Strategic Programme for the Forest Sector

Finnish National Public Procurement Policy for Wood-Based Products

17 June 2010

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MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMY

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On 8 April 2009 the Finnish government passed a resolution encouraging public bodies at all levels of central, regional and municipal government to adopt sustainable procurement practices. The environmental impact of products and services has become an increasingly important selection criterion in public procurement. Responsible procurement can be used as a practical, concrete measure for promoting environmental protection and sustainable development and combating climate change.

The use of products made from wood – a renewable natural resource – can be promoted through public procurement. Finland's objectives as regards raw wood production are to encourage operators to engage in the sustainable management of forest resources, ensure the legality of forest use, and promote the use of sustainably and responsibly sourced wood and wood-based products. The aim as regards wood-based products procurement is to gradually shift the environmental focus away from raw material production and towards holistic evaluation of wood products in terms of their overall life cycle impact.

To achieve the above objectives, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy has established a steering group to draw up a national policy proposal for the public procurement of wood-based products, including guidelines for its application. The steering group comprised the following key stakeholder representatives:

Chairman	Reima Sutinen, Counsellor Ministry of Employment and the Economy
Secretary	Outi Marin, Environmental Manager Metsäliitto Cooperative
Members	Hannu Koivurinta, Budget Secretary Ministry of Finance
	Taina Nikula, Senior Advisor Ministry of the Environment
	Taina Veltheim, Counsellor Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
	Isa-Maria Bergman, Expert Consultant Motiva Oy
	Hannu Huhtala, M. Sc. Eng., construction engineering Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities
	Jukka Koivusalo, Public Procurement Lawyer City of Espoo
	Janne Liljavuori, Tendering Consultant Hansel Oy
	Aila Janatuinen, Manager Finnish Forest Industries Federation
	Helka Julkunen, Green Office Manager WWF Finland
	Lea Jylhä, Forestry Specialist Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK)
	Jukka Lehtonen, Expert Confederation of Finnish Industries EK

1 Introduction

The Finnish public procurement sector is worth approximately EUR 23 billion per year. Due to the considerable volumes of goods and services involved, public procurement can have a significant impact on the well-being of society and environment. By making sustainable choices, public procurement can be used to directly reduce environmental effects, serve as an example to the private sector, generate demand for environmentally friendly alternatives, and create new markets for innovations. In addition to improving the state of the environment, sustainable procurement can also provide economic savings.

On 8 April 2009, the Finnish government passed a resolution on the promotion of sustainable choices in public procurement. The resolution elevates the environmental impact of products and services as a key determining factor in public procurement decision-making. The promotion of sustainable choices in public procurement is also required by the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and by Finland's National Programme to Promote Sustainable Consumption and Production.

The government requires central government to take environmental considerations into account in 70% of its procurement by the year 2010 and in all procurement by 2015. The target for municipal and local government is for environmental considerations to be taken into account in at least 25% of procurement by 2010 and half of all procurement by 2015.

The government requires contracting authorities to make the shift towards green procurement choices particularly in six key procurement areas: energy, construction and housing, food services, transport, energy-using equipment and services.

Wood-based products are used widely in public procurement. Wood is used in a variety of forms in construction, furniture and interior decoration. Paper is a major wood-based product group, and is procured extensively in the form of office papers, printed matter, packaging and sanitary products.

Wood is considered a natural material choice in Finland, which has long traditions of wood use. As a raw material, sustainably produced wood meets all modern environmental and climate protection criteria. The objective of these procurement policy recommendations is to steer the public procurement of wood-based products towards practical choices and measures that maximise the positive impact – i.e. environmental and sustainability benefits – of wood. Sustainably produced wood is a renewable raw material which can be efficiently used to produce a vast range of added-value products. Wood-based products can be reused, recycled. At the end of their life cycle, they can be disposed of by composting or burning for energy recovery.

The Finnish government's objective as regards raw wood production is to ensure the legality of wood raw material, encourage various stakeholders to engage in the sustainable management of forest resources, and thus promote the use of wood and products derived from wood. Finland is a significant exporter of wood-based products

and a pioneer in the promotion of sustainable forestry and, accordingly, in the sustainable production of wood raw material.

Finland's National Forest Programme 2015, endorsed by government resolution on 27 March 2008, emphasises that the whole life cycle of products and the benefits of wood with respect to sustainable development are to be taken into consideration in the guidelines for public procurement.

Finland's national Strategic Programme for the Forest Sector contains a number of measures related to the public procurement of wood-based products. One of the Programme's long-term measures for developing the competitiveness of the forest sector was set out by the Finnish Cabinet Committee on Economic Policy on 29th September 2009 as follows: the specification of public procurement policy and building regulations is to prioritise the use of products made from renewable natural resources on environmental and climate protection grounds.

Other Programme measures closely related to public procurement include promotion of the use of wood and wood construction as well as the commissioning of an independent international report on the benefits and advantages of wood as a raw material. The Programme also emphasises the importance of wood in public sector construction.

These recommendations also serve to promote the attainment of the EU's sustainable development strategy and public procurement policy objectives, and have been drawn up to be compatible with the EU Public Procurement Directive.

Many EU countries – such as the Netherlands, Belgium, the UK, France, Sweden, Germany and Denmark – have control measures in place to promote the procurement of legally and sustainably produced wood-based products. The EU has no uniform policy for the public procurement of wood-based products. The varying approaches among Member States present a number of challenges, and the need for harmonisation is increasing as more and more countries implement their own steering mechanisms.

Under the aegis of the Commission, the EU Forest Action Plan calls for discussion between Member States concerning the recommendation for the inclusion of wood-based products under the Public Procurement Directive. In 2009, a working group formed under the Standing Forestry Committee was tasked with the following: the exchange of information and experiences between Member States, the Commission, and stakeholders regarding public procurement control methods for wood-based products; advising how better compatibility can be achieved amongst the various existing approaches; and determining what criteria for wood-based product public procurement may be set and how these can be verified. The working group is to complete its assignment by the end of 2010.

The EU has also developed a set of guidelines (Green Public Procurement (GPP) Training Toolkit) for the inclusion of environmental considerations in public procurement in ten separate product groups. The guidelines will be updated with ten new product groups in the near future. The GPP guidelines concerning wood-based products currently cover paper products, furniture and buildings.

2 Policy objectives

The general purpose of these recommendations is to support the objectives of Finland's sustainable development and environmental policies. The public sector can serve as a role model by procuring wood-based products in a lawful, sustainable and practical manner which, in addition to ensuring sustainable raw material production, also takes into consideration environmental and economic performance throughout the entire life cycle of the procured product. Finland's goal is to support the harmonisation of guidelines for the public procurement of wood-based products within the EU and promote the adoption of life cycle thinking throughout EU public procurement.

The starting point for these recommendations is the use of existing proven methods and practices. To ensure impartial procurement practice, sustainability criteria must be used in a manner that guarantees a versatile range of suppliers and, as a result, genuine competition.

The objectives of these recommendations are to:

1. Support contracting authorities in choosing the most sustainable wood products.
2. Encourage procurement that takes environmental considerations into account already at the procurement planning stage.
3. Function actively in the drafting of EU sustainable wood-based product procurement criteria, and to ensure that the criteria are clear enough to be put into practice by public purchasers.
4. Support and motivate innovation activity within public procurement.
5. Assist contracting authorities in applying environmental criteria in a non-discriminating manner that promotes healthy competition.

Wood raw material and wood-based products have been subject to environmental criteria for several years. Similar requirements for other raw materials are only now being introduced. It is therefore natural for wood-based products to be the first product group to be subject to sustainable public procurement recommendations regarding raw materials. These recommendations can then serve as a basis for the subsequent drafting of sustainable procurement recommendations for other raw materials, with product life cycle and chain-of-custody aspects taken similarly into consideration.

3 Recommendations for sustainable public procurement of wood-based products

These recommendations apply to products that are made from wood and products that are derived in part from wood. Examples include wooden building materials and furniture or products that contain wood fibre – such as office paper, printing papers and tissue papers and packaging and disposable products. Wood-based products also include products made from recycled fibre and recycled wood. The recommendations apply to these products only with respect to recycled fibre and new wood raw material. These recommendations do not apply to wood-based energy.

3.1 Frame of reference of the recommendations

The main frame of reference of the recommendations is Finnish national public procurement legislation, which is based on EU directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC. In addition to these, the recommendations are also based on legislation related to the production, procurement and manufacture of wood raw material as well as on international agreements.

The basic requirements for public procurement are defined by law in addition to the guiding principles of public procurement: non-discrimination, transparency, equal treatment and proportionality.

Public procurement legislation enables environmental aspects to be taken into account during the various stages of the procurement procedure. Invitations to tender must be planned carefully, since they largely determine the final outcome of procurement. The procurement unit has the right to define the contract to be awarded, providing that the definition is objective and in keeping with the guiding principles of public procurement. Importantly, the contract must not be specified in a manner that is discriminatory or against the principle of equal treatment. The procurement unit is entitled to lay down environmental criteria in the manner specified in public procurement law:

- in the drawing up of technical specifications,
- as conditions of eligibility for tenderers,
- tas evaluation criteria, and
- in the terms of contract.

Any environmental criteria laid down in technical specifications or as tender evaluation criteria as part of the procurement procedure must always relate to the contract to be awarded, and the criteria must be verifiable. The award criteria laid down for tenderers must be related and proportionate to the suppliers' ability to execute the contract and the terms of contract must also be related and proportionate to the subject-matter of the procurement contract. The environmental criteria applied to the procurement contract must also be in accordance with the fundamental guiding principles of public procure-

ment. The principle of non-discrimination, for instance, governs that the requirements placed on a procurement contract must not prevent access to the market.

The requirements laid down for the contract must not groundlessly favour certain undertakings or areas of activity. The required use of a certain eco-label is also considered discriminatory, though such use can be considered as an indication of fulfilment of set environmental requirements if the set requirements are covered by the criteria of the eco-label in question.

Eco-labels serve as useful benchmarks when considering the environmental criteria for public procurements, and contracting authorities should for this reason be acquainted with them. Furthermore, all environmental requirements are subject to the proportionality principle, which requires that the requirements of the procurement procedure are in proportion to the contract to be awarded.

When describing the contract to be awarded by referring to certain standards, fair competition and other such factors should be taken into consideration as far as possible in the choice of standards applied. Primarily, reference should be made to widely recognised standards which as many stakeholders across-the-board as possible will have implemented and which do not overly favour any individuals. The advantage to the contracting authority is that as many and as broad a range of tenders as possible are obtained. Moreover, the contracting authority should aim to ensure that no other proof of conformity or references are required that demand unreasonable costs or resources from tenderers who otherwise indicate conformity with tender requirements, or at least no more than is necessary to ensure fulfilment of the environmental criteria.

3.2 Aiming at life cycle approach

These recommendations follow a whole life cycle approach to addressing the environmental effects of procurements. The recommendations therefore cover the entire life cycle of wood-based products:

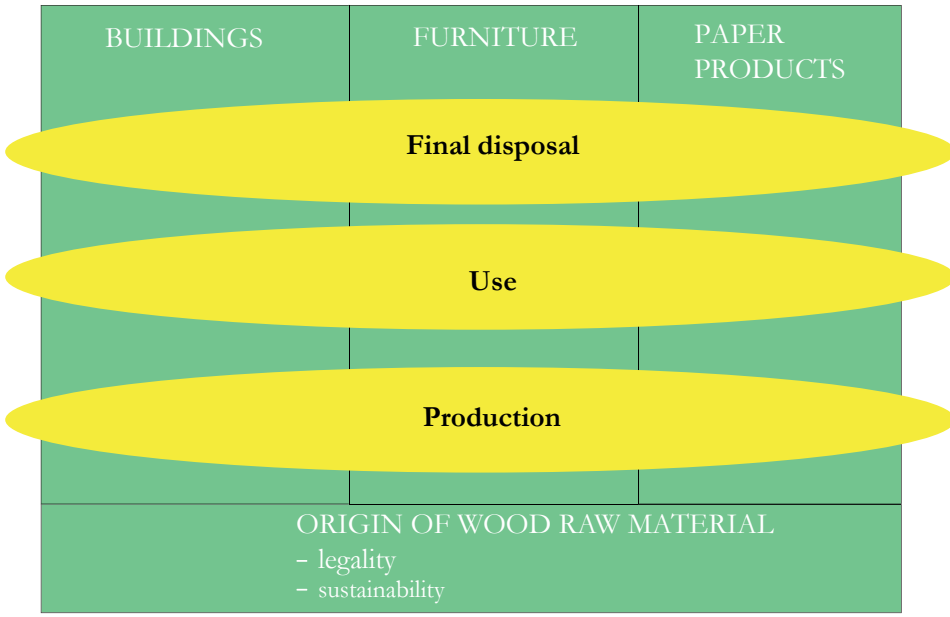
- verifying raw material sustainability
- direct environmental impacts during the production and use of products
- environmental impacts of final disposal.

Life cycle approach also provides an opportunity to promote innovative products and solutions, thus supporting one of the key public procurement objectives of Finland and the EU. The objective of life cycle approach is to gain as comprehensive a view as possible of the environmental impacts of a product or service and to help to make the most sustainable choices overall with respect to the environment. The EU promotes product life cycle-based assessment of sustainability through a number of processes.

The Green Public Procurement guidelines of the EU address the sustainability assessment of ten product groups using the life cycle model. Of these product groups, three (office and printing papers, furniture, and construction) also cover wood-based products. Also, European Commission mandate (M/350) to the European Commit-

tee for Standardization (CEN) regarding the development of standardised methods for assessing the integrated environmental performance of buildings is based on the life cycle analysis of buildings.

In sustainable public procurement, the assessment of procurement costs must be extended to cover the life cycle costs whenever possible, and a life cycle cost calculation carried out (e.g. tenderers provide the necessary calculation data). This enables the procurement of products or solutions which may have a higher purchase price than the competing alternatives, but the overall costs over their entire life cycle are lower. This also serves the public procurement objective of bringing new and innovative products and solutions within reach of the consumer. In terms of sustainability, products and solutions with low life cycle costs also represent sustainable solutions with respect to the environment.



Life cycle elements of wood-based products

3.3 Environmental and legality considerations related to wood raw material

The legality and sustainability of wood raw material production are central to the sustainability of wood-based products. The shared goal of Finland and the EU is to prevent the access of illegally sourced wood to the market and to promote sustainable forestry and the protection of forest resources worldwide.

Illegal logging and the trade in illegal timber have numerous negative ecological, social and economic impacts. Illegal logging is a major contributor to global deforestation and forest degradation. Illegal logging and the illegal timber trade are also closely associated with unlawful activity, for example corruption.

In addition, illegal logging and the trade in illegally sourced timber weakens the operating potential of legal operators in the forest sector. The shared objective of Finland and the EU to provide a competitive operating environment for all forest sector operators requires the combating of illegal logging and the trade in illegal timber.

The guiding principles for the sustainable management of global forest resources were set at the UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. European cooperation on the development of common principles, criteria and guidelines for sustainable forest management began during the preparations for the Second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, held in Helsinki in 1993. The development of these guidelines has been continued thereafter through the preparatory and follow-up work of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Forest Europe), a pan-European policy process for sustainable forest management involving a broad range of forest sector stakeholders. The definition and assessment of the sustainable forest management guidelines incorporates ecological, social, economic and cultural considerations. As Finland is a signatory to the Forest Europe resolutions, the principles of sustainable forest management laid down in them are also applied in these procurement policy recommendations.
The legality and sustainability of wood raw material is assured and verified in all Finnish wood-based product procurement.

3.3.1 Legally procured wood raw material

According to the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) legislation of the EU, the legality of wood raw material is determined on the basis of the forest management, harvesting and timber trade legislation of the country in which the wood was harvested. The criteria for legally sourced wood raw material are:

- the raw material is procured from a legal person with the legal right to conduct timber harvesting in the area of origin in question, and
- harvesting and forest management have been conducted in accordance with local forest and environmental legislation.

The wood must also meet the requirements of EU wildlife trade regulations, which are based on the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) agreement.

In 2003, the EU endorsed the FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Action Plan to combat illegal logging and the trade in illegal timber. As part of the action plan, in 2005 the Commission endorsed a regulation aimed at preventing the access of illegal timber to the EU market, on the basis of which the EU is developing measures for verifying the legality of wood.

Verification of legally harvested wood

These recommendations are based on the measures specified in the FLEGT Action Plan for verifying the legality of timber.

The legality of timber can be verified using the following methods:
- implementation of **due diligence systems by** producers
- **FLEGT licensing of products**
- CITES licensing of products
- **forest certification schemes** such as PEFC and FSC
- **ther similar reliable methods of** verifying timber legality

The FLEGT licensing scheme is based on a regulation endorsed by the Commission in 2005. The FLEGT license serves as proof of legal origin of wood sourced from countries which have signed a voluntary partnership agreement with the EU. Each partnership agreement specifies a licensing scheme which is based on the legislation of the producer country, and on the basis of which a market player can prove that it is importing legally sourced timber to the EU. The licensing scheme must not hamper legal trade.

The CITES license is based on the CITES Convention. The purpose of the CITES Convention is to protect wild fauna and flora by controlling wildlife trade. The Convention covers species that are endangered or threatened with extinction due to the international trade wildlife trade. The trade is controlled primarily by means of various levels of import and export restriction, depending on the level of endangerment of a species and on the degree of exploitation that the species is able to tolerate. At the practical level, regulation is enforced by means of written licences issued by the environmental authorities of the export country, which must be presented to the border control authorities.

Market players are required to implement a due diligence system for minimising the risk of illegal timber procurement. The system can either be an in-house system or a system of an approved supervisory body. The EU is drafting additional legislative options for the FLEGT Action Plan. The additional options can be used according to the due diligence system concept to verify the legality of all wood placed on the EU market. The due diligence system criteria are specified in the FLEGT additional legislative options.

3.3.2 Sustainably produced wood raw material

Sustainably produced wood raw material is produced in a manner that meets, in addition to the set legal requirements, the criteria for sustainable forest management. Since forests, forest use, and administrative frameworks vary from country to country, local conditions must be taken into consideration in the application and assessment of sustainability criteria.

The principles presented below are based on international processes for sustainable forest management, such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Forest Europe/MCPFE). In the selection of sustainability criteria, it has been ensured that the criteria:

- are essential for sustainable forestry
- are coherent for both the wood producer and public contractor
- are verifiable (proof)
- allow competition

The criteria for ecologically, socially and economically sustainable forestry are met if the following principles are observed in the management and use of forest resources:

- forest resources, health and vitality are maintained
- forest productivity is maintained
- forest diversity and ecosystem services are safeguarded
- soil and water resources are protected and erosion is mitigated
- the multiple use and cultural values of forests are safeguarded
- occupational safety, health and well-being is ensured
- land use and ownership rights are respected
- the legally recognised forest rights of local communities and indigenous peoples are respected

Verification of sustainably produced wood

Compliance with sustainability requirements can be verified in a number of ways:.

- **forest certification schemes** such as PEFC and FSC
- **management systems** (quality and environmental systems such as EMAS, ISO 9001 and 14001) that include an operations model for sustainable forest management
- **eco-labels that** also include wood raw material sustainability criteria, such as the Nordic Swan, EU flower and Blue Angel (Blaue Engel) labels
- **other** reliable indication of sustainable origin which complies with these public procurement policy recommendations, or reliable indication that the product meets the criteria for carrying an eco-label

Voluntary, third party verified forest certification systems are an effective means of verifying sustainably produced wood raw material also in the end product. However, they serve only as a proof of origin and do not provide any assurance regarding the overall life cycle environmental impacts of the end product. Valid forest certification schemes are systems which meet the requirements of standardization, where the forest management verification is carried out by certification bodies that are accredited according to EU standards and are independent of the certification scheme, of the forest owner, and of the forest management operator. The standard of forestry

practice laid down by the forest certification scheme must cover the criteria for sustainable forest management presented in these procurement policy recommendations. The forest certification scheme must also include a chain-of-custody mechanism for verifying the traceability of wood.

The sustainability of raw wood production can also be verified if the wood-based product or wood raw material producer uses a credible environmental system that covers the implementation and supervision of sustainable forest practice. The implementation of such management systems must be verified by an external and independent certification body that is accredited according to EU standards. Valid systems include EMAS and the ISO 14001 and 9001 standard environmental systems and quality systems that include an operations model for sustainable forest management.

Standards-compliant eco-labels for wood-based products require, in addition to a manufacturing process that takes environmental impacts into consideration, sustainably produced wood raw material as well. Sustainable raw material production can therefore also be verified by means of an eco-label that has been granted for a given product if the eco-label criteria cover the principles of these procurement policy recommendations as well as, potentially, later agreed sustainable forest management criteria.

3.4 Environmental aspects related to wood-based products

Life cycle approach provides the starting point for assessing the environmental aspects related to wood-based products. The life cycle approach enables examination of the overall environmental impact of a product throughout its lifespan, from raw material procurement through to production, use and final disposal. The very first stage in the procurement process is a needs assessment. The contracting authority's first task is to assess the need for the procurement and to determine the most efficient means of carrying it out.

The objective is for the overall life cycle environmental impacts of products to be taken into consideration in public procurement. The authority responsible for public procurement specifies the areas of the life cycle assessment for which tenderers must provide reliable proof of conformity. When preparing a life cycle assessment, it must be ensured that the tenderers have genuine opportunities to provide the required information and that uniform life cycle assessment methods are used. For these reasons, dialogue with sector operators is an essential part of the procurement process.

3.4.1 Wood products

Wood products include sawn timber and wood-based panels and products derived from these, carpentry and joinery products, wooden packaging, and wooden furniture.

3.4.1.1 Sustainability aspects/environmental criteria of buildings and building products

The national and local objectives set for building construction, the purpose of use and planned service life of the building, and the environment in which the building is built form the basis for the environmental criteria that are applied in the procurement process and the procurement contract. Life cycle assessment enables the contracting authority to draw up sustainable development criteria for the procurement contract.

The life cycle assessment of a building can be divided into four phases:

1. building material production including raw material procurement,
2. construction,
3. building use and maintenance, and
4. demolition and final disposal.

In future, tightening energy-efficiency requirements will present new challenges with respect to environmental impacts and energy consumption during the manufacture of building products.

The EU's energy and climate change package and the Energy Efficiency of Buildings Directive, revised in May 2010, will tighten energy-efficiency requirements for buildings. All new buildings must be virtually zero-energy by the end of 2020. The low-energy requirement will apply to public buildings from the beginning of 2019. National minimum energy efficiency requirements must also be set for renovation.

Building materials should be compared during the building design stage to ensure that as a whole the building is as pro-environmental as possible in relation to its purpose of use. In the environmental assessment of products and buildings, different environmental impacts can be given different weighting on a case-by-case basis. At present, tools available to contracting authorities include the EU's GPP Training Toolkit guidelines and the Nordic Swan criteria for low-rise housing.

The free movement of building products within the EU is guaranteed by EN Standards, and authorities can specify requirements regarding certain product properties within the framework of these standards. The environmental performance of building products is to prescribed under European Standard EN 15804. The standard is due to come into force at the end of 2010, after which environmental product declarations (EPDs) will be drawn up for different product groups.

When the contracting authority assesses the environmental performance of building products, it is recommended that their life cycle environmental impacts be assessed using EPDs in accordance with the EN 15804 standard. The environmental criteria for these can include, for example, low carbon footprint, use of renewable materials, use of renewable energy, reduced non-renewable energy consumption, and minimised water consumption and waste production.

The environmental declarations in current use in Finland are those of the Building Information Foundation RTS. However, since these are not based on a uniform

standard comparison is difficult. With the introduction of EN 15804, the switch to using EPDs conforming to this European standard can be made as these become more established.

When assessing the environmental aspects of buildings and building materials, it is the task of the contracting authority which makes the building procurement decision as well as the building project designer, who is usually responsible for decision-making regarding building material specifications, to ensure that environmental requirements are met. The building project designer must take into consideration the environmental objectives and criteria appointed by the contracting authority both during the building design stage and in the building materials procurement instructions.

Verification of the environmental impacts of building products

Environmental product declarations can be used to assist the environmental impact assessment of building products. The inclusion of EPDs as mandatory product information is likely to come about with the new Construction Products Regulation. European Standard EN 15804 regarding environmental product declarations for European construction products, which is based on the M/350 Standardisation Mandate of the European Commission, is estimated to be completed during 2010 and to enter use among Member States within a couple of years. EN Standards regarding social and economic sustainability aspects will also be completed during the next few years. The ISO is also preparing similar standards.

Once in place, it will be possible to use the standards in the comparison of sustainable development aspects of buildings.

Comparisons can also be carried out using the construction-related guidelines of the EU's GPP Training Toolkit.

The environmental criteria of buildings can be verified using:

- EN 15804 and the corresponding ISO standard (EN 15804 completed by the end of 2010)
- EU's Green Public Procurement (GPP) Training Toolkit
- other reliable account of the fulfilment of environmental criteria

3.4.1.2 Environmental aspects of wood-based furniture

Furniture procurement needs should be considered from at least the following perspectives:

- intended purpose of use
- need for new furniture
- whether or not existing furniture be repaired/restored

The traceability and legality of wood used in furniture are significant environmental factors. In connection with procurement the contracting authority should, where possible, raise the issue of the traceability of wood and wood-based materials with potential tenderers and this criterion should be set, for example, as a minimum requirement, as long as the requirement does not unduly discriminate between tenderers. The contracting authority can also set traceability as a evaluation criterion of moderate weighting in competitive tendering, with additional points awarded for the highest shares of traceable raw material.

Other key environmental selection criteria for wood-based furniture relate to the physical use of the furniture, such as service life and warranty, repairability and replaceability. Besides these, ergonomic and aesthetic criteria can also be used. Final disposal is also a significant sustainability criterion for furniture. The requirement-based service life of furniture can in some cases be very short – such as furniture for one-off events – or conversely long, as in the case of school furniture.

The operational environmental impacts of furniture are minimal. The impacts of manufacture, packaging, transport and final disposal are, however, higher.

The contracting authority should limit the quantity of organic compounds and solvents contained in the surface treatments, glues and elsewhere in the products, and avoid products for which hazardous substances are used during production and finishing. Attention must also be paid to the safety, durability and ergonomics of furniture products. The European Commission's Green Public Procurement (GPP) Training Toolkit provides guidelines on taking the above aspects into account in procurement.

Responsible furniture packaging material choices can also be made through public procurement. The most commonly used materials for furniture packaging are shrink-wrap film, cartonboard and reusable, environmentally friendly protective matting.

Verification of the environmental aspects of wood-based furniture

The environmental effects of wood-based furniture can be verified using EPDs and product eco-labels and by comparing the information obtained from these. The GPP Training Toolkit guidelines can also be used.

The sustainability of wood-based furniture can be verified using:

- the environmental information provided in product declarations
- the EU's **GPP Training Toolkit** guidelines
- **eco-labels** such as the Nordic Swan, EU flower and Blue Angel (Blaue Engel) labels
- **other** reliable indication of sustainable origin which complies with these public procurement policy recommendations, or reliable indication that the product meets the criteria for carrying an eco-label

3.4.2 Paper products

Within the scope of these procurement policy recommendations, paper products are considered to include office and printing papers, tissue papers, cooking papers, wood fibre-based packaging and one-time products, as well as newspapers and magazines.

The key requirement in terms of ecological sustainability of paper products is fitness for purpose. The contracting authority can emphasise, for example:

- sustainable origin
- material efficiency,
- energy efficiency,
- climate impact,
- minimal use of environmentally hazardous chemicals
- minimal emissions to air and water, or
- impacts and efficiency of water use per product produced.

Paper products also have environmental impacts during their use. These include, for example, the technical and physical properties of the products which can influence their environmental performance, such as:

- printing and copying performance of office papers
- properties of printed matter
- low grammage (lightness) of papers and paperboards
- efficient packaging design (low material, high volume)
- collection and recycling systems for disposable paperware.

By paying attention to these aspects the amount of landfill waste generated during use and the amount of emissions created during transport can be minimised, and storage efficiency can be improved.

Final disposal is a crucial stage in the life cycle of paper products. The recyclability and recycling of paper products are at a high level in Europe and are enforced by EU law. Public authorities have an important function as role models in the promotion of procurement practice aimed at generating minimum landfill waste. Recyclability, size and fitness for purpose should therefore be taken into consideration when purchasing packaging and printed matter.

Verification of the environmental criteria of paper products

Standardised definitions of the life cycle environmental aspects of paper products are still being developed. As a result, clear and comparable data on the life cycle of these products is often unavailable.

The sustainability of paper products can be verified by comparing information obtained from environmental product declarations. The GPP Training Toolkit guidelines can also be used.

The sustainability of paper products can be verified by using:

- the environmental information provided in product declarations
- the EU GPP Training Toolkit guidelines
- eco-labels such as the Nordic Swan, EU flower and Blue Angel (Blaue Engel) labels
- other reliable indication of sustainable origin which complies with these public procurement policy recommendations, or reliable indication that the product meets the criteria for carrying an eco-label

4 Development proposals

The public procurement of wood-based products can be used to promote the public procurement objective of supporting the placement of environmentally friendly innovative products and solutions on the market. The realisation of sustainable public procurement requires the creation of an effective expertise and support network, as well as the development of tools to assist contracting authorities in operating sustainably.

Key areas of development include:

- development of sustainable procurement know-how among contracting authorities,
- development of sustainable public procurement know-how among product and service producers operating in Finland,
- ensuring the availability of appropriate and effective information to contracting authorities,
- ensuring adequate financing and support..

A number of projects aimed at developing public procurement are underway in Finland. Two leading examples are the innovative public procurement funding tool of the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (TEKES), and the Public Environmental Technology Procurement Helpdesk advisory service, which operates in connection with the energy and material efficiency specialist organisation Motiva Oy. Better awareness of these services is needed among contracting authorities, as well as sufficient guidance and encouragement in their use.

In addition, improved cooperation, identification and communication of best practices, and the introduction of nationally harmonised operations models would assist the tenderer. Communication is also needed with sector enterprises regarding criteria, calculation models, etc., to ensure their competence and viability for use in sustainable procurement contracts.

Steering Group proposals for further measures

1. Contracting authority competency should be enhanced by centralising environmental procurement expertise in an existing expert organisation (e.g. the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), Motiva Oy, Public Environmental Technology Procurement Helpdesk). This expert organisation would serve as a support service for all public procurement operators. By increasing knowledge and awareness among contracting authorities of the environmental effects of wood products and of other product groups in this manner, the consideration of environmental aspects in public procurement will be promoted. The expert organisation would also coordinate the compilation of national criteria and participate in the preparation of EU criteria.

2. An online databank should be established containing environmental information on products and services, examples of environmental criteria, good practices, procurement document templates, and life cycle cost calculation tools. The aim is to assist the efforts of municipalities and other public sector bodies in observing environmental impact criteria in their procurement activities, and to establish guidelines that can be applied in practice.

3. A study should be conducted (e.g. by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy) together with operators and experts in the sector to determine the need for creating comparison tools to facilitate procurement activities. There is a need among contracting authorities for such a common method and tool to enable effective measurement and comparison of sustainability from the life cycle perspective. In the construction sector in particular, such a system would support the comprehensive adoption and promotion of sustainable procurement.

4. The knowledge base for sustainable procurement training and education in the construction sector should be further increased.

5. Guidelines for the sustainable public procurement of wood energy should also be drawn up alongside these recommendations for wood-based product procurement. Sustainability criteria for biofuels have been defined by the EU. In addition, CEN and ISO are preparing sustainability criteria for biomass, including criteria for energy raw materials as well as energy production.

Keywords

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA).
Cradle-to-grave analysis of the environmental impacts of a product, process or service from the design phase through to production, use and final disposal.

Life Cycle Costs (LCC).
The sum of all costs incurred or estimated to occur over the specified full life span of a product, process or service.

Ecosystem services are the processes by which the natural environment produces material and immaterial resources that are of benefit to people. Examples of these benefits include wood, recreation, wild foods, climate change mitigation, and groundwater production.

Useful online resources

Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy:
www.tem.fi > Consumers and the market > Public procurement

Ministry of the Environment: www.ymparisto.fi

The Public Procurement Advisory Unit: www.hankinnat.fi

Public Environmental Technology Procurement Helpdesk:
www.motivanhankintapalvelu.fi (in Finnish and Swedish only).

Information in English: www.motiva. > Areas of Operation > Materials Efficiency > Help for Environmental Technology Procurement

Government Resolution on the promotion of sustainable choices in public procurement (in Finnish only).
www.ymparisto.fi > Yritykset ja yhteisöt > Tuotteet hankinnat > Julkiset hankinnat

Kestävien hankintojen toimintaohjelma (in Finnish)
www.ymparisto.fi > Yritykset ja yhteisöt > Tuotteet hankinnat > Julkiset hankinnat

Julkisten hankintojen ympäristöopas (in Finnish)
www.ymparisto.fi > Yritykset ja yhteisöt > Tuotteet hankinnat > Julkiset hankinnat
Julkiset hankinnat > Julkisten hankintojen ympäristö -opas

EU Green Public Procurement website Green Public Procurement (GPP) Training Toolkit: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/csr/index_en.htm

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www.tem.fi/mso

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