) provided (or obtained) to form a sound basis on which to develop and publish appropriate product or service-specific criteria.

(Note: in making a judgment about the adequacy of information, the reviewer will consider the nature and extent of information that will be able to be disclosed, the normal expectations for information to support new specifications developed following The Trust's usual ECNZ procedures and the reviewer's own experience developing ECNZ specifications.)

Step Five:

Based on the advice from the initial review, The Trust liaises with the applicant company and makes a decision whether to proceed, or not, to develop product or service-specific criteria and a specification.

Step Six:

The independent technical reviewer reviews the information provided by the applicant in detail and obtains corroborating information he or she considers is necessary (using means that do not breach the confidentiality of the licence application process) to prepare a proposed ECNZ specification for formal notification.

(Note: ECNZ procedure 2.3 covers processes to prepare specifications. The independent technical reviewer will follow those parts of the procedure for selecting and developing environmental criteria, selecting product function requirements, format of specifications and evaluating the proposed specification using the ECNZ programme principles.)

Step Seven:

The Trust appoints an assessor from The Trust's ECNZ assessor register (who shall not be the independent technical reviewer, or have been involved in developing the product or service-specific criteria) to assess the applicant's product or service against the proposed product or service-specific specification and the requirements of this specification.

Step Eight

The assessor completes and reports his or her assessment to The Trust.

Step Nine:

The Trust concurrently notifies the proposed new product or service specification and grants the ECNZ Licence to the applicant company for products or services that meet the notified criteria.

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Step Ten:

Normal ECNZ procedures are followed to complete the notification process and finalise the new product or service specification.

8 Requirements and notes for licence holders

Monitoring Compliance

Prior to granting a Licence, The Trust will prepare a plan for monitoring ongoing compliance with the product or service-specific criteria that are developed and published following the process set out in Clause 7. This plan will reflect the number and type of products or services covered by the Licence and the level of sampling appropriate to provide confidence in ongoing compliance with criteria. This plan will be discussed with the licence applicant and when agreed will be a condition of the ECNZ Licence.

As part of the plan, The Trust will require access to relevant quality control and production or service delivery records and the right of access to production or service facilities. Relevant records may include formal quality management or environmental management system documentation (for example, ISO 9001 or ISO 14001 or similar).

The monitoring plan will require the Licence holder to advise The Trust immediately of any noncompliance with any requirements of this specification (or the product or service-specific specification developed and published following the process set out in Clause 7) which may occur during the term of the Licence. If a non-compliance occurs, the Licence may be suspended or terminated as stipulated in the Licence Conditions. The licensee may appeal any such suspension.

The Trust will maintain the confidentiality of identified confidential information provided and accessed during verification and monitoring of Licences.

Using the ECNZ Label

The Label may appear on the wholesale and retail packaging for an environmental leadership product, provided that the product meets the requirements in this specification and in the Licence Conditions.

Wherever it appears, the Label must be accompanied by:

- the words of the title of the product or service-specific specification developed and published following the process set out in Clause 7; and
- the Licence Number eg 'licence No1234'.

The Label must be reproduced in accordance with the ECNZ programme's keyline art for reproduction of the Label and the Licence Conditions.

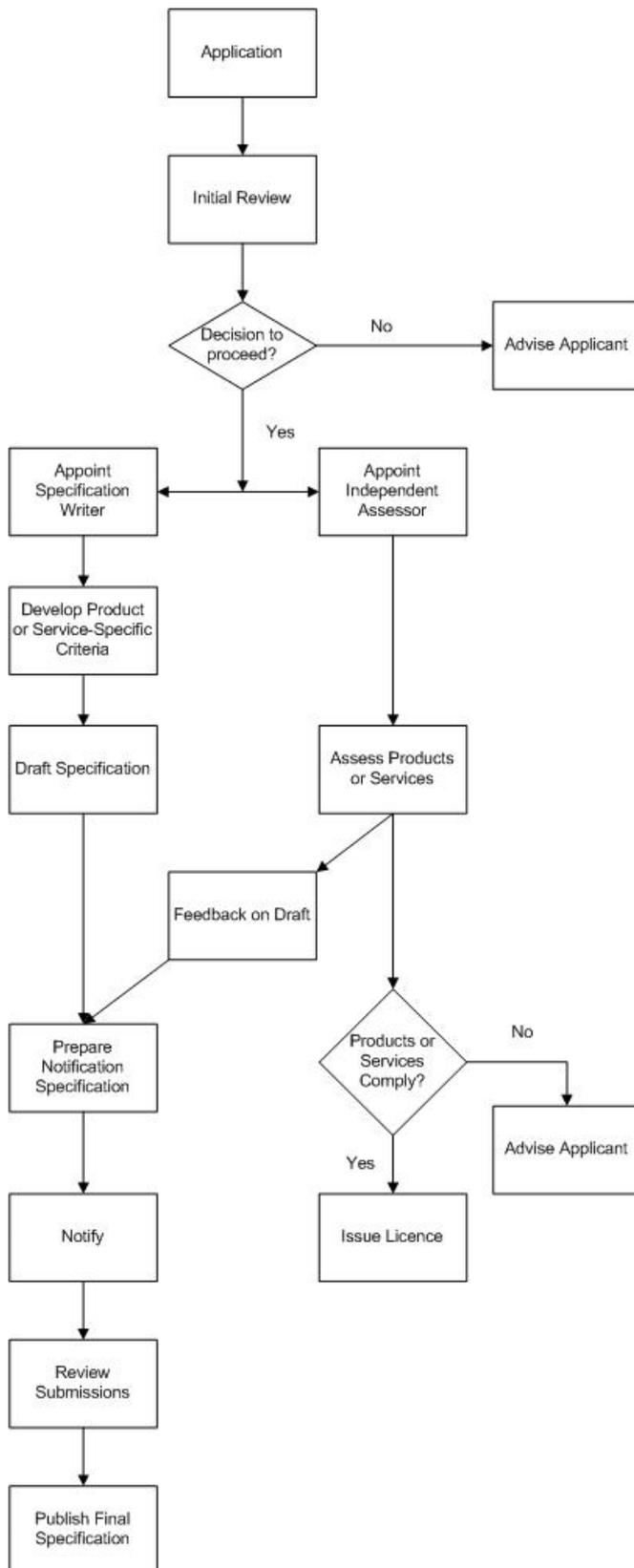
Any advertising must conform to the relevant requirements in, in the Licence Conditions and in the keyline art.

Failure to meet these requirements for using the Environmental Choice Label and advertising could result in the Licence being withdrawn.

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Notes

Applications must include completed **Information Required** form and supporting documents

Review is completed by a trained and experienced ECNZ specification writer & assessor.

Purpose of the review is to establish if there is sufficient information provided and/or readily available from other independent sources to develop life-cycle based product/service criteria

The Trust will liaise with the Applicant based on the recommendations from the initial review and then make a decision to proceed or not.

The Trust will appoint a competent specification writer and a separate assessor from The Trust's ECNZ register of assessors and specification writers

The specification writer follows the ECNZ programme procedures to develop draft criteria. This will include a life cycle approach, review of independently available information and review against the ECNZ programme Principles for specifications.

When a draft specification is ready, the specification writer provides a copy to the independent assessor. The assessor independently assesses the applicant's products or services against the draft specification.

The assessor will provide some feedback to the specification writer on any technical or practical issues associated with interpreting or applying the draft criteria.

The assessor will reach a conclusion as to whether the products or services comply or not with the criteria and report this to The Trust.

The specification writer will review feedback from the experience applying the draft specification and prepare the specification for notification. This will include another test against the ECNZ programme Principles for specifications.

If the applicant's products or services meet the requirements in the specification to be notified, The Trust will issue a Licence at the same time as notifying the specification.

The Trust's normal procedures to receive, review and respond to submissions from any interested parties will be followed

Once the specification is finalised the Licence holder's products or services will need to come into line with any changes to requirements following the normal one-year transition process.

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	Describe end of life issues for your product or service
<p>15. Your Products or Services</p> <p>Describe how your product or service performs against each of the key environmental issues and how this performance compares with the performance of other products or services available. Provide specific information about the benefits of your product or service and the nature, extent and scale of those benefits.</p> <p>Include information that demonstrates that your product or service provides a significant (but not necessarily exclusive) degree of environmental leadership and environmental preference.</p> <p>Note that environmental preference must be considered across the whole life cycle of the product or service. You do not necessarily need to demonstrate benefits in all stages of the life cycle but the information should demonstrate an overall significant environmental advantage. Also note that an advantage in one stage of the life cycle should not lead to some detrimental impact at another stage of the life cycle.</p>	

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