

Nordic Ecolabelling for  
**Copy and Printing Paper – Supplementary  
Module**



Version 5.1 • 05 October 2020 – 31 December 2026

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## Contact information

In 1989, the Nordic Council of Ministers decided to introduce a voluntary official ecolabel, the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. These organisations/companies operate the Nordic Ecolabelling system on behalf of their own country's government. For more information, see the websites:

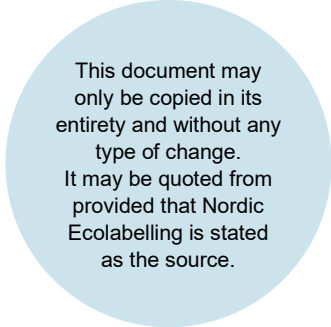
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## What is Nordic Swan Ecolabelled copy and printing paper?

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel on a paper product signifies that the product meets strict environmental requirements. This means that the paper has minimal environmental impact throughout its lifecycle.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled copy and printing paper:

- Is either made of virgin fibres and/or recycled fibres. At least 70% of the fibres used in paper must come from sustainably managed forests or be recycled.
- Meets strict requirements concerning chemicals that are hazardous to the health and harmful to the environment.
- Is manufactured in an energy efficient way.
- Generates less emissions to air and water during production.

## Why choose the Nordic Swan Ecolabel?

- Copy and printing paper may use the Nordic Swan Ecolabel trademark for marketing. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel is a very well-known and well-reputed trademark in the Nordic region.
- The Nordic Swan Ecolabel is a simple way of communicating environmental work and commitment to customers.
- The Nordic Swan Ecolabel clarifies the most important environmental impacts and thus shows how a company can cut emissions, resource consumption and waste management.
- Environmentally suitable operations prepare copy and printing for future environmental legislation.
- Nordic Ecolabelling can be seen as providing a business with guidance on the work of environmental improvements.
- The Nordic Swan Ecolabel not only covers environmental issues but also quality requirements, since the environment and quality often go hand in hand. This means that a Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence can also be seen as a mark of quality.

## What can carry the Nordic Swan Ecolabel?

The product group of copy and printing paper includes the following types of paper:

Wood-containing and wood-free unconverted and unprinted copying and printing paper that is made from chemical and/or mechanical pulp and/or recycled fibre for writing, printing and copying.

The following boards made from chemical and/or mechanical pulp and/or recycled fibre can also be Nordic Swan Ecolabelled:

- Solid bleach board (SBB), solid bleached sulphate (SBS) and solid unbleached board (SUB).
- Folding boxboard (FBB).
- White lined chipboard (WLC).

Only paper with a distinct trade name can be ecolabelled. Paper with a trade name that may appear on both ecolabelled and non-ecolabelled paper is not eligible for Nordic Ecolabelling.

These criteria do not apply to tissue paper, greaseproof paper, coffee filters, cardboard (other than the aforementioned), kraft paper or sack paper.

This criteria document may also be used to document that the paper fulfils the environmental requirements for paper that is used for Nordic Swan Ecolabelled printed matter.

## How to apply

### Application and costs

For information about the application process and fees for this product group, please refer to the respective national web site or <http://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/certification/paper-pulp-printing/>. Find contact information first in the document.




### What is required?

The application must consist of an application form/web form and documentation showing that the requirements are fulfilled. Applications are to be submitted with the aid of the web-based application tool My Swan Account. My Swan Account can be accessed via the internet addresses shown on page 2 of this document or via <http://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/portals/paper/my-swan-account1/>

Pulps used in the paper must be inspected and listed at the Nordic Ecolabelling's website or in My Swan Account. The pulp producer is responsible for the application fee and annual listing fee for the pulp.

Each requirement is marked with the letter O (obligatory requirement) and a number. All requirements must be fulfilled to be awarded a licence.

The text describes how the applicant shall demonstrate fulfilment of each requirement. There are also icons in the text to make this clearer. These icons are:

-  Upload
-  State data in web-based application tool
-  Requirement checked on site

All information submitted to Nordic Ecolabelling is treated confidentially. Suppliers can send documentation directly to Nordic Ecolabelling, and this will also be treated confidentially.

**Licence validity**

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence is valid provided that the criteria are fulfilled and until the criteria expire. The validity period of the criteria may be extended or adjusted, in which case the licence is automatically extended, and the licensee informed.

Revised criteria shall be published at least one year prior to the expiry of the present criteria. The licensee is then offered the opportunity to renew their licence.

**On-site inspection**

In connection with handling of the application, Nordic Ecolabelling normally performs an on-site inspection to ensure adherence to the requirements. For such an inspection, data used for calculations, original copies of submitted certificates, test records, purchase statistics, and similar documents that support the application must be available for examination.

**Queries**

Please contact Nordic Ecolabelling if you have any queries or require further information. Find contact information in the beginning of this document. Further information and assistance (such as spreadsheets or electronic application help) may be available. Visit the relevant national website or <http://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/certification/paper-pulp-printing/> for further information.

# Definitions

| Term                            | Definition   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| BAT-AELs                        | The range of emission levels obtained under normal operating conditions using a best available technique or a combination of best available techniques, as described in BAT conclusions, expressed as an average over a given period of time, under specified reference conditions (Art 3.12. of Directive 2010/75/EU).  |
| FBB                             | Folding boxboard (FBB) is a multi-layer board comprising a surface layer of bleached cellulose pulp, a mid-layer of mechanical pulp (groundwood or thermomechanical pulp) and a backing of bleached or unbleached cellulose pulp.  |
| Inspected paper                 | Inspected paper is assessed by Nordic Ecolabelling and meets the requirements for paper that can be used by Nordic Swan Ecolabelled printing companies. Requirements are set in the Basic Module, Appendix 1.  |
| LWC                             | Light weight coated  |
| My Swan Account                 | My Swan Account. Nordic Ecolabelling's web-based application tool for paper and paperboard manufacturers. The tool also applies to pulp and chemical producers wishing to have their products assessed by Nordic Ecolabelling.   |
| Recycled fibre                  | Recycled material is defined in accordance with ISO 14021 in the following two categories.<br>Material in the pre-consumer phase. Material that has been taken from the waste flow during the manufacturing process. The exception is the re-use of material that is generated in a process, e.g. waste that can be recycled within the same process that generated it.<br>Material in the post-consumer phase. Material generated by households or by trade, industry or institutional facilities in their role as end-users of a product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes the return of materials from the distribution chain. |
| SBB                             | Solid bleached board (SBB) and solid unbleached board (SBB) and solid bleached sulphate (SBS). Solid board comprises several layers of a single material such as cellulose pulp or mixed pulp.   |
| SC                              | Super calandered paper   |
| SBS                             | See SBB above.   |
| SUB                             | See SBB above.   |
| TMP/GW                          | Thermomechanical pulp/groundwood   |
| WLC                             | White lined chipboard (WLC) is a multi-layer board with a surface layer of bleached cellulose pulp and a core and backing made of recycled fibre. Bleached and unbleached cellulose backings are also available.   |
| Wood-containing paper and board | Paper and board containing a considerable amount of non-cellulosic compounds (more than 5 %) as an essential constituent of its fibre composition.   |
| Wood-free paper and board       | Paper having, in principle, only chemical pulp in its fibre composition. in practice, however, it may contain a small amount of other fibres or pulps.   |

# 1 Information about production

## O1 Information about the paper

Applicant shall provide the following information about the paper product(s):

- Name of the paper manufacturer.
- Trademark/trade name of the paper product, paper grade and type (as book, cover, magazine, newspaper) and grammage ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) for which paper(s) is/are available.

*The documentation required is to be submitted with the aid of the web-based application tool.*

Overview of the above points in the web-based application tool. Representative product samples are to be supplied upon request from Nordic Ecolabelling.

## O2 Basic and Chemical Modules (ver. 3)

Paper must meet all the requirements in the Basic Module and the Chemical Module, version 3 or later.

If the paper already carries the Nordic Swan Ecolabel, or has been assessed by Nordic Ecolabelling, the requirement is fulfilled. State the licence number or information on the trading name and the manufacturer of the assessed material.

The documentation required from the pulp and paper mill are to be submitted with the aid of the web-based application tool.

# 2 Energy and greenhouse gases

## O3 Energy

The following requirement must be fulfilled for Nordic Swan Ecolabelled copy and printing paper

$$P_{\text{electricity\_total}} < 2.3$$

$$P_{\text{fuel\_total}} < 2.3$$

For paper comprising solely of TMP/GW\* produced on-site, the limit value for  $P_{\text{fuel\_total}}$  is 1.15.  $P_{\text{electricity\_total}}$  and  $P_{\text{fuel\_total}}$  include the energy scores from paper production and the pulps that are used.

A more detailed description of documentation requirements and calculation methods is provided in Appendix 4 of the Basic Module, version 3 or later in which  $P_{\text{electricity}}$  and  $P_{\text{fuel}}$  are also defined.  $P_{\text{electricity\_total}}$  and  $P_{\text{fuel\_total}}$  include the energy scores from production of both paper and the constituent pulps.

\* *Thermomechanical pulp/groundwood*

The pulp/paper manufacturer shall submit calculations in accordance with Appendix 4 of the Basic Module (version 3) showing compliance with the limit values. Worst case calculations shall be enclosed to demonstrate that each pulp recipe meets the requirements in case pulp mixture specific calculations are not documented for each pulp mix. Nordic Ecolabelling also provides a spreadsheet that is to be used for these calculations.

## O4 Energy requirements for special paper and niche products

Maximum total energy score for the production of special paper and niche products:

$$P_{\text{electricity\_total}} < 2.5$$

$$P_{\text{fuel\_total}} < 2.5$$

Definition of special paper and niche products:

The production of special paper/niche products must fulfil the following conditions:

1. Production capacity must not exceed 10 tonnes/day, based on annual figures.
2. Production quantities must not exceed 10 tonnes/day, based on annual figures.
3. Production requires the paper machine's pump system to be emptied so often that the resetting time (time required to change paper quality) is at least 7% of the net production time.

If this exemption rule is used for a paper mill or integrated mill, the emission figures for other paper or pulp production must not include emissions that stem from one or more paper making lines included in this special paper production.

This exemption shall only be used for paper making lines that fulfil items 1, 2 or 3. This exemption rule shall not be used as part of the calculation of the mean value for various paper making lines.

$P_{\text{electricity\_total}}$  and  $P_{\text{fuel\_total}}$  include the energy scores from paper production and the pulps that are used. A more detailed description of how the energy scores are calculated is provided in the Basic Module (version 3).

- ☞ Calculations, performed according to Appendix 4 of the Basic Module (version 3), demonstrating compliance with points score limits. Nordic Ecolabelling also provides a spreadsheet that is to be used for these calculations.

## O5 Emissions of greenhouse gases

a) The emission of greenhouse gases from fuels used for production of process heat must not exceed the following limit values:

- 525 kg CO<sub>2</sub> /tonne paper for paper made from 100% deinked/recycled pulp
- 450 kg CO<sub>2</sub> /tonne paper for paper made from 100% chemical pulp
- 500 kg CO<sub>2</sub> /tonne paper for paper made from 100% mechanical pulp

For paper comprising a mixture of chemical pulp, recycled pulp and mechanical pulp, a weighted limit value is calculated based on the proportion of each pulp type.

b) The paper manufacturer shall supply calculations of the total emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> kg per tonne paper.

- ☞ **The pulp/paper manufacturer** shall submit calculations in accordance with Appendix 4 to demonstrate fulfilment of the requirement. Nordic Ecolabelling also provides a spreadsheet that is to be used for these calculations.

- ☞ **Paper manufacturer** shall submit a calculation of carbon dioxide emissions given in kg CO<sub>2</sub> per tonne paper. Details of how the CO<sub>2</sub> values are calculated with reference to e.g. system boundaries, assumptions and factors used must be included.



## 3 Packaging

### 06 Information to consumers

Product packaging must be clearly marked with indicative information on how packaging is to be sorted. The information must be clearly visible to the end-consumer and be of such a nature that the consumer understands what is meant. Labelling can be in the form of symbols/pictograms\* or text, e.g. "paper packaging" Labelling can be embossed, stamped or printed.

*\* Symbols are e.g. labels advocated by the Green Dot, FTI or Rinki. General symbols such as recycling symbols or general text can also be used but must first be approved by Nordic Ecolabelling. Note, however that, the Green Dot label will not be approved as a general symbol.*

📁 Enclose documentation such as a picture of the label, artwork or equivalent, to document fulfillment of the requirement.

## 4 Quality and regulatory requirements

Quality and regulatory requirements are general requirements that are always included in Nordic Ecolabelling's product criteria. The purpose of these is to ensure that fundamental quality assurance and applicable environmental requirements are dealt with appropriately. They also ensure compliance with Nordic Ecolabelling's requirements for the product throughout the period of validity of the licence.

To ensure that Nordic Ecolabelling requirements are fulfilled, the following procedures must be implemented.

### 07 A primary licence contact

The company shall appoint a primary licence contact.

The primary licence contact must:

- Maintain the company information and the names of the designated persons in the customer portal.
- Ensure that the company meets Nordic Ecolabelling requirements during the validity of the licence.
- Report planned changes within the business which affect the Nordic Ecolabelling requirements to Nordic Ecolabelling (please see Planned changes).
- Report unexpected incidents which affect the Nordic Ecolabelling requirements to Nordic Ecolabelling (please see Unexpected incidents).
- Train and inform relevant persons among the licensee's personnel in the requirements of Nordic Ecolabelling.
- Report changes in the company structure to Nordic Ecolabelling, e.g. new ownership or mergers.
- Ensure that "Regulations and Guidelines for using the Nordic Swan Ecolabel" are followed.

Primary licence contacts' responsibility may be delegated to other designated persons, who have to report to the primary licence contact on their responsibilities.

📄 Declaration that requirement is met.

## O8 Customer complaints

The licensee must guarantee that the quality of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled product or service does not deteriorate during the validity period of the licence. Therefore, the licensee must keep an archive over customer complaints.

*Note that the original routine must be in one Nordic language or in English.*



Routines for handling and archiving customer complaints.

## O9 Planned changes

Planned changes affecting the Nordic Ecolabelling requirements must be reported to Nordic Ecolabelling.

These changes must be approved by Nordic Ecolabelling before being implemented in the production. Typical business changes which always should be reported are:

- The product composition is planned to be altered.
- Production sites, materials, chemicals, suppliers, or similar are planned to be altered.
- Trade names are planned to be altered.
- Longer shutdowns that may affect the Nordic Ecolabelling requirements are planned to be carried out.
- The product will be launched on the market in other Nordic countries than those specified at the time of application.

Please keep in mind that most changes are so significant that the primary licence contact may need to start an application to update the licence.



Declaration that requirement is met.

## O10 Unexpected incidents

An unexpected incident occurs when one or several of Nordic Ecolabelling requirements cease to be met.

In the event of such an incident, the primary licence contact must inform Nordic Ecolabelling immediately after the incident is discovered and submit a report which contains:

- Description of how the incident occurred.
- Account of the scope of the incident.
- Description of how the incident affects the fulfilment of the Nordic Ecolabelling requirements.
- Description of corrective actions taken after the incident and a plan for avoiding similar incidents in the future.

If the plan encompasses changes in relation to the licence documentation, the primary licence contact may need to start an application to update the licence.



Declaration that requirement is met.

## O11 Traceability

The licensee must be able to trace the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled products in the production. A manufactured / sold product should be able to trace back to the occasion (time and date) and the location (specific factory) and, in relevant cases, also which machine / production line where it was produced. In addition, it should be possible to connect the product with the actual raw material used.



Description of/routines for the fulfilment of the requirement.

## O12 Annual follow-up

Every year a follow-up of the environmental requirements must be made in line with instructions from Nordic Ecolabelling, see also requirement O16 in the Basic Module, version 3 or later.

Nordic Ecolabelling may examine a selection, or all, of the requirements.

## Regulations for the Nordic Ecolabelling of products

When the Nordic Swan Ecolabel is used on products the licence number shall be included.

More information on graphical guidelines, regulations and fees can be found at [www.nordic-ecolabel.org/regulations/](http://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/regulations/)

## Follow-up inspections

Nordic Ecolabelling may decide to check whether copy and printing paper fulfils Nordic Ecolabelling requirements during the licence period. This may involve a site visit, random sampling or similar test.

The licence may be revoked if it is evident that copy and printing does not meet the requirements.

## Criteria version history

Nordic Ecolabelling adopted version 5.0 of the criteria for copying and printing paper on 5 October 2020. The criteria are valid until 31 December 2025.

On 12 December Nordic Ecolabelling decided to prolong the criteria document with 12 months till 31 December 2026. The new version is called 5.1.

## New criteria

- Levels stipulated in requirements on energy and greenhouse gases.
- Requirements on quantities of certified fibres