natureplus e.V.

# Guideline 5004

# Transparency and Social Responsibility

Version: July 22, 2022
for the awardance of the eco-label

The origin, cultivation and harvesting conditions of renewable raw materials and the conditions relating to the extraction/mining of raw materials and secondary raw materials as well as their processing along the whole of the value chain shall be transparent and provided in a comprehensible form. Transparency also enables the improved recycling of raw materials through the development of collection and recycling infrastructures and the associated reprocessing technologies. This approach leads to resource efficiency improvements, a lowering of waste levels and a reduction in the amounts of raw materials harvested or extracted.

The aim is to ensure transparency by a complete and comprehensive proof of the chain of custody, without omissions, for the supply chain, which should extend as far back as the extraction/harvesting of the primary raw materials. Starting with this extraction the whole value chain must be detailed. The capacity to do so is highly restricted, because reliable verifications exist only in few sectors. In general, it shall be ensured that the raw materials and input components employed have been sourced and acquired in a socially responsible manner and that the production processes meet the basic requirements of social responsibility.

The transparency of the value chain is ensured by the data capture form for the product declaration, by special documentation of the supply chain and by the declaration of the input components on the product. Compliance with the requirements for social responsibility are checked within the framework of the production site inspections and the main assessment.

Documentary evidence of the proof of origin must be provided for all raw materials, pre-fabricated products and input components.

The company must demonstrate and provide evidence of compliance to the following principles of Social Responsibility in the production site and across the supply chain:

1. The ban on child labour and forced labour in accordance with the ILO-Conventions (ILO =International Labour Organisation) 29, 105, 138 and 182.
2. Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (ILO Conventions 87 and 98).
3. Equal Remuneration Convention and non-discrimination in the workplace (ILO Conventions 100 and 111).
4. Compliance with occupational health and safety requirements, if statutory regulations apply.
5. Compliance with international standards for ethical business practises (e.g. proscription of corruption, observance of the law, protection of human rights).

6. Raw materials and pre-fabricated products must not originate from crisis/conflict regions or civil war zones.
7. To avoid jeopardizing the livelihoods of the local population through the extraction/harvesting of raw materials, their processing or the manufacture of products, for example through dispossessions of land and evictions, forced resettlements or impairment of the food security situation.
8. Upholding the rights of indigenous peoples and the maintenance of cultural values.

Options to prove compliance with the above-mentioned requirements are:

- The manufacturer of the building material in question has a company policy which contains principles and processes specifically intended to prevent corruption and bribery, to prevent negative ecological and social impacts when dealing with raw or secondary materials (e.g. conflict minerals) and which aim to prevent violations of human rights.
- The manufacturer produces a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) report in accordance with recognized standards (ISO-Standard 26000 "Guidance on Social Responsibility", ILO-coreworking conventions, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) etc.), which is freely and publicly accessible to all interested parties. The report provides information on responsible business activities relating to the commercial dealings of the company, in particular on the most important environmental and socially relevant aspects.
- The manufacturer assures by binding declaration the compliance to the above-mentioned requirements for his company as well as for the companies involved in the supply chain.

If none of these options applies, the manufacturer must provide evidence of compliance from his suppliers. Internationally recognized labels as GOTS or Fair Stone shall be introduced as reference if possible. Raw materials and input components with a mass share of less than 5 % can be disregarded as long as there is no valid suspicion of conflict. This leads to the request for the manufacturer to provide declarations of conformity from specific suppliers of raw materials and input components.

In the case this is not possible and a valid suspicion of serious conflict with the above-mentioned principles is stated for a particular company of the supply chain, the award of the label is suspended up to the successful completion of this process or the replacement of the critical input component.

The company must operate a safety and hazardous substance management at the production site. Proof of compliance with occupational health and safety measures

(avoidance/prevention of work-related accidents / protection of employees from potential hazards and sources of danger like dust, toxic substances, electricity etc.) on the production site must be provided. The employer must provide all necessary personal protective equipment in sufficient quantities.

The transparency of the material flows within the production site must also be ensured. A system must be employed at the production site to prevent any mix-ups between input materials. If raw materials are purchased from various suppliers, a verifiable, documentary record of the purchases must be available. If, due to different origins of the raw materials, there is a possibility of variations in the quality of the raw materials, these must be investigated and documented. All changes in product composition, if very relevant for product quality, must be reported before they are executed.

The product quality is to be ensured by means of a quality control system for the essential product characteristics related to the declaration of performance. A record of the results of the quality control measures conducted must be provided. Further records concerning the quality of the company's processes, in particular of waste management, consumption of water and energy, must be provided.