

Press Release [Embargoed 10am (GMT+4) November 20, 2024]

Launch of the Mutual Recognition Agreements for “Flooring Products” and “Tile Carpets” between Japan Environment Association’s EcoMark and Singapore Environment Council’s Singapore Green Label

The agreement will facilitate green trade between Singapore and Japan, and reduce compliance costs for companies to adopt green production.

1. The Singapore Environment Council (SEC; managing the Singapore Green Label Scheme) and the Japan Environment Association (JEA; managing the Japan EcoMark) have signed an agreement that establishes mutual recognition of common criteria for "Flooring Products" and "Tile Carpets" categories of both labels. The signing ceremony took place at the Singapore Pavilion during COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, witnessed by Mr. Yutaka Matsuzawa, Vice-Minister for Global Environment Affairs from Japan’s Ministry of Environment, and Mr. Stanley Loh, Permanent Secretary of Singapore’s Ministry of Sustainability and Environment.
2. With this agreement, flooring products and tile carpets certified with the EcoMark can apply for Singapore Green Labelling Scheme (SGLS) without undergoing additional evaluations by SEC for the common criteria. This reduces the need for tests and documentation, saving time and costs for the applicant companies.
3. Over 50% of Singapore Green Labelling Scheme certified companies are based outside Singapore, primarily in the ASEAN region, and many of the certified products are construction-related. This mutual recognition is expected to benefit companies selling eco-labelled products in both Japan and Singapore.
4. “This agreement represents more than a formal partnership—it is a testament to the power of collaboration in facilitating climate action. As the world gathers here at COP29, this MRA aligns with the call for unified action, demonstrating how nations and organizations can work together to multiply impact.” said Mr Cheang Kok Chung, Singapore Environment Council, Executive Director.
4. Ecolabels such as the EcoMark and Singapore Green Labelling Scheme are key enablers in climate action. Lifecycle ecolabels follow ISO 14024 principles, are third-party verified and globally recognised as the most robust and credible form of environmental labelling by the United Nations. JEA and SEC are members of the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), the leading network of the world’s most credible and robust lifecycle ecolabels. By encouraging sustainable consumption and production patterns, these labels provide transparency on the environmental impact of products throughout their lifecycle, including the greenhouse gas emissions. Ecolabels empower consumers, businesses, and policymakers to make informed choices that collectively contribute to global emissions reductions and a sustainable future.

About Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)

Mutual Recognition Agreement is a formal arrangement between two or more certification bodies, that allows for the mutual acceptance of conformity assessment results. Common criteria are established through bilateral discussions, enabling the partner country to omit evaluations for shared criteria.

Benefits of an MRA include:

- i. Reducing development and manufacturing costs by promoting common standards.
- ii. Lowering application costs for environmental labels.
- iii. Facilitating entry into overseas markets.
- iv. Broad international distribution of certified products, contributing to global environmental impact reduction.

Background Information

Japan Environment Association

Managed by Japan Environment Association, EcoMark is the only ISO14024-compliant Type I environmental label in Japan, operated since 1989. As of November 1, 2024, it has certification standards for 74 product categories and recognizes 53,039 products.

Singapore Environment Council

Established in 1995, the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) enables businesses in their sustainability journeys through its globally recognised environmental certification programme under the Global Ecolabelling Network. In line with the national targets outlined in the SG Green Plan 2030, SEC focuses on raising public awareness on sustainability issues and fosters capability and capacity building through Public Private People (3Ps) partnership. As a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation (NGO), SEC is approved under the Institution of Public Character (IPC) which extends tax exemption to donors. As of November 2024, it has standards for 56 product categories and certifies around 4,000 products.

For details, please visit <https://www.sec.org.sg>

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