

## Minutes of the first ad hoc working group meeting on the “Development of European Ecolabel Criteria for buildings”

Rome, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2008

APAT, Via Curtatone, Sala Fazzini, 10:00-16:00

### Participants

*Table 1: List of participants*

Name	Surname	Member State	Organization
Vanessa	Adell	UK	British Board of Agreement (BBA)
Guillaume	Artois	Belgium	CEFIC - EFRA (European Flame Retardants Association) / Albemarle
Antonio	Basti	Italy	University Chieti-Pescara
Aldo	Blandino	Italy	Comune di Avigliana
Eliana	Cangelli	Italy	University of Rome “La Sapienza”
David	Crowhurst	UK	BRE
Laura	Cutaia	Italy	APAT
Karen	Dahl-Jensen	Denmark	Ecolabelling Denmark
Giuliano	Dall’O’	Italy	Politecnico di Milano - BEST
Lisa	De Cristofaro	Germany	EEB/ University of Neaples Federico II
Claudia	Di-Tivoli	Italy	APAT
MarianneB.	Eskeland	Norway	Ecolabelling Norway
Anna	Esteve-Traveset	Spain	Catalan Competent Body European Eco-label
Fausta	Finzi	Italy	Ministero dell’Ambiente/ ENEA
Angela	Fiore	Italy	APAT
Gabriela	Fleischer	Germany	DIN - BEUC
Simona	Fumagalli	Italy	ENEA
Giuseppe	Gravina	Italy	ARPA Puglia
Christiana	Hageneder	Austria	ÖGUT, representing Austrian Ministry for Environment
Benjamin	Kaspar	Belgium	European Commission - DG Env.
Tim	Krögel	Belgium	UEAPME
Maria	Litido	Italy	ENEA
Alberto	Lodi	Italy	ICMQ
Alain	Lusardi	Italy	University of Firenze - TAED department
Lorenzo	Maiorino	Italy	APAT
Maria Grazia	Marchesiello	Italy	ARPA Emilia Romagna

Stefania	Minestrini	Italy	APAT
Andrea	Moro	Italy	ITACA/ IISBE Italia
Paolo	Neri	Italy	LCA-lab SPIN-OFF ENEA
Pietro	Novelli	Italy	Regione Toscana
Mauro	Olivetti	Italy	ENEA
Marco	Piana	Italy	AIPE - Centro di informazione sul PVC
Eloi	Piel	Sweden	Euroheat and Power
Riccardo	Rifici	Italy	Ministero dell'Ambiente
Gianfranco	Rizzo	Italy	University of Palermo - DREAM
Maria Rosa	Ronzoni	Italy	University of Bergamo
Roberto	Saettone	Italy	Federchimica - PlasticEurope Italia
Ulla	Sahlberg	Sweden	SIS Ecolabelling
Daniela	Santonico	Italy	APAT
Giovanni	Silvestrini	Italy	Comitato Ecolabel - Ecoaudit
Demi	Theodori	The Netherlands	SMK - European Ecolabel
MariaChiara	Torricelli	Italy	University of Firenze - TA e D department
Niko	Wirgentius	Finland	Euroheat and Power
Mario	Zoccatelli	Italy	Provincia Autonoma di Trento

Note: for details see table 2.

### h 10.00 - 13.30

#### Introduction of the work by APAT (Stefania Minestrini)

The Chairman, Ms. Stefania Minestrini, responsible for the Ecolabel sector of APAT, welcomes the participants to the 1<sup>st</sup> AHWG meeting. She introduced Mr. Benjamin Caspar, the representatives of DG ENV G.2., Ms. Laura Cutaia - the project manager and the working group composed by experts from APAT and from universities and public authorities.

The Chairman introduced the Agenda and specified that the working group will present to the AHWG participants the results of the Preliminary Report for the development of European Ecolabel criteria for Buildings.

Meeting objectives:

- ✓ Discuss possible direction for the definition of European Ecolabel criteria for Buildings;
- ✓ Presentation of the preliminary report;
- ✓ Focus on the last chapter: towards a product group definition.

Schedule of the following steps:

- ✓ End of June 2008: Finalised product group definition (APAT/other res. inst.)
- ✓ End of September 2008: First draft criteria (APAT/other res. inst.)
- ✓ Middle October 2008: Second AHWG meeting on 1st draft criteria

- ✓ End of November 2008: Second draft proposal criteria (APAT/other res. inst.)
- ✓ Middle February 2009: Third AHWG meeting on 2nd draft criteria
- ✓ End of March 2009: Final criteria proposal (APAT/other res. inst.)
- ✓ April 2009: final time for the project. Presentation and discussion at EUEB

## Presentation of the preliminary report

Contributes (please see the presentation attached):

- ✓ L. Maiorino (APAT): "Market analysis"
- ✓ P. Novelli (Regione Toscana): "The European legislation framework"
- ✓ G. Dall'O' (Politecnico di Milano): "EPBD Directive"
- ✓ L. Cutaia (APAT): "Technical norms - Existing Initiatives - LCA of buildings"
- ✓ P. Neri (LCA-lab Spin-off ENEA): "Building LCA"
- ✓ M. C. Torricelli (University of Florence): "LCA of building materials"
- ✓ S. Ministrini (APAT): "Toward a product group definition"

### EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He stated the role of the European Ecolabel as a voluntary tool; standards and legislation on buildings are the starting point; a product group definition at first is necessary; then we need to consider possible negative environmental impact of a building in defining the Ecolabel criteria; he stated the wish to have a useful tool for all European Countries.

### President of the Italian Competent Body - Ecolabel Section (Giovanni Silvestrini):

He highlighted that the European Ecolabel for buildings is a tool asked from builders; he pointed out that now we have the opportunity to develop this label at European level overcoming the steps already done in each Country and how it is important to consider not only the energy point of view but to enlarge to other environmental aspects. The objective would be to make the most from existing initiatives.

## Comment on the preliminary report by the intervened representatives of different EU Countries. Debate on the possible directions for definition of the European Ecolabel criteria for buildings.

### DIN - BEUC - Germany (Gabriela Fleischer):

She asked if there would be some conclusions for each chapter of the preliminary report. He noted that there are conclusions for the chapter 2 (market analysis), but not for the others.

He said that it is necessary to look at the experience of different groups and that someone think that this is not a mature moment for an Ecolabel for buildings.

### BRE - UK (David Crowhurst):

He underlined that In the report have been presented standards and methods widely used in the past 20 years and that in order to finish in April 2009 it would be necessary to take from the already existent tools.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She clarified that the real objective of this preliminary report is to develop an overview of the existent situation on building sector labels, not to select which method or tool is the best and which one the worst; the aim is to create a synergy on the analysed topic.

She specified that there is no intention to reinvent something that already exists: but there are a lot of tools that measure the standard level and no one that measure the performance level. The intention is to focus on the quantity point of view, and not only on the qualitative point of view.

According to the European Ecolabel methodology we're following a step-by-step approach and we will consider existing initiatives useful to the purpose in order to maximise synergies and to reduce time.

EEB (Lisa De Cristofaro):

She expressed the opinion that it is not the goodtime to develop a quality eco-label; scheduled time is not enough because it is difficult to manage this process across all Europe.

She stated that EEB has collected opinion on the preliminary report from different Institutions (e.g: Belgium Federal Administration) and there are some questions about the report; e.g: which would be the comprehensiveness of the presented data and if they can be considered sufficient for the Ecolabel criteria definition.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She specified that APAT has already answered to those questions concerning a preliminary project description raised from the Belgian CB and she also specified that most of the questions will be answered by the work in progress that it will be done. Therefore as we are in a first stage related to the product group definition, investigations for the elaboration of criteria still have to be undertaken.

EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He asked to the EEB to give some constructive objections on the report; in particular which would be the right time according to EEB to develop a European Ecolabel.

SMK - The Netherland (Demi Theodori)

She expressed a positive opinion on the EU Ecolabel criteria development for buildings even in a written form which has been distributed during the meeting.

Ecolabelling Norway (Marianne Eskeland):

She congratulated for the report. She stated that it is not too early to start to develop Ecolabel criteria for buildings, but instead it is a difficult task.

She mentioned the work done in Norway on flats eco-sustainability assessment and she suggested to divide the assessment in type of buildings. She expressed some doubts about the time scheduled for the project as some more time could be needed working also in parallel with other initiatives.

ÖGUT (Christiana Hageneder):

She asked how ambitious would be this work. She pointed out that a not so ambitious level, would be simpler to reach results.

She asked in which phase of the life cycle the ecolabel would be addressed as for example in the construction phase, the ecolabel would be used by the builders as a marketing tool, and this would be very attractive to them. She suggested not to have a too ambitious level.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She answered that the ambition level will be determined by a cost-benefit analysis: we have to establish a compromise ambition level, with the aim to develop a simple and useful tool.

ITACA- Italy (Andrea Moro):

He stated that it is important to develop an assessment methods adapted to each Country contest; he wonder if it is possible in fact to establish a common standard for all different Countries who have different building methods. He stated that ISO framework of rules and methods cannot be a tool for the assessment, but only the base from which to start the assessment.

EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He clarified that only working from now to forward it is possible to find a common base from which to start; the definition of eco-label criteria needs a work in progress step by step; the ambition level can be selected and fixed later in the process.

Italian Ministry of the Environment (Fausta Finzi):

She wondered which kind of buildings would be considered according also to the different construction methods. She also expressed the importance to consider the particular life duration of the buildings compared to the life of others product groups.

She also informed the participants about the work done by the Ministry for defining the green public procurement criteria for construction materials.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She clarified that it is the normal challenge of this kind of project to try to apply the criteria in the different European contexts. She also agreed about the importance to give special attention to the peculiar long term life of the building.

H 14.00 -16.00Ecolabelling Denmark (Karen Dahl-Jensen):

She congratulated for the interesting work and for the hard work that Italy has decided to take on board. According to the experience done DK has worked on flats which are very large areas and therefore she suggested to be careful to extend the product group definition. She said that they have decided NOT to work with office buildings in the Swan criteria for now, and only focus on small houses, flats for residence

and day-care institutions. We also considered the period of built 1991-2001 and she suggested to consider about 10 year life time.

Catalan Competent Body (Anna Esteve Traveset):

She stated that they have created different working group on different kind of buildings and this is a long work (1-2 years only to collect data); it is difficult to manage a working group on all different kinds of buildings. She suggested to focus on residential buildings and office buildings.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She explained that at the moment we try to have a global overview; later of course it will be necessary to limit the choice on specific categories of buildings and we will focus on them for the criteria development.

SMK - European Ecolabel (Demi Theodori):

She remembered that the objective of this project is not developing LCA studies, but to give a tool for evaluation in the building sector. It would be useful to develop different type of criteria level according to the different type of buildings.

Swedish CB representative (Ulla Sahlberg):

She reminded that it is important to identify who will be the license holder.

UK-BRE (David Crowhurst):

He asked about the LCA approach why it is necessary to consider the LCA approach as it is not so internationally and widely used and for instance is not considering a point award approach.

EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He answered that the the LCA approach is requested by the Eco-label Regulation which recommends taking into account the life cycle of a product but a point system could be also considered.

Karen Dahl-Jensen (Ecolabelling Denmark):

She remarked that the LCA method doesn't take into account the 100% of environmental aspects (e.g. Human Health); but with an LCA approach we can identify the life cycle phases which have the major impacts on the environment.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She remembered that criteria will be based on LCA approach and results and will be integrated with the experience coming from the existing initiatives.

UK-BRE (David Crowhurst):

He asked again how after having established a set of criteria, would be possible to compare two buildings with different characteristics.

Ecolabelling Norway (Marianne Eskeland):

She explained that there will not be a comparison of buildings with global parameters (e.g. energy use, emission,...), but limits to be respected.

APAT (Laura Cutaia):

She answered that the criteria will be selected according to the logic LCA, integrating the minimum performance requirements related to the specific purpose of a building.

SMK (Demi Theodori):

She noted that even if according to the LCA methodology aspects such as indoor quality are not considered, we use them often considering all flows (energy, materials, water,...); ultimately LCA can be seen as the best tool to use.

EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He stated that according to the EC Regulation we need to take into account LCA considerations, but this does not limit the possibility to consider point systems.

British Board of Agreement (Vanessa Adell):

She asked clarifications about the purpose of the meeting.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She explained that the purpose of the meeting is discuss possible directions for the product group definition, wishing it a product group definition as broadest as possible. She also reminded the next step to be undertaken for the future work.

ÖGUT (Christiana Hageneder):

She suggested to invite to participate in the development of this work all people who work on label in different Countries and people of the standardization sector and to involve local initiatives. She expressed the importance to consider the European Ecolabel as an ecolabel addressed to building companies but also to the public/consumer.

APAT (Stefania Minestrini):

She pointed out that that all 27 Member States were invited to participate at this meeting, but some could not be present today because committed. The involvement of all stakeholders is a part of the process for developing EU Ecolabel criteria.

Ecolabelling Denmark (Karen Dahl-Jensen):

She appreciated the timing for developing European Ecolabel criteria . She noted that the European Ecolabel is a great communication tool and the Ecolabel for buildings can include the valorisation of single items of a building such as the EU Ecolabel for paints, for floor coverings, etc.....; a European Ecolabel for building can be very useful for consumers who want to buy ohouses: at present consumers do not have the possibility to have information about the respect of criteria for sustainability of different parts of a house,

but with an Ecolabel for buildings it will be possible to have information about the building environmental performances.

Ecolabelling Norway (Marianne Eskeland):

She recognised the important and complex work to be carried out and she suggested in order for the product group definition to start with new buildings, focusing on residential and offices buildings.

APAT (Laura Cutaia):

She stated that it would be necessary to carry out an assessment on possible margins for environmental improvement in order to exclude a priori certain products (e.g. existing buildings).

SMK (Demi Theodori):

She suggested to consider public buildings (offices) in the product group definition.

BREEAM (David Crowhurst):

He expressed the opinion to set up criteria which can be applicable to all kinds of buildings instead of choosing before which building to focus on.

Ecolabelling Norway (Marianne Eskeland):

She recognised that different criteria for new buildings, existing buildings and demolition are needed but she also suggested to focus on a single product group which might provide criteria for the others groups.

APAT (Stefania Ministrini):

She recognised that two different approaches are possible or even more:

- ✓ to focus on the product group definition at first and then on the criteria development (i.e. European Ecolabel methodology);
- ✓ to focus on the criteria development at first and then understand to which kind of buildings we can apply them (i.e. the Japanese methodology).

It might also be possible to choose a mixed approach where of course according to the European Ecolabel methodology first a product group definition will be established and consequently criteria set up but with an eye to their applicability to similar categories of buildings (e.g. residential versus offices).

SMK (Demi Theodori):

She reminded that there are some aspects not considered in the LCA approach that we should add in the criteria: the landscape for example (integration of the building with the environment) or the acceptance of the building by the population.

Ecolabelling Denmark (Karen Dahl-Jensen):

She expressed the concerns in terms of difficulties about this consideration in the European Ecolabel criteria

ÖGUT (Christiana Hageneder):

She noticed that even if this aspect is difficult to consider this is a relevant one as it is important to consider where a building is located (e.g. near public transport and other services). She stated that in Austria there are a lot of passive houses situated near forests and that it is important to consider the related impact.

SMK (Demi Theodori):

She informed that in Netherlands the interaction with surroundings is considered in evaluations. She also asked to focus on who will be the license holder for the Ecolabel

EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He expressed the opinion that the criteria used (interaction with surrounding, localization, etc.) will depend on the type of building considered.

APAT (Stefania Ministrini):

She considered that different kind of license holders might ask for the EU Ecolabel such as

- ✓ Construction companies
- ✓ Public Administrations
- ✓ Public and Private owners of entire buildings

About landscape integration she considered the importance of the integration with surroundings. She reminded that there are already example in the tourist accommodation criteria where is asked to the tourist accommodation to comply with legislations regarding landscape and biodiversity conservation.

Ecolabelling Norway (Marianne Eskeland):

She remarked that urban planners are normally responsible for conditions where buildings are built and therefore it is an issue which should not concern an Eco-label.

Ecolabelling Denmark (Karen Dahl-Jensen):

She recommended flexibility on criteria

Representative of UEAPME (Tim Krögel):

He stated the necessity to take into account the structure of the European construction sector, which is composed of 98% SMEs. This means that criteria should be legible and understandable by average construction companies (5 employees). On the same point he suggested that it was important to identify early on the target group for the Ecolabel (consumer, builder, etc.). Furthermore criteria and scope should be limited to parameters that can be influenced by the company and not extend to considerations beyond the scope of their involvement (such as societal impacts, opinions of the community etc.). Furthermore he mentioned the wide variety of buildings that may be found in certain countries, such as Belgium, and the difficulty that this poses for comparison.

Ecolabel - Ecoaudit competent body / Ecolabel section President (G. Silvestrini):

He reminded that an Eco-label is usually given to the top quality level of products (10-20% of the total); often this product belongs to big companies, rarely to small companies.

EU Commission (Ben Caspar):

He pointed out that even if APAT is responsible for the Eco-label criteria development, all the participants are involved in the process and are kindly requested to send comments and suggestions for the work in progress.

APAT (Stefania Ministrini):

She thanked the participants for their useful contributions and she wished to receive constructive comments and suggestions from also other participants who could not attend the meeting. She said that the material presented today will be send out by e-mail.

President of the Italian Competent Body - Ecolabel Section (Giovanni Silvestrini):

He also thanked the participants and remarked once again that it is important to establish a good ambition level for the criteria which would be neither too high, nor too low.

He also remarked that the project ongoing is a good opportunity for all those who work in Europe in the building sector in order to contribute in the realisation of a good and useful tool.

*Table 2: List of participants*

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