

# What is an EPD?

(Environmental Product Declaration)

An EPD is an objective report based on life cycle assessment (LCA). It is used to communicate information about the potential environmental and human health impacts of a product. It's like a nutritional label, stating what a product is made of and how it impacts the environment across its entire life cycle, from raw material extraction to disposal.

## What is Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)?

LCA measures the human health and the environment impacts associated with a product. It examines each stage in the life cycle of a product, including raw material extraction, manufacturing, transportation, use and maintenance, and disposal. Credible LCAs conform to international standards such as ISO 14044, ISO 14025, and ISO 21930 (for building products), and measure potential environmental impacts such as:



Climate Change



Acidification  
(acid rain)



Smog Formation



Eutrophication  
(a type of water pollution)



Ozone layer  
depletion

## EPDs begin with a Product Category Rule (PCR).

The first step to getting an EPD is to look at the Product Category Rule (PCR), which defines how to conduct the LCA for the product category being assessed (e.g. carpet, steel framing, etc.). It lays out which impacts must be reported and ensures that all EPDs under the same category report the same information.

Many PCRs have been developed for products across industries, including, but not limited to:

- Building Sealants
- Concrete and Cement
- Flooring
- Insulation
- Office Furniture
- Paints
- Roofing
- Steel Construction Products
- Windows and Doors

Many more PCRs are in the process of being developed for additional categories.



EPD of Bentley AFIRMA™  
Hardback Tile

## How does the LCA become an EPD?

Once the LCA is completed, it is critically reviewed by an independent expert for conformance to the ISO standards. After the review, an EPD is prepared which summarizes the LCA. The EPD is verified by a third-party to ensure it accurately reflects the LCA report, and follows the PCR requirements. Then the verified EPD is registered through the Program Operator website and is made publicly available. The validity period for the EPD depends on the PCR, but this is often five years.

## How are EPDs used?

EPDs qualify products for credit towards buildings destined for LEED v4 rating and other green building ratings. Having EPDs can help a manufacturer become a preferred supplier amongst designers and architects specifying for green building projects.

Manufacturers also use the data from EPDs to identify areas of improvement within their manufacturing process, helping them become more efficient and set realistic sustainability goals.

## I am a manufacturer and would like to get an EPD for my product(s). How do I get started?

The first step will be to have a life cycle assessment conducted for your product scope. Contact an Account Executive to discuss the scope of your project and next steps.

## About SCS Global Services

SCS has been providing global leadership in third-party environmental and sustainability certification, auditing, testing, and standards development for over 30 years. Programs span across industries, recognizing achievements in green building, manufacturing, food and agriculture, forestry, and more.

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