

BEC GUIDE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION



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1.1 What is Sustainable Consumption?

Sustainable Consumption refers to “the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardise the needs of further generations”¹. In more recent years, the scope has been expanded to not only cover the environment but also include social and economic aspects.

Sustainable Consumption is not just about buying more sustainable products but also includes the way of living, going beyond mainstream consumption practices. Some examples of a more sustainable lifestyle include refusing to consume when not necessary, taking unsustainable options out of the market and switching from products to services.

It has an essential role in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Among the 17 SDGs established by the United Nations in 2015, at least three are directly related to Sustainable Consumption. They are namely Goal 12: “Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns”; Goal 14: “Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources” and Goal 15: “Sustainably Manage Forests, Combat Desertification, Halt and Reverse Land Degradation, Halt Biodiversity Loss”. The Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity has also identified the linkage between biodiversity and sustainable consumption in the document Biodiversity and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Technical Note.”

¹ Oslo Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (1994). The Imperative of Sustainable Production and Consumption: Defining sustainable consumption. Accessible: <http://enb.iisd.org/consume/oslo000.html>

1.2 Why is Sustainable Consumption important?



Current consumption patterns have caused huge pressure on the planet. With global population expected to grow from 7.6 billion in 2017 to 9.8 billion by 2050², and more people joining the middle class, the environment will suffer irreversible damage if our unsustainable lifestyle continues. On one hand, individual welfare improves with increasing prosperity; on the other hand, higher demand for resources creates a variety of environmental and social problems.

Hong Kong, being one of the most prosperous cities in the world, imports and consumes large quantity of products every day to maintain and continuously improve the living standard of society and the city's competitiveness. However, society is also confronted with a range of sustainability issues, such as inadequate space for waste treatment, harbour pollution, depletion of natural resources such as damaging the continuity of sea food species, excessive use of chemical fertiliser and pesticide, contamination of food supply chain etc. Evidently, individual consumers and business are major contributors to the city's ecological footprint.

Other than environmental concerns, provision of products and services with socially responsible manner and benefits to local communities are also crucial elements of a sustainable society. The success of sustainable consumption depends on the availability of sustainable products and services in the market and consumers that can support by choosing sustainable products and services.

1.3 Aim of this Guide



of overexploitation and unsustainable consumption. This guide echoes the action of promoting sustainable consumption of biological resources (Action 22) in the Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2021.

In addition, the Hong Kong Consumer Council published the "Sustainable Consumption for a Better Future – A Study on Consumer Behavior and Business Reporting" study report in February 2016, stating that "not enough information" and "not easy to acquire" are the 2 major factors which prevent respondents from consuming more sustainably.

The Business Environment Council has developed this guide to enable sustainable consumption for Hong Kong businesses and the community by introducing the concept of sustainable consumption and providing information about common sustainable features of products and services found in Hong Kong society.



² United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Council for Sustainable Development

The Council for Sustainable Development was established by the Chief Executive as one of the initiatives to promote sustainability in Hong Kong. The terms of reference of the Council are -

- To advise the Government on the priority areas it should address in promoting sustainable development;
- To advise on the preparation of a sustainable development strategy for Hong Kong that will integrate economic, social and environmental perspectives;
- To facilitate community participation in the promotion of sustainable development in Hong Kong through various means, including the award of grants from the Sustainable Development Fund; and
- To promote public awareness and understanding of the principles of sustainable development.

Members of the Council are appointed by the Chief Executive and include people with experience and expertise in the environmental, social and business sectors, as well as senior government officials. The Council is a forum for exchanging views on key issues related to Hong Kong's long term sustainability.



Business Environment Council

Business Environment Council Limited
商界環保協會有限公司 (BEC) is an independent, charitable membership organisation, established by the business sector in Hong Kong.



Since its establishment in 1992, BEC has been at the forefront of promoting environmental excellence by advocating the uptake of clean technologies and practices which reduce waste, conserve resources, prevent pollution and improve corporate environmental and social responsibility.

BEC offers sustainable solutions and professional services covering advisory, research, assessment, training and award programmes for government, business and the community, thus enabling environmental protection and contributing to the transition to a low carbon economy.

2. SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE CLAIM



Product and service suppliers generally disclose the performance of their products / services on the product packaging, promotional materials or specification documents. Consumers should be able to obtain the information about sustainable products in the forms of product labels or descriptions provided by suppliers without much difficulty. Information about the product or service performance might be too simple for explaining a particular sustainable feature and principles, or technical terms used on the label name itself are confusing to consumers, as well as commercial buyers. The question of how to determine whether the information provided is trustworthy becomes important for concerned parties.

2.1 Sustainable Product Performance Claim

In Hong Kong, most consumer products are imported from overseas, with product performance described using labels from international or local product standards, certification scheme or regulation of other countries. Since there are many different product performance claims existing on the market for various product categories, some confusion may be caused to consumers during product selection. As it stands, it is crucial for consumers and corporates to clearly distinguish the different forms of performance information disclosure. Most of the product performance information is presented by producers / suppliers in the following formats:



Self-declaration (without third-party verification) by product producers



Certification scheme with label printed on the product or certificate document provided by suppliers



Third-party verification



Product test report

2.1.1 Product Performance Self-Declaration

Self-declaration is one of the common form of claims made by producers or retailers regarding the sustainable performance of a particular product / service. Such information could refer to any environmental or social feature of a product, such as its eco-friendly materials used as well as its overall multi-attribute benefits. The claim statement is mainly found on product packaging or promotional materials, such as the product catalogue, and it may be presented in the form of a written description or graphics designed by suppliers themselves. In principle, product or service suppliers are obligated to provide supporting evidence of their claims on request.

2.1.2 Product Performance Certification and Labelling Scheme

Product certification is the procedure which a product is being assured that it conforms with certain pre-defined product standards, normally upon product test or/and assessment by an independent certification body. As a result, a written assurance, i.e. "certificate", is issued by the certification body as a formal statement of the successful certification decision for meeting the product standards. A well-established certification system would be a credible form of information communication, especially within the commercial and industrial world.

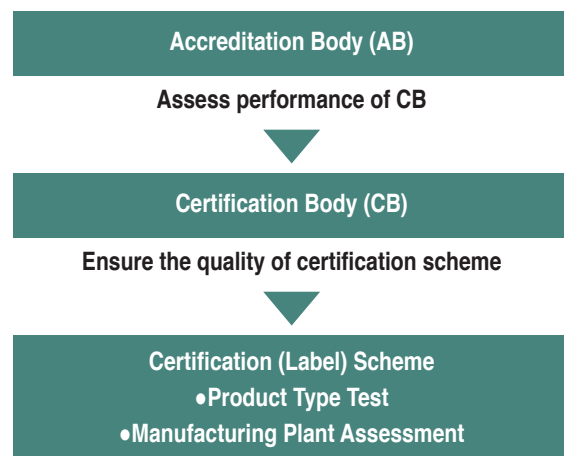
Typically, a certification logo, i.e. label, will be granted to the product producer or supplier for them to put onto the certified product or its packaging. The product certification label can represent information of a product performance for either a single attribute or multiple attributes, depending on the type of issues the certification scheme addresses.

- Single-criterion product certification: a product which complies with a particular product performance criterion - e.g. a notebook made by at least 50% post-consumer recycled paper.
- Multiple-criteria product certification: a product which complies with a set of product performance criteria - e.g. an electric fan produced with an environmentally friendly design including energy saving features, eco-packaging and replaceable parts.

As mentioned, a certification body is an independent organisation which executes the certification programmes, sometimes including the standard-setting part. In order to secure the capacity of the certification bodies for carrying out a credible certification scheme, they are usually evaluated by the government for accreditation.

Note: The accreditation process normally requires the authoritative body to verify compliance by the certifier with certain guidelines set by international organisations such as ISO. As a result, an accredited certification body shall be assured for the authenticity of its product standards and certificates issued.

TYPICAL PRODUCT CERTIFICATION GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



2.1.3 Product Performance Verification

Verification is the process for checking that a product or service fulfils certain requirements or specification claimed by the product producer / supplier. For products, it is important for consumers to find out if the claim made by the product producer / supplier is verified by a disinterested third party. Normally, product performance verification is conducted through many methods, including document review, data analysis, product test, or production site inspection. To obtain such information, a consumer may need to contact the product supplier or manufacturer directly and, in some cases, a statement or report would be made by suppliers to indicate that the specification claims have been verified.

2.1.4 Product Performance Laboratory Test



Product test is commonly undertaken by producers or suppliers to examine the specification or sustainable performance of a product. The test could be taken in a laboratory against a certain product standard or a set of standards. For certain products / services, product standards are established by the government and suppliers are legally required to conduct product tests. Consumers or commercial buyers could request for the test results or reports as suppliers shall keep those records.

2.2 Sustainable Service Performance Claim

Sustainable services refer to services which are delivered with sustainable manner such as installation or application of sustainable products during services delivery. Service providers usually explain services sustainability performance in its service agreement as standard or tailored service package.

2.2.1 Commitment in Using Sustainable Product During Service Delivery

As more consumers are aware of the impact on society from consumption behaviour, service providers deliver their services in a sustainable manner as a value-added element and to have a competitive advantage. For example, an interior design service can make suggestions on using sustainable materials, furniture and energy saving products, whilst banquet venue providers can offer packages that including sustainable seafood and organic vegetable. Service providers will put their commitment in using sustainable products in their service agreements and provide evidence of their sustainable performance claim.

3. TYPE OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Sustainable consumption is related to the use of products and services which are concerned with the benefits and impacts they have on society. The selection of sustainable products and services is important for the transition towards becoming a more sustainable society. In this section, the definition of “sustainable products and services” will be discussed, and the relationship between products and their associated benefits and impacts will be explained. Products and services can be produced and delivered with different sustainable properties which are categorised by this guide as below:

-  Biodiversity-friendly
-  Environmentally Friendly
-  Socially Responsible
-  Products from Social Enterprises
-  Sustainable Poultry and Livestock

3.1 Biodiversity-friendly



Biodiversity refers to the variety of life forms on Earth, which is measured at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels. Species diversity includes different types of animals, plants and microbes. To a much broader extent, biodiversity also includes different types of ecosystems, such as mudflats, streams, mangroves, forests and coral reefs, together with the species living there and the interactions among them. It is important to human beings as we depend on the availability of biological resources for provision of food, medicine, timber, cotton and other raw materials to sustain our basic living requirements. Apart from providing these essential resources that we rely on every day, the ecosystem also accounts for the provision of regulating services for the planet such as climate regulation, disease control, protection against floods and cultural services that complement human values. These ecosystem services are vital to human well-being and hence should be sustainably consumed and managed.

Biodiversity is often taken for granted, however, unsustainable consumption by human beings are placing increasing pressure to the existence of species and ecosystems. This includes over-fishing and over-exploitation of biological resources, overuse of forest and land, destruction and fragmentation of habitats and contamination that cause irreversible damage to species. Therefore, the loss of biodiversity is dangerous and the next generation will be suffering from its immediate consequences, for instance, food security and water shortage problems may arise.

Consumers are responsible for stopping the loss and should be careful during consumption, especially when choosing agricultural, forestry and fisheries-related products. Biodiversity-friendly products can prevent the loss of habitats during raw materials extraction and encourage the protection of ecosystems and species diversity. The most commonly found product labels addressing biodiversity concerns are those certified for sustainable forestry, sustainable fishing and farming practices.



Sustainable Forest
Management

• Sustainable Forest Management

Forests serve as homes for various types of living things and also helps to stabilise the climate by regulating carbon and water cycles. Therefore, forest damage will directly cause negative impacts on the ecosystem and climate change. Sustainable Forest Management means that a forest is managed in a sustainable way and protected from over-harvest, trees have to be replanted in order to maintain a balance between the demand for the forest's natural resources and the vitality of the forest.



Sustainable
Fisheries

• Sustainable Fisheries

Most of the fish products we obtain today are sourced from fishing and aquaculture practices. The sustainability of capture fisheries depends on sound fishery management that helps to maintain a healthy and productive marine ecosystem. Sustainable fisheries can ensure fish stock to be harvested at a sustainable rate through implementing fishing practices, fisheries and seafood businesses that do not cause a decline of fish population over time if they target to maintain an ecological balance. The stock structure of fish populations can be maintained by preventing over-fishing through several approaches, such as limiting fishing seasons and enforcing strict fishing area control. Sustainable fishing practices such as changes in fishing gear may also help to reduce bycatch and minimise interactions with sea mammals and birds. Apart from fishing practice, sustainable operation mode of fish farms is another solution to prevent over-exploitation of fisheries. This can guarantee the natural environment, water resources and biodiversity to be well-preserved and also encourage the responsible use of animal feed and other resources. To save endangered seafood species, some green groups promote the concept of sustainable seafood, where endangered seafood species are identified and recommended the general public not to or less consume those identified endangered seafood species.



Sustainable
Farming Practice

• Sustainable Farming Practice (e.g. Organic Farming)

Decades of continuous usage of chemical fertilisers and pesticides reduce soil fertility and cause underground water contamination. Chemical fertilisers' and pesticides' impacts on health of human beings are controversial. To maintain a sustainable agricultural system, organic farming methods have been promoting, by avoiding or largely excluding the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, genetically-modified seeds and other synthetic chemical to avoid the damage to the ecosystem.

3.2 Environmentally Friendly



Environmentally-friendly products are generally defined as products which cause minimal or no harm to the environment. Environmental concerns, such as air and water quality, soil contamination, hazardous chemicals, waste management, energy saving and climate change etc., are directly related to our living environment, food supply chain, climate condition and human health. Therefore, the environmental impact caused by a product should be considered during product purchasing. Product life cycle thinking is a common method used for reviewing the environmental impact caused by a particular product. The environmental impact of a product is not only caused from its usage and disposal, but also includes its whole life cycle from material extraction, product manufacturing and transportation to product in-use and disposal. For example, paper products have no pollution caused during product in-use stage but it causes forest resource depletion and chemical discharge waste during the manufacturing stage.

Life Cycle Impact Assessment

Phase of life cycle assessment aims at understanding and evaluating the magnitude and significance of the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout the life cycle of the product

Source : ISO 14040





Energy Efficient

• Energy Efficient

Electricity is generated from the burning of coal, petroleum and natural gas that are regarded as non-renewable resources. These resources cannot be replenished in meaningful human timeframes once being consumed. As a result, energy crisis may arise if electricity is not consumed sustainably. Efficient energy use is a concept to conserve energy by reducing the amount of energy required for provision of products and services. Energy efficiency can be generally improved by adoption of a more efficient production process or technology such as the installation of LED lightings. Besides, increasing energy efficiency can also reduce the greenhouse gas emissions caused by the combustion of fossil fuels. This may help mitigating the problem of climate change.



Water Efficient

• Water Efficient

Water efficiency can be achieved by using the minimal amount of water to fulfil a particular action with an understanding of the actual amount of water that need to be delivered. This concept is somewhat different from water conservation as it reduces water wastage instead of limiting the amount of water that can be used. Water efficient products should be able to save water use without compromising the quality of the service to be provided.

Restriction on Use of
Hazardous Chemicals

• Restriction on Use of Hazardous Chemicals

To reduce air, soil and water pollution, the restriction on the use of hazardous materials during production can be effective. The Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive (RoHS) is a typical standard aiming to limit the use of toxic substances in electronic products, for example, lead, mercury, cadmium etc. Upon adoption of RoHS or other chemical restriction standards, manufacturers may develop their own marks to demonstrate compliance. Different chemical substances that are posing environmental threats for various product types, for instance, consumers are encouraged to select chlorine-free paper products as chlorine bleaching of the paper pulp releases large amounts of dioxin, which is a persistent environmental pollutant that is proven hazardous to human and ecological health.



Recyclable

• Recyclable

Recyclable is defined as a post-consumer product that could be entirely or partially recycled into useful materials such as paper, plastic, glass and wood. It helps society to save natural resources and reduce waste quantity generated from our daily life. However, there are some products which are not easily recycled or can not be recycled, such as paper with plastic coating, gift items, as they are made from different types of materials and cannot be disassembled.



Made of
Recycled Materials

• Made of Recycled Materials

Recycled content items are produced with recovered materials from manufacturing processes or post-consumer products. Products with higher recycled content are more environmentally preferable since they are able to achieve a greater conservation of natural resources. Example of products with recycled content include printing paper, napkins and garbage bags.



Biodegradable

• Biodegradable

A biodegradable product will completely break down and return to nature, by decomposing into elements found in nature within a reasonably short period of time after customary disposal. For examples, food scraps, cotton, wool, and paper are bio-degradable; while plastics and polyester generally are not.



Compostable

• Compostable

A compostable product refers to biodegradation into soil conditioning material (i.e., compost) under certain conditions. Compostable products undergo degradation by biological processes during composting to yield carbon dioxide (CO₂), water, inorganic compounds, and biomass at a rate consistent with other known compostable materials and that leaves no visible, distinguishable, or toxic residue. ASTM Standards D6400 and D6868 outline the specifications that must be met in order to label a plastic as commercially “compostable”.



Carbon Emission
Awareness

• Carbon Emission Awareness

Carbon emission is known as a main cause of global warming, greatly contributed by the production and consumption of products and services. A product's carbon footprint is the total sum of greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂e) produced throughout a product's lifecycle, including emissions produced during production, distribution and use of the product. The total carbon footprint of a product can be quantified for understanding its impact on climate change. “Carbon Neutral” means that the carbon footprint of a product is off-set by purchasing carbon credit from verified carbon mitigation projects.



Low VOC-emission

• Low VOC-emission

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) include both man-made and naturally-occurring chemical compounds. Coatings, especially protective coatings and paints found on wall, are a major source of man-made VOC emission. These man-made chemicals usually carry strong scents and odor due to their volatile nature. VOCs are responsible for the formation of smog and thus leading to adverse impact on human health and hazardous to the environment. Some of the organic compounds are known to cause various health risks identified in animals and human. For example, exposure to formaldehyde from paints may pose adverse health effects in people. Consumers should procure products that contain low VOC or no VOC in order to reduce exposure to these chemicals compounds.



Eco-packaging

• Eco-packaging

The aim of sustainable packaging design is to reduce the use of natural resources, pollution and waste generation to landfills. This includes the use of biodegradable and compostable materials, renewable resources and recycled materials in packaging, as well as applying physical design to reduce material useage in packaging. Reusable packaging can well enhance eco-friendliness as less waste is being produced.

3.3 Socially Responsible

Socially responsible business is a description of business manner in which organisations behave to improve the quality of life of the workforce and their families, as well as the local community and society at large, while looking for economic development. Socially responsible business manner can benefit the society by improving overall living standards and welfare conditions. Examples of socially responsible behavior include fair wages, safe working conditions and prohibition of forced and child labour.

Good Labour
Practice

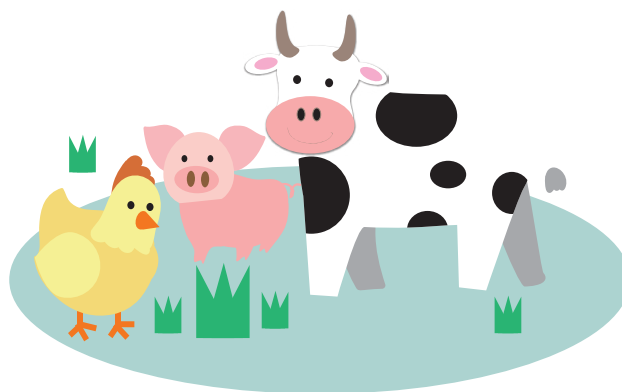
• Good Labour Practice

Labour welfare and conditions are indispensable parts of responsible production. Socially responsible employers have the obligation to safeguard the basic rights of workers, including the right of negotiating on wages and conditions to work in a safe environment. Minimum wage for workers have to be established to allow them to be able to sustain their essential living needs. Apart from reasonable wages for workers, discrimination and forced or illegal child labour should be prohibited. Providing better working environments and offering higher standards of living to workers can increase the productivity of the entire production process, which in turn contribute to the quality of the products being manufactured.

Social Capital

Social capital refers to the institutions, relationships and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. Social capital includes social norms (personal attitudes and social values), networks and institutions. Social cohesion is essential for the economic prosperity and long-term sustainable development of a society. Social capital holds people and institutions together to work for the common good.

Source: Community Investment and Inclusion Fund, Labour and Welfare Bureau,
<http://www.ciif.gov.hk/en/about-ciif/fund-objectives.html>

3.5 Sustainable Poultry and Livestock

Human depends heavily on poultry and livestock for food and other derivative products. In order to provide large quantities of poultry and livestock food products every day at a competitive price, some organisations have used artificial feed, growth hormones and antibiotics to entertain the pursuit of quantity and efficiency. However, the unnatural farming methodologies will cause existence and accumulation of chemical substances in the food supply chain, which then would be consumed by people. Sustainable poultry and livestock refers to natural farming processes which do not using unnecessary chemicals.



Organic Poultry
and Livestock

• Organic Poultry and Livestock

“Organic poultry and livestock” commonly indicates that animal products are produced using the natural method by following a set of criteria, such as not using any synthetic fertilizers or pesticides and the animal feed is not genetically modified and is free of hormones, antibiotic, chemicals. Also, healthy and humane treatment should be guaranteed to protect the welfare of animals. The United States, Europe and some other countries have set its standard for organic food in the market.



Antibiotic-free and
No Hormones Added

• Antibiotic-free and No Hormones Added

Antibiotics and growth hormones should not be used for raising sustainable poultry and livestock as they leave chemical residues within the animal body and accumulate toxins along the food chain. Farmers must rely on animal selection and other sustainable management practices to cure diseased animals. Only a few drugs, such as vaccines, are allowed for the medical treatment of poultry and livestock raised in farms.

3.6 Examples of Common Product Certification Label

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
Accredited Farm Scheme 	Vegetable Marketing Organisation (VMO) & The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) Locality: Hong Kong	Sustainable Farming Practice	<p>VMO and AFCD have been jointly running the Accredited Farm Scheme since 1994. The scheme accredited vegetables farms in Hong Kong or other regions in the Mainland operated by Hong Kong citizens for adoption of good horticultural practices and proper use of pesticides. Accredited vegetables are sampled and tested to ensure that there is no excess pesticide residue before distribution for sale at retailer outlets designated by VMO. Consumers can identify these outlets by the VMO 'accredited retailers logo carried by the retailers.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://www.vmo.org/en/index/page_scheme/item_accruitedfarm/</p>
Accredited Fish Farm Scheme 	The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) Locality: Hong Kong	Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture	<p>Under the accredited fish farm scheme, participating farms need to meet a set of good aquaculture practices and hygiene standards, and to follow a predefined management regime. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will administer the accredited fish farm scheme; carry out farm inspections and provide necessary technical support. Regular monitoring will be conducted throughout the culture period. Before marketing of fish, quality assurance tests will be performed and products with satisfactory results can be marketed under the unique brand name of the scheme.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://www.hkaffs.org/en/background.html</p>
Agriculture Biologique 	Agence Bio Locality: France	Sustainable Farming Practice	<p>France's national logo for organic products since 1985. Organic products carrying the logo should contain more than 95 percent organic components, and be produced or processed within the EU, and are certified by one of the inspection bodies accredited according to EN 45011.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://www.agencebio.org/</p>
BioGro Certification 	BioGro Locality: New Zealand	Sustainable Farming Practice/ Organic Poultry and Livestock	<p>The BioGro logo guarantees a product has been made without GMO, animal testing and the routine use of synthetic pesticides. BioGro certified producers carry the BioGro logo on their products to assure consumers that the products they bought are genuine organic.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://www.biogro.co.nz/</p>

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
Bluesign® 	bluesign technologies ag Locality: Switzerland	Restriction on Use of Hazardous Chemical	<p>The bluesign® system is the solution for a sustainable textile production. It eliminates harmful substances right from the beginning of the manufacturing process and sets and controls standards for an environmentally friendly and safe production. This not only ensures that the final textile product meets very stringent consumer safety requirements worldwide but also provides confidence to the consumer to acquire a sustainable product.</p> <p>bluesign technologies ag was founded in 2000. Since then, the bluesign® system has been adopted by worldwide leading textile and accessory manufacturers. Various significant key players of the chemical and machine industry rely on the bluesign® system. And well-known brands of the outdoor, sportswear and fashion industry rely on the extensive knowledge of bluesign technologies.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.bluesign.com/</p>
Canadian Organic Standards 	Canadian Food Inspection Agency Locality: Canada	Sustainable Farming Practice	<p>The Canadian Organic Standards require producers to utilise management methods designed to restore and sustain ecological stability on their farming facilities and surrounding environment.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://bit.ly/2tCfWiF</p>
Carbon Trust 	Carbon Trust Locality: UK	Carbon Emission Awareness	<p>Carbon Trust Certification is an independent certification body for product footprints to provide greenhouse gas verification. The Footprint Label shows the efforts to measure and reduce the resource footprint of product, thereby reducing cost and demonstrating clearly the commitment to environmental sustainability.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.carbontrust.com/home/</p>
EU Ecolabel 	European Commission Locality: European Union	Environmentally Friendly	<p>The ecolabel developed specific criteria for different product types, with a focus on the stages of its manufacturing or usage that has the highest environmental impact.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/</p>

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
EU Organic Farming 	European Commission Locality: European Union	Sustainable Farming Practice	<p>The EU organic logo indicates that this product can be legally qualified organic because it is in full conformity with the conditions and regulations for the organic farming sector established by the European Union. For processed products it means that at least 95% of the agricultural ingredients are organic.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/index_en</p>
Fair For Life 	Ecocert S.A. Locality: France	Fair Trade	<p>This label represents a certification programme for social accountability and fair trade. It mainly focuses on agricultural, manufacturing and trading operations.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://www.fairforlife.org</p>
Fair Trade Certified 	Fair Trade USA Locality: US	Fair Trade	<p>Fair Trade USA works closely with producers, suppliers and companies to ensure that the people making Fair Trade Certified goods work in safe conditions, protect the environment, build sustainable livelihoods, and earn additional money to empower their communities. They accomplish this through the implementation of rigorous social, environmental, and economic standards.</p> <p>More information will be available at: http://fairtradeusa.org/what-is-fair-trade</p>
Fairtrade Mark 	Fairtrade International Locality: Global	Fair Trade	<p>Fairtrade is an ethical trade system that puts people first. It is aimed to support the sustainable development of small-scale producers and agricultural workers in developing countries in order to improve their living quality and invest in their future. Moreover, it provides consumers an opportunity to help reduce poverty and instigate change through everyday shopping.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.fairtrade.net</p>
Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC™) 	Forest Stewardship Council Locality: Global	Sustainable Forestry	<p>The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC™) is a global not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting responsible forest management around the world. Officially founded in 1994 with a mission to stop global deforestation, the FSC certification scheme ensures that forests products are responsibly managed and harvested.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://blogapac.fsc.org/</p>

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
Global Organic Textile Standard 	OTA (USA), IVN (Germany), Soil Association (UK) and JOCA (Japan) Locality: US, Germany, UK, Japan	Restriction on Use of Hazardous Chemical / Sustainable Farming Practice/ Good Manufacturing Conditions	Only textile products that contain a minimum of 70% organic fibres can become GOTS certified. All chemical inputs such as dyestuffs and auxiliaries used must meet certain environmental and toxicological criteria. The choice of accessories is limited in accordance with ecological aspects as well. A functional waste water treatment plant is mandatory for any wet-processing unit involved and all processors must comply with social criteria. More information will be available at: http://www.global-standard.org/
Good Environmental Choice Australia 	Australian Environmental Labelling Association Locality: Australia	Environmentally Friendly	This label ensures that the products and services are more sustainable and reduce the impacts on the environment and human health based on criteria for different product types. More information will be available at: http://www.geca.org.au/
Hong Kong Green Label (HKGLS) 	Green Council Locality: Hong Kong	Environmentally Friendly	The Hong Kong Green Label Scheme (HKGLS) is an independent, non-profit-making and voluntary scheme for the certification of environmentally preferable products launched in December 2000 by the Green Council. The scheme sets environmental standards and awards its "Green Label" to products that are qualified regarding their environment attributes and/or performance. As with all ecolabelling schemes, the aim is to encourage manufacturers to supply products with good environmental performance and provide a convenient means for consumers to recognise products that are more environmentally responsible, thus promoting a more sustainable pattern of consumption. More information will be available at: http://www.greencouncil.org/en/page.php?sub_id=5
HKGBC Green Product Accreditation and Standards (HK G-PASS) 	Hong Kong Green Building Council Limited (HKGBC) Locality: Hong Kong	Environmentally Friendly	The HKGBC Green Product Accreditation and Standards (HK G-PASS) is a Hong Kong-based labelling scheme, launched in January 2015, to certify environmentally friendly building materials, products and building services components according to their degree of greenness. HK G-PASS aims to provide a practical and recognised standard of green building products for industry practitioners and end users to make smart purchases of eco-products as well as to distinguish safer, healthier, more efficient and sustainable building products from existing traditional ones. More information will be available at: http://hkgpass.hkgbc.org.hk/
HKORC-Cert 	Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre Certification Limited Locality: Hong Kong	Sustainable Farming Practice	All certified organic crops by HKORC-Cert must comply with the Organic Production, Aquaculture and Processing Standard throughout the production cycle from sowing, fertilizing all the way to harvest and sales in order to ensure crop production is taking responsible care to the health of consumers and the environment. More information will be available at: http://www.hkorc-cert.org/en/index.php

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) 	IFOAM - Organics International Locality: Germany	Sustainable Farming Practice	IFOAM - Organics International regards any system that uses organic methods and is based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture, as 'organic agriculture' and any farmer practicing such a system as an 'organic farmer.' Organic agriculture benefits farmers and society, well beyond the market place. More information will be available at: http://www.ifoam.bio/en/ifoam-accreditation-program
Japanese Agricultural Organic Standard (JAS) 	Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Locality: Japan	Sustainable Farming Practice	The JAS Standards for organic plants and organic processed foods of plant origin were established in 2000 on the basis with the Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods which were adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. More information will be available at: http://www.maff.go.jp/e/index.html
Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme 	Electrical and Mechanical Services Department Locality: Hong Kong	Energy Efficient	To facilitate the public in choosing energy efficient products and raise public awareness on energy saving, the Hong Kong Government has introduced the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (MEELS) through the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Products) Ordinance, Cap. 598. Under MEELS, energy labels are required to be shown on the prescribed products for supply in Hong Kong to inform consumers of their energy efficiency performance. More information will be available at: http://www.energylabel.emsd.gov.hk
Marine Stewardship Council 	Marine Stewardship Council Locality: UK	Sustainable Fisheries	The MSC works with scientists, fisheries, seafood producers and brands to promote sustainable fishing and safeguard seafood supplies for the future. They set credible standards for sustainable fishing and supply chain traceability. Organisations have to meet these standards in order to demonstrate the sustainability of their products. More information will be available at: https://www.msc.org

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
<p>Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) Scheme</p> 	<p>The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)</p> <p>Locality: Switzerland</p>	Sustainable Forestry	<p>Obtaining PEFC Sustainable Forest Management certification demonstrates that management practices meet requirements for best practice in sustainable forest management.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.pefc.org</p>
<p>Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal</p> 	<p>Rainforest Alliance</p> <p>Locality: US</p>	Sustainable Forestry / Sustainable Farming Practice	<p>The Rainforest Alliance is an international nonprofit organization that works to conserve biodiversity and promote the rights and well-being of workers, their families and communities. The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal assures consumers that the product they are purchasing has been grown and harvested using environmentally and socially responsible practices. Farms and forestlands that meet the rigorous, third-party standards of the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard or the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) are awarded the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/</p>
<p>SCS Certified Biodegradable</p> 	<p>Scientific Certification Systems, Inc.</p> <p>Locality: US</p>	Biodegradable/ Restriction on Use of Hazardous Chemical	<p>SCS certifies biodegradable liquid cleaning products - liquid soaps, detergents, degreasers, and cleansers. In addition to being biodegradable, products must not contain phosphates or be toxic to aquatic species. SCS only certifies products that meet the OECD's definition for "Ready Biodegradability".</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.scsglobalservices.com/biodegradable</p>
<p>SCS Indoor Air Quality Certification</p> 	<p>Scientific Certification Systems, Inc.</p> <p>Locality: US</p>	Low VOC Emission	<p>SCS Indoor Air Quality Certification ensures that interior products, including furniture and building materials such as paints, ceiling tiles and floor coverings, have low VOC emissions to maintain good indoor air quality.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.scsglobaiservices.com/indoor-air-quality-certification</p>
<p>Singapore Green Label</p> 	<p>Singapore Environment Council</p> <p>Locality: Singapore</p>	Environmentally Friendly	<p>It endorses industrial and consumer products that their products meet specific environmental requirements to reduce undesirable effects. The labelling scheme has covered 3000 products in 28 countries.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://www.sglsec.org.sg/sgls-standard.php</p>
<p>Social Enterprise Directory</p> 	<p>Social Enterprise Business Centre</p> <p>Locality: Hong Kong</p>	Products from Social Enterprises	<p>SE Directory is recognized and supported by the HKSAR Government and has long been serving as an important reference material for advocating responsible consumption across government departments, public organizations, NGOs, SEs as well as corporations.</p> <p>More information will be available at: https://socialenterprise.org.hk/en/sedb</p>

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

Label Name	Organisation	Type of Sustainable Products and Services	Label Description
Soil Association Organic Standard 	The Soil Association Locality: UK	Sustainable Farming Practices/Good Manufacturing Conditions/ Organic Poultry and Livestock	The organic standard of Soil Association includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fewer pesticides - No artificial colours & preservatives - The highest standards of animal welfare - No routine use of antibiotics - GM Free - No harmful chemicals - Better factory and working conditions - Residue free More information will be available at: https://www.soilassociation.org/what-we-do/organic-standards/
Sustainable Forestry Initiative Certification 	Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Locality: US	Sustainable Forestry	SFI is a non-profit organization dedicated to promote sustainable forest management and developed forest certification standards based on principles that promote measures to protect water quality, biodiversity and wildlife habitat. More information will be available at: http://www.sfiprogram.org
Voluntary Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme 	Electrical and Mechanical Services Department Locality: Hong Kong	Energy Efficient	The scheme aims to save energy by informing potential customers of the product's level of energy consumption and efficiency rating, so that buyers can take these factors into consideration when making their purchasing decision. More information will be available at: http://bit.ly/2tCBA6t
Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (WELS) 	Water Supplies Department Locality: Hong Kong	Water Efficient	Products registered in WELS shall incorporate a water efficiency label that informs consumers of the level of water consumption and water efficiency in order to help consumers to choose water efficient products for water conservation. The water efficiencies of the products under WELS are rated to different grades according to their types and water consumptions. Grade 1 is the most water efficient whereas grade 4 is the least water efficient. More information will be available at: http://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/plumbing-engineering/water-efficiency-labelling-scheme/index.html
World Fair Trade Organization 	The World Fair Trade Organization Locality: Global	Fair Trade	It signifies not only that the practices across the supply chain are checked against the WFTO Fair Trade Standard, but it also represents support to the battle against poverty and inequality. Products carrying the WFTO Label are made and traded by Guaranteed Fair Trade Organisations dedicated to the sustainable Fair Trade economy. Every purchase of products with the WFTO Label supports small producers and their communities. More information will be available at: http://wfto.com

Remark: The description of product labels are adopted from the official website of the corresponding organisations.

4. BUSINESS SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

Sustainability performance is widely believed by commercial sector as an important element of company success, short term consideration of economic performance without taking care of its social performance and contribution to the society will not enable a company to continue or bring it to higher level of success. Sustainable procurement is a behaviour which a company implement the elements of sustainability during procurement processes. Companies purchase products and services with consideration of their sustainability performance instead of just making decision by quality and financial considerations.

Sustainable procurement plays an important role in fostering sustainable consumption behaviour in society, because it creates market demands on sustainable products and services and also mobilise sustainable consumption and production behaviour along supply chain. The Government green purchasing policy is a typical example. Under this policy, the hong kong Government has been taking the lead to promote green procurement. According to a set of specified procedures and designed green specifications for a list of green items. Bureaux and departments are required to select and purchase economically rational green products and services as far as possible.



Source: http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/how_help/green_procure/green_procure.html

The following checklist is designed to encourage considerations for sustainable features during procurement:

Product & Service	Examples of Sustainable Features
Paper & Printing Products	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper products certified by sustainable forest management scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Recovered fibre content <input type="checkbox"/> Recyclable (e.g. coating-free) <input type="checkbox"/> Limited use of bleaching agents (e.g. chlorine, optical brighteners) <input type="checkbox"/> Ink with low volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
Office Equipment (Electrical and Electronic Products)	<input type="checkbox"/> Energy saving features <input type="checkbox"/> Material saving features (e.g. paper, ink) <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling service provided by suppliers <input type="checkbox"/> Replaceable parts <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance level of restricted substances (e.g. RoHS) <input type="checkbox"/> No use of halogenated flame retardants
Plastic Products	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear marking of plastic resin identification code for recycling purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Recycled content <input type="checkbox"/> Products can be disassembled into single material for recycling <input type="checkbox"/> No polyvinyl chloride (PVC)
Textile Products	<input type="checkbox"/> Azo dyes free <input type="checkbox"/> No excessive use of packaging materials <input type="checkbox"/> Natural and biodegradable materials <input type="checkbox"/> Raw materials from organic farming (e.g. organic cotton) <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling service provided by suppliers <input type="checkbox"/> Products from socially responsible suppliers <input type="checkbox"/> Recycled content
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/> Low volatile organic compounds (VOCs) (e.g. formaldehyde) <input type="checkbox"/> Timber certified by sustainable forest management scheme <input type="checkbox"/> No use of halogenated flame retardants <input type="checkbox"/> Replaceable Parts <input type="checkbox"/> Recycled content <input type="checkbox"/> Products can be disassembled into single material for reuse or recycling

Event Related Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Limited use of event related materials (e.g. printed matters, souvenirs)<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid the use of disposable items<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable food and drinks<input type="checkbox"/> Service provided by social enterprises<input type="checkbox"/> Souvenirs with sustainable features<input type="checkbox"/> Printing products with sustainable features
Food and Drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Organic products<input type="checkbox"/> Fair Trade Products<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable seafood<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Genetic modified Food<input type="checkbox"/> No antibiotics, added growth hormones, or other prohibited feed ingredients<input type="checkbox"/> Food and beverage from social enterprises<input type="checkbox"/> Recyclable packaging materials



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