



However, if the manufacture of this specific renewable material would use very high amounts of water, pesticides, energy, etc., then its environmental impact might be higher than that of the petrochemical equivalent, cancelling the environmental benefit of the paint.



An extensive CEPE glossary of sustainability-related definitions is available for members via the CEPE Workplace.

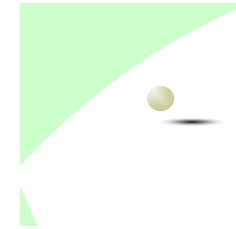
CEPE, September 2012



Avenue Edmond Van Nieuwenhuyse, 6
BE-1160 Brussels

Tel : +32 (0)2 676 74 80
Fax : +32 (0)2 676 74 90

E-mail : secretariat@cepe.org
www.cepe.org



CEPE Guidance On Self-Declared Environmental Product Claims for Decorative Coatings





When making environmental claims that are not certified or validated by third parties, CEPE members of the decorative coatings sector should respect the following guidelines.

Self-declared claims should:

1. Be formulated in an honest, clear and concrete way

Example 1: An environmental claim “environmentally friendly” or “more sustainable” is not accurate enough. The claim should indicate which environmental aspect is improved with this specific product, like for example diminution of VOC emissions, optimization of use of fossil or natural resources, the product’s durability, etc.



2. Reflect a meaningful benefit to the environment

Example 2: An environmental claim like “does not contain substance X” for a particular DIY decorative paint does not reflect any benefit to the environment when this substance X is forbidden and the ‘non-containing’ is just a matter of compliance with the law. In that case the claim would not be meaningful and could even be misleading to consumers, making them believe that other paints do contain substance X.



3. Be measurable and verifiable by using scientific standards or other evidence

Example 3: An environmental claim “biodegradable” for a particular DIY wood paint can be made only when appropriate and recognized tests have been carried out to prove the biodegradability of the product.

4. Take the whole Life Cycle of a product into account

The claimed benefit should not have been achieved by neglecting other aspects of the product (such as use of hazardous or scarce ingredients) or manufacturing processes with negative environmental impacts.



Example 4: An environmental claim for a paint containing a naturally occurring renewable material in replacement of a petrochemical makes sense since it helps preserve non-renewable fossil resources.