

FAQs Certification

What can be certified?

Only (consumer) products, not companies, persons or services.
For complex products like buildings or electronics there will be special regulations later.

In which documents can I find information?

On the website of EPEA you find the following documents which inform you about principles and procedure of *Cradle to Cradle*[®] Certification

Cradle to Cradle[®] Certification Program

Certification “flyer”

Step by step introduction how to apply for an *Cradle to Cradle*[®] certificate

General information on *Cradle to Cradle*[®] Certification

Criteria Matrix

Data forms for data collection

What are the steps in a Certification Process?

There are four steps in a Certification Process.

In brackets: who is responsible for the step in a usual Certification Process when applied at EPEA.

1. Material Assessment (EPEA)
Assessment of all ingredients of a product according to the ABC-X categorization of EPEA and MBDC
2. Process Evaluation (EPEA)
Data about the process flow, inputs, energy, social responsibility and water of the production process(es).
3. Audit (MBDC)
Check whether the Certification is in line with the original Certification Program. From the EPEA point of view MBDC is an independent 3rd party as they are not involved in the first two steps.
4. Issuing of the Certificate (MBDC)

What kind of data do I have to deliver to EPEA for Certification?

A crucial point is the definition of the product. This means to know all ingredients described by chemical name and CAS number.

Furthermore: Data about the production process (flow chart, in- and output of chemicals, recycled input, energy for production, social responsibility, water management).

How far do I have to go into the production process?

Data about the main manufacturing steps have to be gathered. It is not needed to gather data about the production of pre-products (e.g. when a t-shirt is to be certified, data is needed about the processes of spinning, weaving, dyeing, tailoring and finishing treatment but not about the production of the dyes). Some exceptions will be mentioned if applicable in the particular case.

Where can I gather these data?

Either the applicant disposes of the data himself or he has to ask his supplier(s).

What to do if my supplier does not give us information due to confidentiality?

It is up to the customer to encourage his supplier(s) to get in touch and to cooperate directly with EPEA. Subsequently EPEA can sign a secrecy agreement (non disclosure agreement) with your supplier so that he can deliver confidential data to EPEA. This is called "know-how-trustee"-model, and EPEA acts as the know-how-trustee. If a supplier does not see a role in the Certification as important, it is possible that the applicant looks for another supplier who is cooperative.

How long will the whole process for applying the Cradle to Cradle certification last?

From delivery of all necessary data by the customer and/or the supplier it will take approximately 6-8 weeks to carry out the assessments by EPEA and to issue the Certificate by MBDC.

How long is a Certificate valid?

One year, then there is a Re-Certification necessary or the product is listed out.

How does a Re-Certification proceed?

If nothing has changed, the applicant declares this by signing the templates from the original Certification again and will receive a new Certificate, charged by EPEA with 2000 € including the issue of the Certificate by MBDC. If something has changed and additional or new Assessments have to be done, this will be charged by EPEA according to the time spent by EPEA scientists on this. If many things have changed, it has to be considered whether a new Certification is necessary.

What does a Certification cost?

Costs mainly depend on the number of ingredients to be assessed, furthermore on the number of processes and audits. Please see our Certification flyer on the EPEA website which outlines this in detail. The exact costs are only known when the exact number of ingredients are known. This may be the case when the suppliers have given the composition of their materials.

Does MBDC apply the same criteria as EPEA?

Yes, the standard is the same. It is published on the EPEA and MBDC websites.

www.epea.com, www.mbdc.com

What is the relationship between the two organizations?

Michael Braungart is the founder of EPEA and co-founder of MBDC. Both organizations are separate companies, but cooperate in several projects. The information provided within the Non Disclosure Agreements are respected by both companies individually.

Is the certification valid all around the world?

Yes, it does not make a difference to certify a product either with MBDC or with EPEA. The Certificates are valid worldwide. Together with the Certificate, customers have to sign a license agreement with MBDC about the usage of the logo. This will be prepared by MBDC. MBDC owns the trademark and certification mark, EPEA is a licensee of the certification program of MBDC.

Where can I look if I want to see what kind of products are already certified?

There is an official list of certified products worldwide on the MBDC website.

Why is MBDC involved in the Certifications carried out by EPEA?

MBDS is the licensor for the whole Certification Process and holds all rights on the logos. So they are the only company who is allowed to issue the Certificates.

If you want to have another additional external view on the Certification process of your product, the company Berenschot, Utrecht, is authorized to carry out an Audit Review which checks shortly the steps of the Certification process in the special case. This is not a check of the Assessments, only of the procedure and requires an additional budget.

Does EPEA check the data which are delivered by the customer?

The *Cradle to Cradle*[®] Certification System is based on credibility and not on control like e.g. common ISO systems. The applicant confirms with his signature the values of the content.

Is there any service for Asia located customers?

We will have an EPEA office in Taiwan soon and we have Chinese colleagues in our Hamburg office.

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