

Understanding Green Business Certifications A Review of Five Third-Party Verification Programs

A recent report by the [U.N. Global Compact](#) surveyed more than 750 CEOs on green issues and preparing for a future where sustainability is central to business. According to the report, in the face of rising competition, technological change, and economic depression, *corporate commitment to principles of sustainability remains strong*. Roughly 93 percent of CEOs now see sustainability as important to their company’s future success. Almost three quarters of CEOs agreed that, “strengthening brand trust and reputation is the strongest motivator for taking action on sustainability issues.”

Trust and credibility are also vital for long-term business stability and growth. Failure to build trust can have negative effects (see the chart below). Consumer companies that have a good rating with the Better Business Bureau, for example, enhance their credibility by associating with a long-standing organization that consumers trust. This third-party authenticates the claims a company makes regarding ethics and financial reporting. The same holds true for companies earning certification regarding their sustainability practices.

Table A-1 Trust Actions



Along with verifying claims, earning a Green Business (GB) certification provides a comprehensive, streamlined plan with which to move forward. It distinguishes your company as one willing to make a public commitment to the environment, social good and profitability in an ethical manner. It enhances your brand, attracts LOHAS consumers in the rapidly-growing green marketplace, reduces operating costs and waste, saves energy, helps you become a



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preferred vendor in green supply chains, builds credibility with stakeholders, attracts investors enhances employee satisfaction, and attracts top job candidates.

According to the [Connecticut Business & Industry 2010 Sustainability and Connecticut Business Survey](#), the single greatest barrier to going green, cited by 29% of respondents, is a lack of knowledge regarding sustainable practices. When moving toward making your company more sustainable, you will find a wide variety of definitions, frameworks, standards, and certifications to assist you.

Frameworks

In addition to being credible, sustainability claims must be specific, measurable, frequently reviewed, and regularly updated. Three common frameworks for sustainability are:

- [GRI](#) - The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a network-based organization that has pioneered the development of the world's most widely used sustainability reporting framework. This framework lays out the principles and indicators that organizations can use to measure and report their economic, environmental, and social performance.
- [The Natural Step](#) is a planning and decision-making framework that allows individuals to understand the root causes of sustainability, or lack thereof, and then move strategically toward sustainability.
- The [Triple Bottom Line](#), also referred to as "TBL", or "3BL", simply stands for People, Planet, and Profits. TBL reporting is an accepted way for businesses to demonstrate that they have strategies for sustainable growth. This form of reporting takes into account the impact your business has in terms of social (people) and environmental (planet) values alongside financial returns (profit).

Failure to comply with sustainable standards may put your organization at risk of "greenwashing". Of the [Seven Sins of Greenwashing](#), created by Scot Case of Terrachoice, the seventh sin is the "Sin of Worshiping False Labels." Some marketers are exploiting consumers' demand for third-party certification by creating fake labels or false suggestions of third-party endorsement. This development is serious enough to warrant its own category.

Standards and Certification Programs

Certification programs validate claims made by a business. In addition to setting standards, certifying companies may also provide diagnostic tools and roadmaps for moving toward certification. Attached is a chart comparing several certification programs:



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Table A-1: Certification Programs	B Lab/B-Corporation	CERES (not a certification)	Green Business Bureau	Green Profit Solutions	Green Seal
For Profit/Nonprofit	NP	NP	FP	FP	NP
Affiliation	Sustainable Business Network	GRI, Coalition of Environmental & Public Interest Groups, Foundations and Investors	Green Irene, EcoChamber, WorldofGood.com by eBay	ENERGY STAR Partners, Wastewise Sponsors, Certified ISO trainers/auditors	ANSI , ISO , Green America, USGBC
Location	Berwyn, PA	Boston, MA	Houston, TX	Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	Washington, DC
Measurables / Re-qualification Audits	Accountability, Transparency, Employees, Consumers, Suppliers, Community, Environment/Re-qualification needed	Operations, Supply Chain, Transportation and Logistics, Products and Services, Employees	Waste reduction, water reduction/reuse, energy efficiency, conserving natural resources, sustainability component or mission.	Energy, Paper, Products, Air Quality, Waste & Recycling, Transportation, Landscape, Water	Labor & Workplace, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Water Use, Waste Reduction & Management, Toxicity, Indigenous Peoples, Biological Diversity, Social & Environmental Impact, Supplier Management, Product Life Cycle Impacts
Comments	Free Impact Assessment available on website.	Not a Certification but a standard for membership.	Focuses on business operations and ROI of programs.	Monthly payment plan makes it more affordable for small business.	The new GS-C1 pilot standard looks at both product manufacturer's products and business.

B Lab and B Corporations

Created in 2007, [B Lab](#) is a non-profit organization founded by 81 corporations and governed by a process of broad, transparent multi-stakeholder engagement. [The Board of Directors](#) convened a nine person [Standards Advisory Council \(SAC\)](#) that oversees the certification ratings and auditing requirements for B Corporations. The SAC is an independent body to ensure that the B Rating System is a fair yet rigorous standard for social and environmental performance.

B Lab is highly transparent and measurable. Founding corporations, board members, nine members of the SAC, and B Corporation members are listed on the website. The Impact Assessment is accessible to anyone at no cost, and steps for certifying are listed clearly.



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B Lab oversees the evolution of the standards and the auditing of B Corporations. The mission of B Lab is to support B Corporations and this emerging sector by 1) certifying and rating B Corporations through the B Ratings System; 2) developing and disseminating a legal framework to institutionalize stakeholder interests within existing corporate law; 3) recruiting and promoting B Corporations; and 4) helping B Corporations access purpose-driven capital.

B Corporations are purpose-driven and create benefit not only for shareholders, but also for employees, the community, and the environment (*3BL*) by:

- Meeting comprehensive and transparent social and environmental performance standards
- Institutionalizing stakeholder interests
- Building collective voice through the power of a unifying brand
- Differentiating between a “good company” and just good marketing (greenwash)
- Providing additional legal recognition and tax preferences for companies in some cities and states

In order for a business to become a B Corporation, a company must 1) achieve a passing score on the B Ratings System, a comprehensive tool to assess a company’s social and environmental performance; and 2) must agree to legally expand the responsibilities of the corporation to include the interests of its employees, suppliers, consumers, community, and environment.

There are over 315 B Corporations in over 51 industries, with \$1.4B collective revenues, and \$7B in assets including sole proprietors, national brands and global financial intermediaries, ranging from consumer product companies.

The following outlines the steps to become a B Corporation:

- **STEP 1: [Take the B Impact Assessment](#)** - Completing the assessment usually takes about 60 to 90 minutes and once you've completed the assessment, you will receive the B Report that contains a composite score and if that score is above 80 (out of 200 points available), you can go to Step 2. *This Impact Assessment is listed on the main webpage and is available for free to take. This provides an excellent opportunity for establishing a baseline.*
- **STEP 2: [Complete a Review](#)** - A review is conducted in about 60 minutes with a B Lab staff member to ensure accuracy and to help understand your company’s unique practices and best practices.
- **STEP 3: [Understand the Legal Roadmap](#)** - For most companies this includes:
 1. Amending your governing documents (e.g., Articles of Incorporation, Membership Agreement, Partnership Agreement) to redefine the best interests of the corporation to include the consideration of employees, consumers, the community and the environment;
 2. Obtaining board/governing body approval of your amended governing documents;



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3. Obtaining shareholder/member/partner approval, requiring a majority/super-majority vote, depending on your state of incorporation/operating agreement;
 4. Filing your amended articles with the Secretary of State (only for C or S Corporations; unnecessary for LLCs and LLPs). This step is unique to B Labs certification process and ensures a long-term commitment by the corporation.
- STEP 4: [Make it Official](#) - Once you have successfully completed the B Impact Assessment and the legal commitment, a simple 2-page term sheet that lays out the expectations states the B Corporation Declaration of Interdependence that marks your commitment to the shared mission.

After you become a Certified B Corporation:

- STEP 5: [Complete Supporting Attachments](#) - Within 90 days of certification, you will be asked to provide supporting documentation to approximately 10% of the answered questions.
- STEP 6: [The Legal Roadmap](#) - Within 1 year of their certification, B Corporations must amend their corporate governing documents to include the B Corp Legal Framework.
- STEP 7: [Audits](#) - 20% of B Corporations are randomly selected for an on-site audit during every two-year term. *The audit component of the B Corp Certification is critical in maintaining the authenticity of the Certified B Corp Seal.*

B Lab offers support to companies needing assistance and referrals for more technical help. Assessments are customized toward size and type of business. B Service Partners provide discounted services to members.

Annual membership pricing is based on revenue at: \$0 - \$1.9 M - \$500; \$2 M - \$4.9 M - \$1,000; \$5 M - \$9.9 M - \$2,500; \$10 M - \$19.9 M - \$5,000; \$20 M - \$99.9 M - \$10,000.

Ceres

[Ceres](#) (pronounced “series”) is a national network of investors, environmental organizations and other public interest groups working with companies and investors to address sustainability challenges such as global climate change.

Although *not a certification*, members commit to enhancing value through in-depth engagement with stakeholders and shareholders, disclosure of environmental and social commitments and results, and continuous performance improvement. They understand that environmental and social issues pose potential risks for their businesses and are committed to addressing them.

To become a member, a company must:

1. Develop a plan with Ceres on priorities for sustainability disclosure and action. The [Ceres Principles](#) are used as a starting point to guide the discussion.

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2. Be reviewed by the Ceres board of directors regarding the company's executive level commitment to sustainability.
3. Be accepted by the board to become a Ceres company.

[Ceres member companies](#) come from a range of sectors from financial services to manufacturers, to electric power to retailers and technology companies. Approximately 1/3 of the members are Fortune 500 companies.

The Ceres Principles, created in 1989, is a ten-point code of corporate environmental conduct to be publicly endorsed by companies as an environmental mission statement or ethic. The Ceres

Principles are:

- **Protection of the Biosphere** - to reduce and make continual progress toward eliminating the release of any substance that may cause environmental damage to the air, water, or the earth or its inhabitants.
- **Sustainable Use of Natural Resources** - make sustainable use of renewable natural resources, such as water, soils and forests and conserving non-renewable natural resources through efficient use and careful planning.
- **Reduction and Disposal of Wastes** - reduce, and where possible, eliminate waste through source reduction and recycling. All waste to be handled and disposed of through safe and responsible methods.
- **Energy Conservation** - conserve energy and improve the energy efficiency of internal operations and of goods and services sold. Make every effort to use environmentally safe and sustainable energy sources.
- **Risk Reduction** - minimize the environmental, health and safety risks to employees and the communities in which operations exist through safe technologies, facilities and operating procedures, and by being prepared for emergencies.
- **Safe Products and Services** - reduce, and where possible, eliminate the use, manufacture or sale of products and services that cause environmental damage or health or safety hazards.
- Inform customers of the environmental impacts of products or services and try to correct unsafe use.
- **Environmental Restoration** - promptly and responsibly correct conditions caused that endanger health, safety or the environment. To the extent feasible, redress injuries caused to persons or damage caused to the environment and restores the environment.
- **Informing the Public** - inform in a timely manner everyone who may be affected by conditions caused by the company that might endanger health, safety or the environment. Regularly seek advice and counsel through dialogue with persons in communities near facilities. Take no action against employees for reporting dangerous incidents or conditions to management or to appropriate authorities.
- **Management Commitment** - implement these Principles and sustain a process that ensures that the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer are fully informed about pertinent environmental issues and are fully responsible for environmental policy. In selecting Board of Directors members, consider demonstrated environmental commitment as a factor.



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- **Audits and Reports** - conduct an annual self-evaluation of progress in implementing these Principles. Support the timely creation of generally accepted environmental audit procedures. Annually complete the Ceres Report, which will be made available to the public.

Services provided to participating companies include:

- Stakeholder team support on reporting including report development advice and report review by Ceres staff and coalition members;
- Monthly consultation and/or advice as required;
- Incident response advice, including correspondence with coalition members and contacts;
- Communications service - company link on Ceres website; electronic newsletter, press referrals, advance notice of Ceres publications and events;
- Participation at Ceres board meetings;
- Participation at Ceres annual conference and other Ceres events including early notification and opportunity to participate and sponsor key events.

Cost of the program is an “annual fee scaled to reflect corporate revenues, ranging from \$2,000 to \$40,000” as stated on their website.

Ceres does not endorse any specific certification programs, but places value on such programs with transparency, audits/qualifications, a reapplication process, and programs that are developed out of a collaborative process rather than individual programs.

Green Business Bureau

The private, for-profit Green Business Bureau (GBB) provides customers with an online tool and roadmap that explains step-by-step how to complete green initiatives and receive GBB’s certification. By completing initiatives, members also earn the opportunity to advance to the next higher tier.

The standards were developed by a group of LEED Accredited Professionals in combination with industry experts and business professionals, and reference the USGBC LEED standards, EPA programs, leading government programs (San Francisco, for example), proprietary research and industry best practices for a single source for green business initiatives. The standards were developed with two key principles in mind: efficiency and optimization.

The standards are also monitored and administered by a panel of GBB associated experts including members of the USGBC, individuals in the legal and compliance arena, and folks with experience in renewable energy.

When I asked about seeing the actual standards, I was told the “assessment includes a lot of proprietary information with a large database of initiatives that a business could be undertaking” and was not able to see an example of the actual standards. This is in contrast to the standards elements which are available to view on B Lab’s website and the Green Profit Solutions’ elements which were shared with me. GBB’s elements, I was told, include waste reduction, water reduction/reuse, energy efficiency, conserving natural resources, and a sustainability component which must be included in a company’s mission/vision or have specific mission



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around sustainability. GBB does not focus on social justice, the program is more focused on environmental sustainability efforts that lead to an adequate ROI.

Their GB Certification certifies that the *business operations* of a company meet the required standards for sustainability. GBB serves small- and medium-sized businesses across several industries in the US and Canada. In addition, they have created an Eco-Industries Program (EIPs) that incorporate their standard menu of green initiatives, along with industry-specific initiatives developed by the EPA and trade-related bodies. The current list of EIPs includes: Janitorial and Cleaning Services; Dry Cleaning; Landscaping; Office Supplies Vending; Building and Construction; Horticultural Nurseries; Retail; Hotels and Lodging; and Restaurants.

GBB membership includes:

- Online access to your personalized green roadmap
- Official GBB green business certification (once pre-requisites are met)
- GBB Welcome Package (includes poster, decal, employee video, online seal)
- Unrestricted use of our exclusive web applications and newsletters
- Access to use the GBB brand to market your business

The program includes:

1. An Online Assessment that helps determine where your business currently falls on the green spectrum. Credit is available for green steps already implemented. The results of the survey allows them to tailor your plan.
2. A Profile and Environmental Tracker that keeps track of your completed initiatives so you can monitor your progress. This also enables you to find the initiatives that yield the most “environmental bang for your buck”. As you complete initiatives, the system will automatically recommend new initiatives across the five categories.
3. Initiative Detail & Resources. This page provides additional information on any given initiative in a clear format. You’ll be able to see how an initiative ranks in three grading criteria: Investment, Effort, and Environmental Benefit.
4. The EcoPlan™ is a printable worksheet that guides you through exactly how to implement the initiative within your business. The worksheet includes a step-by-step checklist with helpful steps on how to complete a given initiative. You will also be able to assign task owners and keep track of your timing.

Audits are conducted by Green Irene, a network of eco-consultants. All GBB members, during their renewal period, will receive a visit from a Green Irene eco-consultant to verify the sustainability initiatives reported on their online portal. Actual displays of all of the initiatives a member is undertaking can be seen when clicking on the GBB seal providing transparency and potentially mitigating greenwashing claims.

GBB recently joined with Ebay’s World of Good to become a trust provider for vendors seeking to sell their products on this sister site of online auction Ebay.com. WorldofGood.com (WOG) is the world’s first online marketplace to convene “People Positive” and “Eco Positive” sellers and



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products all in one place, empowering consumers to shop in ways that align with their personal values.

GBB membership will also earn automatic enrollment with EcoChamber, where you receive additional benefits such as legislative advocacy, access to the latest environmental news, and member discounts. Membership with EcoChamber is about \$375. Annual certification pricing with Green Business Bureau is: for 1-9 employees = \$375; 10-25 employees = \$475; 26-99 employees = \$575; \$100+ employees = \$875. It does not cost additional to move up the certification tiers from Aware to Gold or to Platinum. Added consulting and on-site assistance is available through Green Irene when a member joins with the Premium offering for a nominal fee.

GreenProfit Solutions

GreenProfit Solutions, Inc. was founded on the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility, and is based on the idea that little changes in habits can bring upon large savings in environmental impact because truly making any substantial improvements for the small business owner, comes down to: make it easy, make it affordable.

These principles place environmental sustainability, fair and decent treatment of all peoples, and the commitment to being a productive member of their community at the heart of the company's operations and were derived from:

- ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems
- EPA Energy Star & WasteWise (GreenProfit Solutions is an Energy Star Partner & WasteWise Endorser)
- USGBC's LEED standards
- California Green Business Program
- Collaborative input from the business community.

GPS are EPA Energy Star Partners and Wastewise Sponsors, and are certified ISO trainers & auditors. Details are currently being finalized for them to partner with Broward College in Florida for the first CPE course for CPA's on Climate Change & Sustainability Accounting. This 8-credit course will be offered through various channels in Florida including Broward College. Joseph and Keith Winn, founders of GPS, are adjunct faculty. GreenProfit Solutions was selected as the Greater Fort Lauderdale, FL Chamber of Commerce Small Business of 2010.

Green Profit Solutions has partnered with the EPA's programs, a variety of standardized tools and metrics became available for company audits. Additionally, academic resources as well as representatives of various industries across the entire United States were surveyed to ensure program competency. Although not audited by a third party, standards are upheld by GPS staff. All member companies must follow a carefully designed process for transitioning business practices. Upon completion, the Guidelines are submitted to in-house specialists. Pending successful review, the company is deemed qualified and the certification is awarded. To encourage continuous improvement and maintain compliance, companies must re-certify annually.



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Steps are:

- 1) Application - Complete the requested information online and the necessary documents to get started are to be forwarded to GPS.
- 2) Implementation - Review the *Guidelines to Sustainability* (The core of the Approved Green Business Program) and the *Sustainability Plan*. The Guidelines are the actual improvements, divided by category and rank, designed to help companies focus on the most important sustainability improvements today, while assisting them to understand valuable steps that can be taken in the future. The *Sustainability Plan* is the actual plan to implement the guidelines.
- 3) Organize an employee-driven Green Team to oversee the program's progress and with assistance of GPS's guide materials, begin to make progress toward certification. As a member, you are eligible to receive a variety of [membership benefits](#).
- 4) Marketing - Upon signing up and pending approval, GPS will begin a public relations campaign by submitting press releases to media outlets. In addition, they provide sample "Going Green" articles for your newsletter or magazine.

For larger clients, GPS also offers Green House Gas inventory and reduction service using ISO 14064 and ISO 14065. They are certified trainers and auditors for ISO 9001:2008, ISO 14001:2004 and many other standards (CMMI) including the BS 8901 Sustainable Event System and Certification which was developed for the 2010 London Olympic Games.

Annual Pricing for the Approved Green Business Program: 1-3 employees - \$342; 4-9 employees - \$456; 10-15 employees - \$570; 16-25 employees - \$684; 26-35 employees - \$798; 36-50 employees - \$912. Monthly payment plans available.

Green Seal, Inc.

Founded in 1989, non-profit Green Seal provides science-based environmental certification standards for a variety of products and services. Although Green Seal does not have a general Green Business Certification program, it does have a Product Manufacturers Certification, GS-C1, in which certification is based on a comprehensive standard founded on a set of social and environmental sustainability criteria.

The [GS-C1 standard for Product Manufacturers](#) looks at products and business practices in their totality. The pilot standard includes rigorous requirements in the following areas:

- Transparency and accountability at the corporate level, including publicly available company-wide social and environmental policies; an effective environmental management system; identification of social and environmental roles and responsibilities; compliance; and publicly available annual reporting.
- Aggressive goals, actions and achievements in major social and environmental impact areas, including workplace conditions; expanded opportunities for local communities; indigenous peoples' rights; biological diversity; social and environmental assessment; and reductions in greenhouse gases, water use, waste and toxic chemicals.
- Effective and accountable supplier management practices to ensure sustainable sourcing of product raw materials, ingredients, and components.



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- Scientific life-cycle assessments on key product lines coupled with aggressive actions to reduce environmental and health impacts. It includes requirements for reducing or eliminating impacts from raw materials; manufacturing; packaging; transport; product use; and the end of product life.
- Ambitious requirements for third-party certification of a company's products to verify social and environmental responsibility of products and to make it easier for consumers to reduce the negative impacts, and increase the social and environmental benefits of their purchasing.

The standard will continue to be further developed and refined by systematic stakeholder input. Green Seal is also piloting a certification program for consumer product manufacturers. After the completion of the pilot phase, the final standard will be available for certification to all product manufacturers.

Green Seal is the first standards specification to be approved as an [American National Standards Institute \(ANSI\)](#) and is an ANSI-accredited standards developer. The process used to achieve performance levels and practices for products and services is based on the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards for environmental labeling programs, [ISO 14020/14024 standards - international standards for eco-labeling](#).

Product or service categories are evaluated using a *life-cycle* approach to ensure that all significant environmental impacts are considered in the development of a standard, from raw materials extraction through manufacturing to use and disposal. Clients include major companies such as 3M, Benjamin Moore, and Andersen Windows. More than 180 major product categories have been covered by their standards. Clients also include [government agencies](#), universities, and the [lodging](#) and architectural building industries which they actively advise and assist in their efforts to green their purchasing, operations, and facilities management functions.

Green Seal has recently launched a pilot program to The [Green Seal Green Purchasing Partnership and Green Facilities Partnership programs](#) build upon Green Seal's long-standing Institutional Greening Program, which provides technical assistance to pioneering public and private organizations that wish to improve their purchasing and facilities management practices. Unlike Green Seal's certification program, the Green Partnership programs *do not provide standards based certification*. Instead, they offer recognition based upon successful implementation of an organization's individual action plan, tailored specifically to its own challenges, opportunities, and objectives.

Green Seal does not offer any consultation to companies applying for certification, but do provide on-line tools for companies to use in the certification process. They also do not take any funds from stakeholders involved with the standard development process that might have a stake in a certifiable company.

The fees are based on the annual revenue of the company and other factors. There are 6 tiers, the lowest for companies with less than \$5 million in revenue and the highest for companies over \$50 billion.



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UL Environment - In Development

Currently in development is UL Environment, a division of Underwriters Laboratories, in partnership with GreenBiz.com, issuing Sustainability for Manufacturing Organizations, a global, company-level standard. The standard defines core sustainability metrics for manufacturing businesses on environmental and social issues. There will be additional standards following ULE 880, including ULE 881, intended for service-sector companies. ([Read project backgrounder here.](#))

ULE 880 defines core sustainability metrics for manufacturing businesses within the following five domains:

- **Sustainability Governance:** how an organization leads and manages itself in relation to its stakeholders, including its employees, investors, regulatory authorities, customers, and the communities in which it operates
- **Environment:** an organization's environmental footprint across its policies, operations, products and services, including its resource use and emissions
- **Workplace:** issues related to employee working conditions, organization culture, and effectiveness
- **Customers and Suppliers:** issues related to an organization's policies and practices on product safety, quality, pricing, and marketing as well as its supply chain policies and practices
- **Social and Community Engagement:** an organization's impacts on its community in the areas of social equity, ethical conduct, and human rights

Organizations that demonstrate leadership performance against the standard's metrics will be recognized through a third-party verification process. It is anticipated that there will be three levels of certification, reflecting increasingly higher levels of achievement.

Currently, UL Environment and GreenBiz.com are seeking participation from a broad cross-section of stakeholders affected by or interested in the implementation of this standard, including manufacturers, assessment and standards organizations, regulators, policy makers, procurement officers, sustainability professionals, the socially responsible investing community, and non-profit and for-profit sustainability interest groups.

It is encouraged to invite colleagues or others who may be interested in providing input on this standard. There is no fee or other obligation to participate. Stakeholder Feedback Period Open Through September 14, 2010. Read more: <http://www.greenbiz.com/ratings#ixzz0wluiRfaF> any questions should be directed to UL Environment directly at: Standards@ULEnvironment.com.

Lastly, various States, Regions or Municipalities have GB Certifications, such as the GB Certification Program of Montgomery County, MD. <http://mcgreenbiz.org/overview/>.

A-2 Definitions

ANSI - The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has served in its capacity as administrator and coordinator of the United States private sector voluntary standardization system for more than 90 years. Founded in 1918 by five engineering societies and three government agencies, the Institute remains a private, nonprofit membership organization supported by a diverse constituency of private and public sector organizations.

EcoChamber is the first global green chamber of commerce dedicated to helping organizations create and implement sustainable business practices while counseling them on how to make sound and profitable business decisions driven by the new “Green Economy”. The EcoChamber has six key initiatives, but is not a certification program:

- Help companies and governments take additional eco-friendly steps while improving their budget through analysis and tracking tools.
- Help those who are already green or taking steps in the right direction to thrive through business development and marketing tools.
- Work to ensure governments are creating legislation that is good for environment while still supporting jobs and businesses.
- Help to build and support the next generation of environmental leaders through free student programs.
- Share best practices across the globe between industries and governments to, helping progress be more rapid and readily adopted.
- Unify fragmented eco industries to create a louder, more powerful voice for advancement.

Green House Gas Inventory - [Greenhouse gas](#) inventories are a type of [emission inventory](#). Policy makers use inventories to develop strategies and policies for emissions reductions and to track the progress of those policies. Regulatory agencies and corporations also rely on inventories to establish compliance records with allowable emission rates. Businesses, the public, and other interest groups use inventories to better understand the sources and trends in emissions. The ISO 14064 standards provide governments, businesses, regions and other organizations with an integrated set of tools for programs aimed at measuring, quantifying and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. These standards allow organizations take part in emissions trading schemes using a globally recognized standard.

Greenwash(ing) - Greenwashing (a portmanteau of green and whitewash) is the practice of companies disingenuously spinning their products and policies as environmentally friendly, such as by presenting cost cuts as reductions in use of resources.

ISO - is a network of the national standards institutes of some 163 countries, with a central office in Geneva, Switzerland, that coordinates the system and publishes the finished standards. ISO 14001:2004 specifies requirements for an environmental management system to enable an organization to develop and implement a policy and objectives which take into account legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes, and information about significant environmental aspects.



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Life Cycle Analysis - LCA is a technique to assess the environmental aspects and potential impacts associated with a product, process, or service, by: compiling an inventory of relevant energy and material inputs and environmental releases; evaluating the potential environmental impacts associated with identified inputs and releases; interpreting the results to help you make a more informed decision. <http://www.epa.gov/nrmrl/lcaccess/>

LOHAS - Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) is a [demographic](#) defining a particular [market segment](#) related to [sustainable living](#), "green" ecological initiatives, and generally composed of a relatively upscale and well-educated population segment. A study by the Natural Marketing Institute showed that in 2007, 40 million Americans were included within the LOHAS demographic.

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A-3 - Other significant certification programs:

General Information				Certification or Labeling Types			
Eco Label Name & Website	Label	Year Founded	Product Categories	Lifecycle-based*	Third-party certified	Publicly Available Standard	Transparent Standard Development Process
Design for Environment (DfE) www.dfe.org/dfe		1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning Products. • Office Products. 	✓			
	EcoCert www.ecocert.com		2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic Ingredients. 	single-issue (organic certification)	✓	✓
Ecologo www.ecologo.org		1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Beauty Products. • Cleaning Products. • Home Products. • Office Products. • Electronics. • Building/Construction Products. 	✓	✓	✓	✓
							
Energy Star www.energystar.gov		1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Products. • Building and Construction Products. • Electronics. 	single-issue (energy efficiency)		✓	✓
PEAT www.peat.net		2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronics. 	✓		✓	✓
Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) www.fsc.org		1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood and Paper Products. 	single-issue (forest management)	✓	✓	✓
Green Seal www.greenseal.org		1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning Products. • Office Products. • Building/Construction Products. 	✓	✓	✓	✓
GREENGUARD www.greenguard.org		2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building/Construction Products. • Home Products. • Cleaning Products. • Office Products. 	single-issue (low-emission quality)	✓	✓	✓
Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) www.sfi-program.org		1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood and paper products. 	single-issue (forest management)	✓	✓	✓
USDA Organic www.ams.usda.gov		2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic Ingredients. 	single-issue (organic certification)	✓	✓	✓
WaterSense www.epa.gov/WaterSense		2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Products. • Building/Construction Products. 	single-issue (water saving)	✓	✓	✓

* Lifecycle-based eco-labels consider the environmental impacts from all phases of a product's life cycle, including the raw materials, the manufacturing process, the product itself, its distribution and use, and its ultimate disposal (or recycling/re-use).