

# ENVIRONMENTAL LABELS

## Information from Steinbeis Papier GmbH

The topics of environmental protection, climate change and resource conservation are present in the media and require action from politicians, industry and every individual. There are already simple solutions for acting sustainably and conserving resources. The use of printing and copying paper with environmental labels such as the Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel, FSC or Nordic Ecolabel is one of them.

### Blue Angel

- The RAL German Institute for Quality Assurance and Labelling has been commissioned by the Federal Environment Agency to award the eco-label and to monitor compliance with the criteria.
- Strict criteria must be met, e.g. for DE-UZ14a ("Graphic paper and cardboard made from 100% recovered paper (recycled paper and cardboard)") the use of 100% recovered paper, the absence of chlorine and halogenated bleaching agents.
- Auxiliary materials must be authorised in accordance with the XXXVI Recommendation ("Recommendations for food contact materials") of the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR).
- The Blue Angel contributes to the reduction of environmental impact and supports the protection of ecosystems, climate and resources.
- Products with the Blue Angel fulfil high standards such as harmlessness to health.
- The eco-label provides consumers with reliable guidance when choosing environmentally friendly products and enables them to make informed purchasing decisions.
- The Blue Angel promotes the use of sustainable products and services, supports a resource-conserving lifestyle and contributes to the promotion of a circular economy.
- Companies whose products are awarded the Blue Angel can communicate their environmentally friendly measures and position themselves as responsible players.

### EU Ecolabel

- The EU Ecolabel requires that products consist of at least 70% certified forestry and/or recycled fibres. This promotes the sustainable use of resources and the protection of forests.
- The eco-label takes into account the emissions generated during production and sets high standards for energy and water efficiency, the use of pollutant-free materials and the reduction of waste and emissions.
- Circular economy: The EU Ecolabel promotes the use of recycled materials and supports the development of a circular economy in which resources are used efficiently and waste is minimised.

### **FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)**

- FSC promotes responsible forestry.
- Its logo only applies to products made from certified fibre raw materials and from certified suppliers.
- It serves as a checking function along the entire production chain (chain of custody).
- According to the certification, fibre raw material can come from controlled or certified sources/forestry, and recycled fibres are also possible.
- Different FSC labels depending on the material used: FSC, FSC Mix, FSC Recycled.

### **Nordic Ecolabel**

- The Nordic Ecolabel is internationally recognised and promotes the use of sustainable raw materials by requiring at least 70 per cent from certified forestry or at least 70 per cent recycled fibres. If a paper contains a mixture of fibres from certified forestry and recycled fibres, the total proportion must also be 70%.
- The eco-label contributes to the preservation of ecosystems, climate protection and the reduction of environmental impacts.
- The FSC Nordic Ecolabel serves as credible proof that the wood products come from responsibly managed forests.
- Involving local communities and indigenous peoples in forest management promotes social justice and strengthens the rights of people who depend on the forests.

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The Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel and FSC environmental labels offer different approaches to protecting the environment and resources. Companies take responsibility and are committed to sustainability. Consumers can make an important contribution by using these certified office papers. The Blue Angel is undoubtedly one of the highest-profile and most important labels. This is mainly due to the fact that it stipulates a requirement of 100 per cent recycled paper for production. This strict criterion ensures that no new wood fibres are used in production, thereby conserving valuable resources.