



natureplus e.V.

## **Guideline 1002**

### **Gypsum Boards**

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for the awardance of the eco-label

## 0 Introduction

The International Association for Sustainable Building and Living – natureplus e.V. – has set itself the goal, through the awardance of a quality label (eco-label), of promoting the use of those construction products which are especially suited to achieving the goal of economicsustainability. The three classic pillars of sustainability (the environment, social aspects and the economy) are reflected in natureplus's the three fundamental requirements: the environment, health and functional quality.

Every construction activity encroaches upon the natural environment and is connected with the consumption of limited resources. Our responsibility towards future generations requires us to undertake every effort to reduce these encroachments to the lowest level possible and to limit our use of resources to a necessary minimum. In view of the foreseeable exhaustion of the reserves of fossil fuels, for example, and the dangers to the earth's climate, such an approach is the only possible means to ensure sustainable and socially equitable development. For the building sector this means promoting the use and application of construction products which help to minimize the consumption of fossil fuels and limited resources. It is natureplus's intention to help promote the commercial success of those products which fulfil these demands.

Energy-saving building methods and the avoidance of uncontrolled ventilation facilitates the accumulation of volatile chemical compounds in the interior air that are emitted by building products and the inventory contained within the building. This presents a(n) (avoidable) danger to the health of the occupants. Also, the accretion of chemical contaminants (especially phthalates/plasticisers) from building products on house dust, the increasing use of biocides in everyday products and the dangers posed by mould growth due to negative product characteristics give rise for concern. An increasing proportion of the population are exhibiting reactions, such as allergies, to the negative health-related effects of these construction products. natureplus therefore evaluates the compatibility of construction products, especially in the usage phase, according to strict standards in order to actively promote those materials which pose no risk to health and are, in addition, conducive to a healthy room climate.

The natureplus®-Eco-label is an award for construction products which meet the highest standards of sustainability by exhibiting the best possible performance in terms of the environment, health and functionality. Scope of the assessment is the building material as raw material and as component. Only the best products in a particular product group are eligible for certification in order to act as an orientation for all building professionals and consumers towards the promotion of a culture of sustainable building. The natureplus®-Eco-label has anticipated the requirements of construction products of the European Construction Products Directive EU CPR 305/2011: In the future this regulation requires a declaration of performance with evidence of the sustainable use of natural resources and of compliance with requirements in terms of low impact, over their entire life cycle, on the environmental quality or on the climate, energy-efficiency and the hygiene, health and safety of people. The natureplus®-Eco-label already provides these proofs of performance in relation to the essential characteristics of construction products. This is gauged by natureplus according to criteria and requirements which, as a rule, far exceed the legal requirements and as a minimum comply in each case with the strictest recognised standards applicable.

The natureplus®-Eco-label is classified as a Type I environmental label as per ISO 14024, taking into consideration the EU Ecolabel Regulation and the EMAS regulation on environmental auditing, and is valid across the whole of Europe according to uniform criteria. The pre-requirements for a construction product to be certified with the natureplus®-Eco-label are its especially high performance characteristics in terms of the environment, health and sustainability. The main focuses are on the protection of limited resources by the minimisation of the use of petrochemical substances, sustainable raw material extraction/harvesting, resource-efficient production methods and the longevity of the products. Therefore, building products made from renewable raw materials, raw materials which are unlimited in their availability or from secondary raw materials will be favoured for certification.

## I Application Areas

The following criteria contain the requirements for the awardance of the natureplus eco-label for gypsum boards. The award guideline is to be applied exclusively to those products mentioned in this guideline. Composite systems employing gypsum boards or adhesive-bonded boards are outside the scope of this guideline.

## 2 Award Criteria

The prerequisite for a product to be awarded the natureplus® quality label in accordance with these guidelines is compliance with the following award guidelines:

- GL-5001 Chemicals Directive
- GL-5003 Nature Conservation when Exploiting Mineral Resources
- GL-5004 Transparency and Social Responsibility
- GL-5010 Low-emission building products
- GL-5020 Climate compatibility and energy efficiency

### 2.1 Functional Suitability

The products must comply with the requirements of EN 520. The manufacturer must provide the user with information on constructions, in particular for partition walls, which have been proven to exceed the official requirements relating to sound-proofing and fire protection.

### 2.2 Composition, Forbidden Substances, Substance Restrictions

The product must be made to 99 M-% from mineral and renewable raw materials based upon the state of moisture balance.

The use of hydrophobic (water resistant/repellent) substances in products which are designed for use in areas with increased moisture levels e.g. bathrooms and the use of fibre-glass reinforcement components is permitted, if required, as long as these products are correctly labelled. Any hydrophobic agents employed must not, however, contain organic solvents or softeners. The use of further components and additives must be technically justified. This also applies to components and additives which are supposed to offer additional benefits, for example the ability to bind or break down harmful substances contained in interior room air or to shield against electro-smog. The manufacturer must provide adequate evidence of the functionality of these additional benefits.

The product and any preliminary products must not contain any halogenated isothiazolinones. The use of synthetically produced, so called, nano materials which can detach themselves from the product matrix is not permitted as long as a conclusive evaluation of the health risks and the toxicological risks to the environment of these materials has not been completed. The manufacturer is responsible for providing such proof.

## 2.3 RawMaterial Sourcing, Production of Preliminary Products, Production

The gypsum boards must exhibit an above average ecological performance, in the areas of the conservation of natural resources and energy efficiency in both the extraction of resources and the production process, in order to be eligible for the awardance of the natureplus®-eco Label. A product eligible for certification must exhibit a distinct, above-average performance in at least one of these areas and must not fall below the level of accepted comparative standards in the other areas. The manufacturer must provide suitable proof of compliance with these criteria. For products which are not normally sold in markets beyond national borders, the comparative standards shall be deemed to be the normal industry standards of the domestic country; otherwise the standards of the target country shall apply. Included in these areas are:

The sustainable sourcing/extraction of raw materials

- Particular consideration of the need to protect the natural environment and biodiversity in the extraction of natural gypsum
- The use of suitable secondary raw materials (e.g. flue gas desulphurisation (FGD)-gypsum, industrial gypsum, recycled production and building-site waste)

Resource-efficient production

- The energy efficiency of the dryer and the press
- Reduced production related water consumption
- Reduced atmospheric emissions, especially dust
- Overfulfilment of the ecological indicator requirements

Recycling and reuse

- The recovery of gypsum- and board production waste and its reuse within the production process or an alternative form of reuse
- A system for recycling building-site waste (off-cuts) and/or the reuse of the products

A certificate of origin must be provided for all raw materials. If mineral raw materials are used, the requirements of GL-5003 must be complied with. Evidence of compliance needs to be provided. Evidence must be provided that the gypsum employed within the products is of a pure quality. If flue gas desulphurisation (FGD)-gypsum is used, the manufacturer may demonstrate this through specifications to the supplier relating to the use of high quality fuels, appropriate combustion techniques, filter sequences and regular intake controls. The special paper (card wrapping) must be made to at least 80% from recovered paper.

The manufacturer must demonstrate that a hazardous substance management according to national standards and regulations is available at the production facility for employee protection. Information on dust release and compliance with general dust limit values must be included therein. Where compliance with the general dust limit values or other occupational limit values cannot be guaranteed despite technical and organisational measures, personal protection equipment must be available. It must be aimed for a minimisation of avoidable burdens of the employees.

## 2.4 Usage

The product must not exhibit any unpleasant or foreign smells or odours.

The emissions during use have to be in compliance with the limit values according to section 3.

## 2.5 Recycling/Disposal

The board components must be suitable for recycling. A system for product returns and recycling must be at least in the preparatory stage.

## 2.6 Ecological Parameters

All products in this product group must be manufactured in such a way that the ecological parameters listed in RL 5020 are fulfilled.

## 2.7 Declaration

The product packaging should display a full declaration of the input materials listed, analogue to the EU-Cosmetic Regulations, according to the declining mass percentage. If it is not possible to display this information directly on the product packing, it should be provided with the product in a technical datasheet or sales leaflet (in English or in the national language). If intermediate/preliminary products or formulations are used as input substances and the proportion present in the final product is  $>0.1$  M-%, then all the substances used within these must also be taken into account for the declaration.

For naming the input materials as part of the declaration the following applies:

- More than 1 M-% - designation of the substance in question
- Less than 1 M-% - at least a functional designation (e.g. "moth proofing agent")

Furthermore, it is obligatory to provide the following information in a suitable form to the consumer or user (eg. online):

- Instructions for use and safety precautions
- Indications for storage and disposal
- Batch numbers
- City/town and country of production
- Indication of geographical origin of the key input material

When employing components with a potential for environmental hazard, the manufacturer has to suitably indicate measures to be taken to ensure environmental protection during removal and demolition (i.e. controlled deconstruction).

Additionally, the following product-specific information must be made available to the consumer or user.

- Board type according to EN 520 or a national standard (e.g. ÖN B 3410 and DIN 18180)
- Awardance reason as per 2.3 (field of above-average performance)

For the constructions referred to in section 2.1, both the numerical value of the rated sound insulation value  $R'w$  (for Germany or a corresponding national standard) and the fire resistance class must be declared in the product literature/data sheet.

## 2.8 Processing and Installation

When bonding the boards or the joints with adhesive, it must be possible to use a natureplus certified adhesive or a very low emission adhesive product in accordance with EMICODE ECI or a comparable standard (e.g. "Blauer Engel" – the Blue Angel environmental quality label). The manufacturer must include a reference to at least one of these products within the product documentation.

The manufacturer must demonstrate whether working procedures avoiding dust release are available for the processing of the product. If this is the case, these procedures are to be recommended and suitably presented within the processing guidelines. If compliance with the general dust limit values might not be guaranteed, wearing personal protection equipment must be recommended. For glass fibre reinforced boards, proof must be supplied that no respirable fibres can issue from the reinforcement material – even if the boards are cut, sawn or drilled into.

## 2.9 Packaging

The packaging used must be recyclable. The manufacturer must belong to a recycling system, if one exists for the corresponding material.

Paper and cardboard packaging must be made from recycled paper. Alternatively, paper from sources as per GL-5002 is also permitted.

Plastic packaging must be made from polyolefins. PET, polystyrene or polycarbonates are allowed exceptionally in reasonable cases.

PVC packaging is generally not permitted.

Packaging must not contain biocides.

The natureplus certification mark has to be printed on the packaging after it has been awarded.

## 3 Laboratory Tests

The products are subject to laboratory analyses to test for harmful substances and undesirable ancillary ingredients. A representative sample is collected during the production audit. If the sample collection cannot be conducted by a natureplus examiner, an independent person designated by natureplus can collect the sample. For products with different sizes but the same composition, a single sample is sufficient.

### 3.1 Volatile Organic Compounds VOC / TVOC

To check the emission of VOC and to determine the TVOC and TSVOC, an emission chamber test is carried out with the product. Measurements are usually performed after 3 and 28 days. If a low VOC emission is to be expected, a termination measurement can also be carried out after 7 days. The test-chamber examination is performed according to the current version of natureplus guideline 5010. The product must comply with the limit values specified in guideline 5010.

### 3.2 Element Analyses

The product is subject to an element analysis to determine the content of harmful elements and to check for undesirable contaminations. The measurements have to be in compliance with the limit values. The analysis is performed according to the current version of the test method TM-02 metals.

Element	Limit value [mg/kg]
Arsenic (As)	≤ 5
Cadmium (Cd)	≤ 1
Chromium (Cr)	≤ 20
Copper (Cu)	≤ 35
Mercury (Hg)	≤ 1
Molybdenum (Mo)	≤ 5
Nickel (Ni)	≤ 20
Lead (Pb)	≤ 15
Antimon (Sb)	≤ 5
Selen (Se)	≤ 10
Tin (Sn)	≤ 5
Thallium (Tl)	≤ 1
Zinc (Zn)	≤ 300

### 3.3 Other Analyses

#### Halogenic organic compounds

Test parameters	Limit values	Unit	Method
Halogenic organic compounds: AOX/EOX	≤ 1	mg/kg	TM-03 Halo

#### Odour

Test parameters	Limit values	Unit	Method
Odour	≤ 3	Odour intensity	TM-04 Odour