

## The EU Ecolabel for household detergents

EU Ecolabel household detergent product groups provide consumers an eco-friendly alternative to conventional detergents and lowering their daily environmental impact. EU Ecolabel detergents differentiate themselves from conventional detergents through the wide scope of environmental criteria they respect. The label guarantees detergents with limited hazardous substances used, sustainably-sourced raw material, design and recyclability of packaging and proper guidance of the product user.



The detergents included in these product groups: dishwasher, laundry, and hand dishwashing detergents take into account any detergents marketed and designed to be used exclusively in household dishwashers and in automatic dishwashers for professional use of the same size and usage as that of household dishwashers. Pre-treatment stain removers include stain removers used for direct spot treatment of textiles before washing in the washing machine. They can be used for the daily washing of textile, but also to wash by hand items such as glassware, crockery and kitchen utensils as the product formula prevents skin irritation. Industrial & institutional dishwasher and laundry detergents designed for B2B cleaning companies are covered in separate criteria.



# Hotspots & Solutions

The EU Ecolabel addresses a number of environmental hotspots induced by the use of detergents :

Hotspots	Issue	EU Ecolabel Solution
<b>Hotspot 1: Environmental Impact of Toxic Substances</b>	<i>Some toxic substances present in conventional detergents have a negative impact on the environment.</i>	EU Ecolabel household detergents must respect minimum thresholds for critical dilution volumes, must be composed of biodegradable surfactants and comply with strict restrictions on the number of hazardous substances present. For example, there is a strict ban on EDTA (and its salts), microplastics, and triclosan amongst other substances. Very few fragrances, preservatives, colouring agents and enzymes are allowed. Substances also, cannot be acutely toxic, a specific target organ toxicant, a respiratory or skin sensitiser, carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction. The 'Detergent Ingredient Database' list (DID list) is available on the EU Ecolabel website.
<b>Hotspot 2: Deforestation and degradation</b>	<i>Many ingoing substances used in conventional detergents are derived from palm oil, which are often times sourced from plantations that are responsible for deforestation.</i>	EU Ecolabel household detergents limit the deforestation and degradation of ecosystems by requiring certification schemes for the sustainable production of palm oil, that address environmental impacts on soil, biodiversity, organic carbon stocks and conservation of natural resources. Acceptable certificates include the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) (by identity preserved, segregated or mass balance) or any equivalent or stricter sustainable production scheme.
<b>Hotspot 3: Huge amount of waste going to landfill and impossible to recycle</b>	<i>The use of non-recyclable material and presence of contaminating toxic substances in packaging of detergents creates unnecessary waste sent to landfills and CO2 emissions.</i>	The EU Ecolabel limits the amount of plastic and waste destined to landfill by setting weight/utility ration (WUR) requirements to ensure that only the necessary amount of packing is used for the product. Packaging must also be composed of recyclable materials and have clear indications to the consumer on how it should be properly disposed. Spray bottles must be refillable and reusable. In order to decrease the amount of CO2 emissions, propellants in sprays are also prohibited.

**Hotspot 4:  
Inefficient use of  
resources and  
effectiveness**

*Poorly concentrated detergent containers and lack of dosing instructions lead to unnecessary energy and water consumption.*

The EU Ecolabel ensures less water and energy consumption by guaranteeing that its detergents have optimal cleaning performance even at low temperatures without over-dosing. Companies must provide documentation demonstrating that the product's fitness for use has been tested, as specified in criteria.

**Hotspot 5:  
Overuse of  
detergents**

*Unavailable dosing instructions and measuring equipment may lead to overuse and unintentional waste of detergents.*

The EU Ecolabel limits over-dosing household detergents by ensuring that products are accompanied by instructions on dosing. Furthermore, the reference dosage for each product must not exceed a specific amount of density of liquid used per wash or per kg of laundry. The environmental impact of incorrectly following these guidelines must also be clearly specified on the packaging.



**For more information...**

The scheme, its feature, the actors involved, the application process:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel>

#CircularEconomy  
[www.ecolabel.eu](http://www.ecolabel.eu)