

CPR ACQUIS PROCESS
SUB-GROUP ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS
WORK PROGRAMME
FOR THE DEFINITION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL STRUCTURE OF FUTURE HARMONISED
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION PRODUCT SECTOR

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Executive summary

The European Commission has set up an informal Expert Group to support the Commission in the work of the “CPR Acquis”. The aim of the “CPR Acquis” is to improve existing mandates (future standardisation requests) to cover all relevant regulatory and technical requirements under the framework of the current CPR as well as the ones indicated in the Commission’s proposal for a new CPR.

The group is composed of a main forum, the “Steering Group”, sub-groups corresponding to the product areas identified by the CPR and thematic sub-groups to deal with horizontal issues.

This document is the work programme of the sub-group dealing with horizontal issues related to environmental sustainability.

The sub-group shall operate in compliance with the *Rules of procedure for the governance of the CPR Technical Acquis planning*¹ and shall report to the Steering group in accordance with this work programme.

This work programme is proposed by the Commission and is approved after consultation with the Steering Group.

The sub-group was created mainly to identify and address the technical performance and requirements of construction products as regards their environmental sustainability (including circularity) in harmonised technical specifications covering;

- identification of environmental (including circularity) essential characteristics for all and for specific product groups/individual products;
- expression of assessment results;
- general assessment rules applicable for all product areas including third party tasks, requirements and other regulatory needs under this subgroup’s competence (based on notified regulations and administrative provisions).

The implementation of the work programme is measured against a list of milestones based on specific deliverables. General milestones are linked to a predefined timeframe and product-specific tasks depend on the schedule of the product-specific sub-groups.

Most of the work of the sub-group is expected to be implemented under the current CPR regulatory framework. Developments related to future CPR provisions will be discussed but their implementation will be postponed until the new CPR is adopted according to a revised work programme.

1 Introduction and context

1.1 Background

On the 29th of March 2004 the European Commission adopted Mandate M350 for the development of horizontal standardised methods for the assessment of the integrated environmental performance of buildings. This action triggered the development of European standards on this field, the most relevant in the context of the work of this sub-group are EN

¹ Document SG001-03.1 CPR RoP_main group Ref. Ares(2021)4656757 – 19/07/2021

15804 dealing with environmental product declaration and EN 15978 dealing with environmental assessment of buildings.

Some years later the regulatory text of the CPR adopted on the 9th of March 2011 included basic requirements for construction works (BRCW) 3, 6 and 7 to be used as guidance for the development of essential characteristics for construction products and as a relevant reference to a “broader picture” of the environmental sustainability.

The European standard for the assessment and declaration of environmental performance of products was published in 2012 and amended in 2014 to correct some mistakes.

In the meantime, the European Commission was working in a life cycle assessment methodology called “Product Environmental Footprint” (PEF) which was published in the Official Journal of the European Union the 9th of April 2013 as a Commission recommendation and tested in extensive pilot projects including some construction products through the following years.

The Commission revised the original Mandate M350 requesting an alignment of EN 15804 and of the other standards covered by it to the PEF methodology as much as possible. The decision was approved by the Committee on Standards on the 8th of November 2016. The first standard following the new approach is EN 15804+A2 published in 2019.

To complement product assessment, the Commission also developed Levels(s), the European methodology for the evaluation of environmental performance of buildings. The technical part of the methodology dealing with the life cycle of the building follows EN 15978 and requires the information from products assessed according to EN 15804. The final version of the methodology was published in 2021 after an extensive testing process together with additional resources to facilitate its use.

In line with the previous developments, the first product family including declaration of the environmental performance within the CPR regulatory framework is solid and liquid fuel stoves. These products are covered by a standardisation request adopted on the 29th of July 2021. The request includes some environmental essential characteristics assessed according to EN 15804+A2.

On the 15th of December 2021, the Commission adopted the proposal for the revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)², the proposal under discussion contains provisions related to the calculation of the Global Warming Potential of buildings according to the Level(s) methodology.

Finally, the Commission adopted on the 30th of March 2022, the proposal for a new CPR³ including the declaration of a list of environmental indicators to be provided by construction products manufacturers, one of which, Global Warming Potential, as a mandatory declaration at European level.

The sub-group will use the comprehensive basis developed last years to provide a reliable way to implement environmental sustainability in the context of the marketing of construction products. The combination of this action with the other regulatory and non-regulatory actions at the European and national level will lead to the achievement of the environmental and circularity

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021PC0802>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022PC0144>

goals defined in the EU Green Deal, the Circularity action plan and other initiatives dealing with this topic.

1.2 Overview of standards available

EN 15804+A2 *Sustainability of construction works - Environmental product declarations - Core rules for the product category of construction products* is the reference standard for the assessment of the environmental performance of construction products. However, this standard provides only for core rules applicable for all construction products.

The standard clarifies that complementary product category rules (c-PCR) providing additional compliant and non-contradictory requirements to EN 15804 may be necessary to ensure a consistent approach throughout the construction sector. Some CEN Technical Committees developed during the last years these c-PCR, but they focus on technical issues and do not address regulatory consistency with the European law.

The sub-group may include other standards, see 2.2.2 and 2.2.4.

1.3 Overview of other acts composing the CPR Acquis in this product area

The work developed on this field has remained outside the European regulatory regime and will require the adoption of legal acts to be properly implemented. The most relevant is the definition of the applicable Assessment and Verification of Constancy of Performance (AVCP) system applicable to the relevant, environmental sustainability related, essential characteristics.

The current CPR⁴ offers the possibility for the Commission to adopt delegated acts on this specific topic, in particular Article 60 (e) allows the definition of a new AVCP system and Article 28(2) and Article 60(h) for the assignment of this new AVCP system to the essential characteristics related to environmental sustainability.

The proposal for the new CPR⁵ already contains provisions on this specific topic in the new Annex V as assessment and verification system 3+ (the new legal text modifies the name assigned to the third party tasks to be performed by notified bodies).

2 Objectives, milestones and timeframe

2.1 Objectives

As described in the terms of reference of the sub-group and in the background text above, this sub-group will develop the technical framework for the declaration of performance, additional product characteristics and inherent product requirements within the regulatory context in line with the Annex I of the current CPR and Annex I of the new CPR proposal.

2.2 Milestones

2.2.1 Milestone A: Essential characteristics and environmental indicators

The sub-group will discuss the essential characteristics and environmental indicators to be included in future standardisation requests. The starting point is the list provided in Annex I Part A point 2 of the new CPR proposal containing the core and additional indicators according to EN 1580+A2:

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011R0305>

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022PC0144>

climate change effects (total, fossil, biogenic, and land use and land use change)	ozone depletion
acidification potential	eutrophication aquatic freshwater
eutrophication aquatic marine	eutrophication terrestrial
photochemical ozone	abiotic depletion – minerals, metals
abiotic depletion – fossil fuels	water use
particulate matter	ionizing radiation, human health
eco-toxicity, freshwater	human toxicity, cancer
human toxicity, non-cancer	land use related impacts

Legend	Core indicators	Additional indicators
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The sub-group will not restrict its work to the list above. Relevant indicators are already considered in EN 15804 for describing e.g., resource use, waste, output flows and biogenic carbon. Essential characteristic of capability to temporarily bind carbon and of other carbon removals will also be addressed.

Other essential characteristics may be discussed, even if they are not currently included in the Environmental Product Declarations (EPD).

This shall allow for construction works level assessments and for the Member States to regulate environmental sustainability of construction works respecting the principles of the single market.

2.2.2 Milestone B: Assessment methods and declaration – Horizontal approach

The sub-group will assess existing methodologies and declaration approaches including modularity, scenarios, reference service life, simplification, benchmarking, modelling rules, allocation data collection and sharing, etc. to provide general guidance on these topics to be followed by product-specific sub-groups.

If need be, new methodologies or revision of the existing ones will be discussed, including the development of recommendations to the steering group for the development of standardisation requests, if required.

On the benchmark topic, the standard prEN 17672 “Sustainability of construction works - Environmental product declarations - Horizontal rules for business-to-consumer communication” may be a useful reference.

2.2.3 Milestone C: Verification

The sub-group will discuss the most practical and least financially burdensome approach to implement third party verification to ensure regulatory consistency. Two scenarios will be the baseline of these discussions:

Scenario 1 – Environmental performance is declared within the current CPR. Harmonised technical specifications adopted under the current CPR require the adoption of delegated acts to define the applicable AVCP system.

- Delegated act according to Article 60(e) on the adaptation of Annex V in response to technical progress to include the new AVCP system applicable.
- Delegated act according to Article 28 and 60(h) to define the application of the new AVCP system to environmental sustainability essential characteristics for all construction products.

Scenario 2 – Environmental performance is declared according to a new CPR. The provisions of the new CPR will apply, including the final Annex V. If the proposal is adopted as it was presented on this point, AVCP systems will be replaced by assessment and verification systems (AVS) under the conditions of the final regulatory text.

To ensure a smooth transition, scenarios 1 and 2 should be aligned as much as possible. Therefore, experts should take AVCP system 3+ (Annex V point 4 of the new CPR proposal) as starting point.

System 3+ Notified body's control of environmental sustainability assessment

- (a) The manufacturer shall carry out the assessment of the performance of the product in relation to essential characteristics or product requirements related to environmental sustainability and keep it updated.
- (b) The notified body shall, in particular in view of input values, assumptions made and compliance with applicable generic or product category specific rules:
 - (i) verify the manufacturer's initial and updated assessment;
 - (ii) validate the process applied to generate that assessment.

In case the sub-group introduces deviations, Member States should take them into consideration when discussing the new CPR during the legislative process.

2.2.4 Milestone D: Background datasets and data quality requirements

The sub-group will discuss the need to refer to the same background datasets to prevent unjustified deviations derived from data sources including the possibility to use reference datasets provided by the industry and validated in the context of the regulatory framework.

An alternative approach could be the definition of data quality requirements preventing the unjustified deviations. On this specific point prEN 15941 *Sustainability of construction works - Data quality for environmental assessment of products and construction work - Selection and use of data* may be a useful reference.

2.2.5 Milestone E: Compulsory declaration

The sub-group may take stock of potential mandatory essential characteristics to be declared for all construction products. The new CPR proposal includes climate change effects in this category. In any case, Member States are competent to demand the declaration of any essential characteristics in the markets they regulate through national legislation.

2.2.6 Milestone F – Guidance for “Declaration without assessment”

The sub-group will draft guidance to develop technical dossiers to benefit from the deemed to satisfy provisions included in Article 36(a) of the current CPR.

2.2.7 Milestone G – [per product family] Declaration without assessment

The sub-group will assess the technical dossiers submitted by product specific sectors and will provide feedback on the reliability of the dossier and the conditions under which a manufacturer

can apply it. The official process will need to be submitted to the steering group and adopted as a delegated act according to Article 27(5) and 60(g).

The timeframe of this milestone will be defined when the request is received.

2.2.8 Milestone H - [per product family] Requirements related to environmental sustainability

The sub-group may be consulted on the establishment of threshold values for essential characteristics related to environmental sustainability. Under the current regulatory framework, these values will be implemented in the relevant standardisation request or through a delegated act adopted according to Article 3(3) and 60(a).

The sub-group may also be consulted on requirements not based on performance declaration. They cannot be implemented under the current regulatory framework, but the new CPR legal proposal offers the possibility to implement them.

The timeframe of this milestone will be defined when the request is received.

2.2.9 Milestone I - Other specific discussions

The sub-group will evaluate requests from product-specific sub-groups. When necessary, additional guidance will be discussed. Some examples are:

- Potential addition of product specific essential characteristics.
- Harmonisation of modelling approaches.
- Discussion about additional category rules to better define assessment methodologies and modelling e.g., mass balance approach (biomass accounting) and carbonation.
- Define allocation rules to prevent inconsistent approaches.
- Ensure data consistency.
- Other technical issues.

The timeframe of this milestone will be defined when the request is received.

2.3 Timeframe

The timeframe to implement the milestones is provided in Annex 2 but it can be modified for justified reasons provided by this sub-group with the approval of the steering group.

The proposed date to start the implementation of the work programme is October 2022

3 Execution of the work programme

3.1 Introduction

The guidelines for the execution of the work programme are the following:

- The sub-group will focus on the content which can be implemented under the current CPR. The extension based on the Commission's proposal for a new CPR will be discussed but remains for the time being a secondary priority until the new CPR is adopted.
- The sub-group will evaluate how requirements in European and national legislation have been implemented in practice. For this reason, involvement of regulators or experts with very good knowledge about national regulatory requirements is required.
- Objectives must be realistic in the context of the available timescales and resources.

- Consistency across different product-specific sub-groups to ensure consistent aggregation at construction works levels is the guiding principle for the technical discussions.

The work is led by the Commission with the support of experts appointed by Member States. On a regular basis, experts from the Commission dealing with topics related to construction products will participate e.g., Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), Level(s), Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), etc.

The involvement of observers acting as active experts or as experts offering written contribution (employed mostly in industry or representing other stakeholders) is of utmost importance to meet the necessary needs of different user groups. Participation of observers will be limited to ensure balanced discussions.

The work programme presents realistic outcomes with realistic timescales, addressing the priorities and the regulatory needs of the Member States, the needs of industry and other stakeholders, and the legal and technical requirements of the normative Acquis.

3.2 Description of the approach

The execution of the work programme contains the identification of milestones and considers horizontal aspects that influence the outcomes.

3.3 Description of the tasks

The structure of the work programme follows the list of Milestones identified in clause 2.2.

The complete and detailed work programme is presented in Annex 1. An outline schedule (Gantt chart) for the execution of the work programme is included in Annex 2.

For each task, the template defines if implementation is possible under the current regulatory framework or not.

3.4 Organisation and coordination

The effective coordination is ensured by the Commission, experts can offer their support for the preparation of documents on a voluntary base.

Annex 1 – Detailed Work Programme

Milestone A: Essential characteristics and environmental indicators

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Life cycle assessment indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation of the final list of indicators	Current CPR	Annex I Part A point 2 of the new CPR proposal is the baseline
2	Resource use indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation about the inclusion or not of these indicators	Current CPR	EN 15804 indicators to be considered as baseline
3	Waste indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation about the inclusion or not of these indicators	Current CPR	EN 15804 indicators to be considered as baseline
4	Output flows indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation about the inclusion or not of these indicators	Current CPR	EN 15804 indicators to be considered as baseline
5	Biogenic carbon indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation about the inclusion or not of these indicators	Current CPR	EN 15804 indicators to be considered as baseline
6	Capability to temporarily bind carbon and of other carbon removals indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation about the inclusion or not of these indicators	Current CPR	European regulatory initiatives on this field to be considered
7	Other indicators	Identification of technical and regulatory needs	Recommendation about the inclusion or not of these indicators	Current CPR	

Milestone B: Assessment methods and declaration – Horizontal approach

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Methodology for the assessment	Discuss the assessment methodologies available in relation to Milestone A and every task under it	Recommendation about the methodology to be used	Current CPR	Development in line with the outcome of Milestone A and their tasks
2	Declaration of the performance	Discuss the declaration, including functional and declared unit approaches	Recommendation about the declaration approach	Current CPR	
3	Modularity	Discuss the consistency over the life cycle and integration at construction works level	Recommendation about the approach as regards modularity	Current CPR	
4	Scenarios	Discuss the best way to ensure a single declaration at European level satisfying regional differences	Recommendation about the definition of European scenarios or parametric scenarios for the adaptation of the results to the construction works	Current CPR	
5	Reference service life	Discuss the need to define reference service life	Recommend the conditions under which reference service life needs to be provided and the relevant rules	Current CPR	
6	Simplification	Discuss the way to address simplification: hot spots, cut-off rules, sharing etc. to ensure efficient implementation	Recommend horizontal rules as regards simplified approaches	Current CPR	
7	Benchmarking	Discuss the need for benchmarking approaches and	Recommend guiding principles as regards	Current CPR	

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
		under what circumstances	benchmarking		
8	Modelling rules	Discuss modelling rules when required	Recommend a consistent approach	Current CPR	
9	Allocation	Discuss allocation rules when required	Recommend a consistent approach	Current CPR	
10	Other issues	Discuss other issues when required	Recommend a consistent approach	Current CPR	

Milestone C: Verification

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Third party verification delegated acts	Discuss the content of delegated acts regarding third party verification of environmental performance	Recommendation of the technical content of the delegated acts	Current CPR	Annex V point 4 of the new CPR proposal is the baseline
2	Third party verification new CPR	Discuss the content of Annex V of the new CPR	Recommendation about the content of the annex	New CPR	To be transmitted to the co-legislators

Milestone D: Background datasets and data quality requirements

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Background datasets potential problems	Identify the potential problems derived from the use of different background datasets	Recommendation about the best approach to overcome this issue	Current CPR	
2	Endorsed background datasets	Discuss the validation of reference datasets to prevent uncertainty	Recommendation about the validation of data sources	Current CPR	

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
3	Data quality requirements	Discuss the usefulness of applying data quality restriction as a way to prevent background datasets uncertainty	Recommendation about the data quality requirements	Current CPR	prEN 15941 as baseline for the discussion

Milestone E: Compulsory declaration

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Compulsory declaration current CPR	Identify the need for compulsory declaration of certain indicators at European level in addition to the requirements at national level	Recommendation about the development of a delegated act on this topic	Current CPR	New CPR legal proposal and existing national regulation to be taken as the basis for this task

Milestone F - Declaration without assessment guidance

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Develop guidance for the technical dossiers	Develop guidance to develop technical dossiers to benefit from the deemed to satisfy provisions	Guidance on technical content of dossiers (delegated acts technical input)	Current CPR New CPR	

Milestone G - [product family] Declaration without assessment

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Assess technical dossiers	Assess technical dossiers related to deemed to satisfy provisions	Recommendation about the acceptance of rejection of the dossiers and the implementation details	Current CPR New CPR	Triggered only when requested

			(delegated acts technical input)		
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Milestone H - [product family] Requirements related to environmental sustainability

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Threshold values	Assess the need for threshold values for certain environmental essential characteristics	Recommendation about the establishment of threshold values applicable to certain product families (delegated act technical input)	Current CPR New CPR	Triggered only when requested by the steering group (initial product sub-group request or not) or the Commission
2	Requirements	Assess the need for requirements which cannot be expressed as threshold values	Recommendation about the establishment of requirements applicable to certain product families (delegated act technical input)	New CPR	Triggered only when requested by the steering group (initial product sub-group request or not) or the Commission
3	Inherent product requirements	Assess the needs for inherent products requirements and their applicability to construction products	List of inherent product requirements and construction products that have to comply with them.	New CPR	

Milestone I - [topic] Other specific discussions

	Task name	Description	Outcomes	Impl.	Comments
1	Topic				Under the initiative of another sub-group, of the steering group or the Commission.
...	...				

Annex 2 – Gantt chart

Task Name	2022			2023												2024			
	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04
Milestone A: Essential characteristics																			
1 Life cycle assessment indicators	█																		
2 Resource use indicators		█		█															
3 Waste indicators		█		█															
4 Output flows indicators		█		█															
5 Biogenic carbon indicators		█		█															
6 Carbon removals									█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
7 Other indicators, if required									█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Milestone B: Assessment methods																			
1 Methodology for the assessment	█																		
2 Declaration of the performance		█																	
3 Modularity			█	█															
4 Scenarios			█	█															
5 Reference service life			█	█															
6 Simplification			█	█															
7 Benchmarking									█	█	█								
8 Modelling rules									█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
9 Allocation, if required									█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
10 Other issues, if required									█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Milestone C: Verification																			
1 Third party verification delegated acts		█		█															
2 Third party verification new CPR				█	█	█	█	█	█										
Milestone D: Datasets and data quality																			
1 Background datasets potential problems				█	█	█													
2 Endorsed background datasets						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
3 Data quality requirements						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Milestone E: Compulsory declaration																			
1 Compulsory declaration current CPR						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Milestone F: Guidance dossiers																			
1 Develop guidance for the dossiers									█	█	█								