

SEC, GECA Sign MOU to Mutually Recognise and Promote Green Labelling Schemes

Timed with the 7th Singapore-Australia Annual Leaders' Meeting, the agreement will facilitate increased dialogue and potential partnerships between leading ecolabelling schemes operating in Singapore and Australia, fostering best global practices and standards

Singapore, 18 October 2022 – Singapore Environment Council (SEC) and Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) today entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the areas of environmental protection and promotion of ecolabel certification.

The agreement was signed by SEC Executive Director Jen Teo and GECA CEO Michelle Thomas, on the sidelines of the Australia-Singapore Green Economy Agreement¹ (GEA). By mutually recognising each country's ecolabelling schemes, the MOU will contribute to the expansion of the market for greener products and services to meet growing consumer demands for genuinely eco-friendly products. The collaboration builds on the many synergies between Singapore and Australia to accelerate both countries' transition towards sustainable economic growth and decarbonisation.

“This collaboration with GECA opens many opportunities in enabling both countries to move closer towards balancing resource sustainability and economic growth. On a national scale, SEC believes this is a significant step towards a key tenet of the Singapore Green Plan 2030 – Green Economy². The increased economic competitiveness due to the expansion of the market for sustainable products and services will spur businesses to conduct R&D. This will allow for more sustainable solutions and innovation, helping to propel Singapore forward as the region's Green Finance Hub,” said Ms Teo.

The MOU will provide a framework for both organisations to forge deeper collaboration in addressing environmental issues at both the regional and global level. This includes advocating for ecolabel certification and sustainable consumption. SEC and GECA will also jointly work towards raising environmental awareness for sustainable development through ecolabelling. This will include upskilling capabilities in ecolabelling schemes and facilitating green procurement practices through broadening the list of products and services certified with an ecolabel. Together, this will catalyse the adoption of global best practices and standards through the mutual recognition and co-promotion of ecolabels originating from Singapore and Australia.

¹ <https://www.gea.gov.sg/>

² <https://www.greenplan.gov.sg/key-focus-areas/green-economy/>

“GECA’s MOU with SEC was facilitated by the Governments of Australia and Singapore under the auspices of the Australia-Singapore Green Economy Agreement (GEA). The GEA supports green growth and jobs and decarbonisation and aims to strengthen international governance on trade and environmental sustainability. Both countries recognise that trusted ecolabelling schemes instil confidence and help drive demand for low-carbon, sustainable, and resource efficient goods and services,” said Ms Michelle Thomas, GECA’s Chief Executive Officer.

Lifecycle ecolabels follow ISO 14024 principles, are third-party verified and globally recognised as the most robust and credible form of environmental labelling by the United Nations. GECA and SEC are members of the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), the leading network of the world's most credible and robust lifecycle ecolabels. Ecolabelling enable businesses to meet the growing demands of consumers who are becoming more environmentally conscious about their purchasing decisions. By making it more convenient to identify sustainable and eco-friendly products, such certifications help consumers and businesses adopt greener and more sustainable choices. For example, SEC’s ecolabelling scheme, Singapore Green Label (SGL), certifies products according to a life-cycle approach, ensuring that every stage of the manufacturing process is executed sustainably and mitigates the impact on the environment.

Ms Teo added: “Ecolabelling is key in helping consumers better identify and support green products, especially with our recent survey indicating that labels are one of the top three most trusted sources for eco-friendly information, alongside government websites and non-governmental organisation sources. We look forward to introducing more sustainable businesses and green products across Singapore and Australia – inspiring more stakeholders to play their part in progressing an economy in a sustainable manner.”

The MOU also demonstrates GECA and SEC's commitment to researching crucial sustainability drivers, impacts and solutions. This research aims to generate better environmental, social, and economic outcomes, including harmonising and streamlining approaches to carbon reduction, circular economy, healthy materials, and transparency.

Ms Thomas added: "There has never been a better time to work collaboratively in driving sustainable manufacturing and trade that will significantly benefit the Australian and Singaporean economies, people and environment.”

A full list of product categories that will be agreed upon under the MOU is found in Annex A.

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About Good Environmental Choice Australia

GECA is an independent not-for-profit organisation with a vision to achieve a sustainable future for people and planet. Our uniquely holistic approach to sustainability encompasses environmental, human health and social impacts. One way we practice this is via our lifecycle ecolabelling program, which looks at impacts across a product or service's entire lifecycle, from the extraction of raw materials to the end of its life. We're proud to run Australia's only not-for-profit multi-sector lifecycle ecolabelling program. GECA is the only Australian member of the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), the leading network of the world's most credible and robust lifecycle ecolabels. Our team has developed over 25 lifecycle ecolabel standards for various product and service categories. These are then independently assessed by our Assurance Providers.

Find out more - <https://geca.eco/>

About Singapore Environment Council

Established in 1995, the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) enables businesses in their sustainability journeys through its globally recognised environmental certification programme under the Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN). In line with the national targets outlined in the SG Green Plan 2030, SEC focuses on raising public awareness on sustainability issues and fosters capability and capacity building through Public Private People (3Ps) partnership. As a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation (NGO), SEC is approved under the Institution of Public Character (IPC) which extends tax exemption to donors.

For details, please visit <https://www.sec.org.sg>

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ANNEX A

List of Product Categories from SEC and GECA

SEC	GECA
<p>Building Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cement and Precast Concrete Brick Tile/Ceramics Paints and Surface Coatings Carpets Adhesives and Sealants Panel Board Surface Covering Insulators Flooring Pipes Doors Termiticides 	<p>Building Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhesives, Fillers & Sealants Building Insulation Materials Carpets Cement, Concrete & Concrete Products Construction & Demolition Waste Services Floor Coverings Hard Surfacing Paints & Coatings Panel Boards Steel & Steel Products Waste Collection Services
<p>Non-building Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Products with Recycled and/or Sustainable Content Fire Extinguishers Furniture & Fittings Compact Fluorescent Lamps Laundry Detergents Detergents (Dishwashing) Floor Cleaners Correction Fluids Hairspray Deodorants Shaving Foam/Creams Soil Improver, Growing Media, Aggregate Copying Machine Food Packaging, Crockery, Cutlery Industrial & Institutional Cleaners Products Made from Recycled/Renewable Fibres Biodegradable LED Lights Environmental Innovative Products Hand Dryers Photovoltaic Equipment Automotive Types Cosmetics Dishwashers Electric Kettles Espresso & Coffee Machines 	<p>Non-building Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleaning Products Cleaning Services Copying Machines, Printers, Fax Machines & Multifunctional Device Furniture & Fittings, Foam & Mattresses Level A Furniture & Fittings Level B International Eco-labelled Products Personal Care Products Recycled Products Refrigerants Reusable Plastic Bags Sanitary Paper Products Sanitary Products Stationery & Office Supplies Sustainable Products & Services Textiles & Leather Waste Collection Services

<p>Gas Cookers & Gas-fired Cooking Materials Hot Water Storage Tanks Solar Powered Products Surface Cleaners Oxo-biodegradable Plastic Products Hand Soaps Ink & Toner Cartridges Eco-friendly Products Products That Contain Palm Oil Pulp & Paper Products Commercial Dishwashers Commercial Washer Extractors High Pressure Water Jets Hand Sanitisers Microwave Ovens Personal Computers Textiles</p>	
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