

# Guidelines for Eco Mark Program Implementation

April 2018

Japan Environment Association

## Chapter I General Rules

### 1. Purpose of the Eco Mark Program

The purpose of the Eco Mark Program is to widely disseminate information on the environmental aspects of products (goods and services) and to guide activities of consumers and activities of business towards the formation of a sustainable society. This goal will be accomplished through certification of Eco Mark products, which help to reduce the environmental burden caused by everyday activities and business activities, thereby contributing to the conservation of the environment.

### 2. Basic Requirements of Eco Mark Products

2-1. Eco Mark Products must satisfy one of the following requirements and fall into a category of products that are recommended from the viewpoint of environmental conservation.

- (1) Products that impose less environmental load than similar products in their manufacture, use and disposal.
- (2) Products that reduce the environmental load in other ways, thus contributing significantly to the conservation of the environment.

2-2. Products allowed to be indicated the Eco Mark (hereafter referred to 'Eco Mark products') are sold in Japan, regardless of their country of manufacture; applicable to the Eco Mark product category (hereafter referred to 'product category'); and approved according to the procedures set forth in Chapter III.

### 3. Organization of the Eco Mark Program

3-1. The Japan Environment Association (JEA) administers the Eco Mark Program; JEA Eco Mark Office ('Office') administers general affairs.

3-2. To ensure proper and effective operation of the Eco Mark Program, JEA encompasses the "Steering Committee", "Planning and Strategy Committee", "Criteria Deliberation Committee" and "Product Certification Committee." Product Category-based Criteria Development Committees (hereafter referred to Criteria Development Committees)" is to be organized to formulate a draft criteria for each proposed product category whenever required.

In addition, the Eco Mark meeting composed of specialists in various fields is to be held to listen to opinions of the people about the Eco Mark Program.



**Operational Structure of Eco Mark**

- (1) The Steering Committee comprises specialists in various fields, such as representative from industries and consumer groups, experts from academic and relevant governmental organizations. The committee deliberates on Eco Mark Program budgets, program plans and program implementation guidelines; establishment and revision of guidelines and regulations for each committee, and other important items concerning the Eco Mark Program.
- (2) Planning and Strategy Committee deliberates on selection of the Eco Mark product categories and the establishment of Eco Mark certification criteria stipulated in Section 2, as well as items concerning the revision of these.
- (3) Criteria Deliberation Committee consists of members from experts in environmental conservation, LCA, resource recycling, chemical substances, biological diversity and intellectuals in the administrative organs concerned and the consumer affairs, and investigates and verifies the draft certification criteria from a technical standpoint in order for establishment of certification criteria defined in Chapter II.
- (4) Criteria Development Committee consists of members from enterprise for selected product categories, consumers, and specialists from neutral functions. From the viewpoint of environmental load, they deliberate on the life cycles of the products as a whole and decide on the proposal for certification criteria.
- (5) Product Certification Committee consists of specialists from the neutral functions to whom the evaluation as to how much impact is imposed on the environment, measures to reduce the impact, and certification of the products for Eco Mark are referred to.

## Chapter II Selecting Eco Mark Product Categories

### 4. Selection of the Eco Mark Product Category

4-1. Product category that is an object of Eco Mark is selected according to the following procedure;

- (1) Eco Mark Office accepts proposals for a new product category from suppliers, consumers or the third party persons in accordance within the certain period of time by means of home page, as well as the proposals from Eco Mark Office.
- (2) Planning and Strategy Committee gathers information on the above proposal, and if necessary, conducts survey or hearing for the persons concerned.
- (3) Planning and Strategy Committee selects new product categories taking into consideration of the proposal made under (1) above.
- (4) Newly selected product categories are open to the public by means of Eco Mark News and the web site.

4-2. Apart from 4-1., at the suggestions of Planning or Eco Mark Office, deliberation procedures and policies relating to Selection of the Eco Mark Product Category may be separately stipulated on necessary items with the Steering Committee's approval.

### 5. Developing the Certification Criteria

5-1. Certification criteria of the new selected product category is developed according to the following procedure:

- (1) Criteria Development Committee is established which consists of experts and specialists concerned with the selected product category.
- (2) Criteria Development Committee develops a draft of certification criteria. When developing a draft, the life cycle of the product shall be considered as a whole, referring to Table 1 "Chart for Selecting Environmental Evaluation Items at Product Life Stages" and taking quantitative analysis into consideration, focusing the important items in order to attain the purpose of the product category and satisfy the requirement that certified products should impose less environmental load than similar products in their manufacture, use and disposal, or certified products should reduce the environmental load in other ways, thus contributing significantly to the conservation of the environment. The draft of the certification criteria is developed which is effective to make many consumers and industries guided towards the formation of a sustainable society. The criteria items shall be set focusing on environmental aspects in accordance with ISO14024 "Type I Environmental Label", but social aspects that is closely related to the product category

and desirable to be worked with shall also be included in the criteria items. In the course of setting such criteria items, economic aspects including contribution to the circular economy shall be taken into account.

- (3) The Criteria Deliberation Committee shall discuss the draft of certification criteria from a technical standpoint.
- (4) Upon referral to the Criteria Deliberation Committee, the draft of certification criteria is made open to the public by means of Eco Mark News and the web site, and for opinions and proposals from the general public are accepted for 60 days from the announcement.
- (5) The Criteria Development Committee considers opinions and proposals from the general public, and re-deliberates on the certification criteria.
- (6) Japan Environment Association establishes certification criteria based on the deliberation by the Criteria Development Committee.
- (7) Newly established certification criteria is open to the public by means of Eco Mark News and the web site along with the background information for the certification criteria.

Table 1: Chart for Selecting Environmental Evaluation Items at Product Life Stages

Environmental evaluation items	Product life stages					
	A. Resource extraction	B. Manufacture	C. Distribution	D. Use, Consumption	E. Recycle	F. Disposal
1. Resource saving and recycling						
2. Prevention of global warming						
3. Restriction and control of Hazardous Substances						
4. Conservation of biodiversity						

5-2. Apart from 5-1, at the suggestions of Planning and Strategy Committee, Criteria Deliberation Committee, Criteria Development Committee or Eco Mark Office, deliberation procedures and policies relating to the establishment of certification criteria may be stipulated on necessary items with the Steering Committee's approval.

## 6. Review of Product Categories and Certification Criteria

6-1. Planning and Strategy Committee reviews certification criteria about two years before the end of validity period, giving consideration to market trends and technological development, and if necessary, the committee deliberates and approves an overall revision of

certification criteria, discontinuance of product categories or extension of the validity period.

6-2. Procedures to make an overall revision of certification criteria are carried out in accordance with 5, and based on the deliberations of Criteria Development Committee, Criteria Deliberation Committee, Japan Environment Association revises certification criteria.

6-3. Apart from 6-1 and 6-2, at the suggestions of Planning and Strategy Committee or Eco Mark Office, deliberation procedures and policies relating to revision of product categories and certification criteria may be separately stipulated on necessary items with the Steering Committee's approval.

## **Chapter III Certification of Eco Mark Products**

### **7. Requirements for Eco Mark Product Certification**

Products that satisfy the following requirements and have gone through the necessary procedures set out in 8 will be certified as Eco Mark products.

- (1) The product shall satisfy the certification criteria of the pertinent product category.
- (2) The applicant and the manufacturer of the product (in case the applicant is not the manufacturer of the product) shall abide by any related environmental laws, regulations, and pollution prevention treaties.
- (3) Regarding the quality and safety, the product shall meet the related laws, criteria and standards.

However, the Product Certification Committee reserves the right not to certify a product it judges to be problematic in terms of environmental conservation, even if the product has satisfied the above requirements.

### **8. Certification Procedure of Eco Mark Product**

8-1. The certification procedure of Eco Mark product proceeds the following;

- (1) The Manufacturer or distributor of a product sold in Japan can apply for the certification of the Eco Mark. For the custom-made products, the parties who order products from a manufacturer of product sold or used in Japan can apply for the certification of the Eco Mark when using the products by their own or when distributing the products for free. . To apply, the applicant follows Guidelines for applying for Eco Mark product certification and Usage.
- (2) The Eco Mark Office may ask the applicants for an examination conducted by a third party and a submission of a certificate of the examination, if necessary.

- (3) The Product Certification Committee conducts an examination of the applied product based on the requirements set forth in Article 7, and according to the examination results and its approval, the Eco Mark Office certifies the product as the Eco Mark product

8-2. Apart from 8-1, based on the proposal from the Product Certification Committee or Eco Mark Office, with the Steering Committee's approval on necessary items, separate stipulations on deliberation procedures and policies relating to certification may be stipulated.

### 9. Validity Period of Certification of Eco Mark Product

The validity period of certification of the product which has been certified by the product certification examination, is until the end of “the expiration date” which is stipulated in the Certification Criteria for the product concerned. Therefore, even if small amendments are performed before the expiration date the certification is effective as long as the products concerned are satisfying the requirements for certification at the time of examination. When the expiration of Certification Criteria is extended according to the procedure, the certification is valid until the expiration date extended.

## **Chapter IV Use of the Eco Mark**

### 10. Utilization Contract of Eco Mark

To have the product certified and to use Eco Mark, it is required to conclude Eco Mark utilization contract of between the user and Japan Environment Association (JEA).

### 11. Eco Mark Usage Regulations

The Eco Mark licensee must abide by the Eco Mark Usage Regulations which provided for separately.

### 12. Eco Mark Trademark Rights, etc

Trademark rights for the Eco Mark belong to JEA. If the Eco Mark is improperly used, JEA shall terminate the license contract or take other necessary legal procedures. After certification of Eco Mark Products, if the products become incompliant for the certification criteria, Japan Environment Association (JEA) shall ask the licensee to take the corrective measures, and may order temporary suspension of use or Eco Mark revocation.

Supplements Provision

Any revision of this Guidelines for Eco Mark Program Implementation shall be subject to a resolution of the Eco Mark Steering Committee.

Establish: February 1st, 1989

Revised: April 1st, 1994

Revised: March 1st, 1996

Revised: January 22nd, 1997

Revised: September 8th, 1998

Revised: May 1st, 1999

Revised: July 1st, 2000

Revised: April 1st, 2005

Revised: September 25th, 2007

Revised: April 1st, 2010

Revised: April 1st, 2011

Revised: April 1st, 2012

Revised: April 1st, 2013

Revised: April 1st, 2018 (5-2.(2))