

**BLUE ANGEL**

**The German Ecolabel**



**Unbleached Filter Papers  
for Use with Hot and Boiling Water**

**DE-UZ 65**

**Basic Award Criteria**

**Edition February 2014**

**Version 3**

## The Environmental Label is supported by the following four institutions:



Federal Ministry  
for the Environment, Nature Conservation  
and Nuclear Safety

The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety is the owner of the label. It regularly provides information on the decisions taken by the Environmental Label Jury.



The German Environmental Agency with its specialist department for "Ecodesign, Eco-Labeling and Environmentally friendly Procurement" acts as office of the Environmental Label Jury and develops the technical criteria of the Basic Criteria for Award of the Blue Angel.



The Environmental Label Jury is the independent, decision-making body for the Blue Angel and includes representatives from environmental and consumer associations, trade unions, industry, the trade, crafts, local authorities, academia, the media, churches, young people and the German federal states.



The RAL gGmbH is the awarding body for the Environmental Label. It organises the process for developing the relevant award criteria in independent expert hearings – which involve all relevant interest groups.

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## Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	4
1.1	Preface .....	4
1.2	Objectives of the Environmental Label .....	4
2	Scope .....	5
3	Requirements .....	5
3.1	BfR.....	5
3.2	Food and Consumer Goods Act.....	5
3.3	Bleaching ban .....	5
3.4	Use of plastic fibres in tea filter papers.....	5
3.5	Exclusion of halogenated compounds .....	5
3.6	Paper preparation.....	6
3.7	Requirements on wastewater .....	6
3.7.1	Direct dischargers .....	6
3.7.2	Indirect dischargers .....	6
3.7.3	Manufacturers of tea filter paper .....	6
3.7.4	Emission values for the manufacture of pulp.....	7
3.8	Origin of primary fibres and forest certification systems .....	8
3.9	Consumer Information .....	8
3.10	Packaging.....	8
4	Applicants and Parties Involved.....	9
5	Use of the Environmental Label .....	9

**This document is a translation of a German original. In case of dispute, the original document should be taken as authoritative.**

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Preface

In cooperation with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the German Environmental Agency and considering the results of the expert hearings conducted by RAL gGmbH, the Environmental Label Jury has set up these Basic Criteria for the Award of the Environmental Label. RAL gGmbH has been tasked with awarding the Environmental Label.

Upon application to RAL gGmbH and on the basis of a Contract on the Use of the Environmental Label to be concluded with RAL gGmbH, the permission to use the Environmental Label may be granted to all products, provided that they comply with the requirements as specified hereinafter.

The product must comply with all the legal requirements in the country in which it is to be marketed. The applicant shall declare that the product meets this requirement.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Environmental Label

Filter papers for use with hot and boiling water which are used, among other things, to prepare tea or coffee, are mainly made of pulp. Pulp and paper for these products should be manufactured by using the most advanced technologies available that ensure a high degree of environmental protection.

To ensure the serviceability of the filter papers the pulp used need not be bleached. Doing without bleaching processes helps avoid wastewater contamination and the use of poorly degradable complexing agents becomes superfluous.

The pulp must be made of fibres from certified sustainable and nature-oriented forestry sources. Under no circumstances may they come from forests that are particularly worthy of protection (e.g. tropical or boreal virgin forests).

From an ecological point of view, the FSC Standard is of great significance for fibre certification. The Environmental Jury expects the PEFC Standard to be further developed during the term of these Basic Criteria with regard to the requirements for plantation operations, the ban on genetically modified organisms and a responsible use of primeval forests. The Jury will take these issues into account when next revising these Basic Criteria.

This will support manufacturing processes with a strong focus on water and nature protection.

## 1.3 Objectives of the Environmental Label

Therefore, following benefits for the environment and health are stated in the explanatory box:



[www.blauer-engel.de/uz65](http://www.blauer-engel.de/uz65)

- content biodegradable
- wood fibres from sustainable forestry
- unbleached

## 2 Scope

These Basic Criteria apply to the following filter papers for use with hot and boiling water:

- Coffee and tea filters,
- Coffee and tea filter papers.

Excluded are single-serving bags (e.g. tea bags) and non-woven fabrics.

## 3 Requirements

### 3.1 BfR

The filter papers for use with hot and boiling water shall comply with the 36th/1 Recommendation of Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung (BfR) (Federal Institute for Risk Assessment), as amended.

**Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with the requirement in Annex 1 to the Contract.*

### 3.2 Food and Consumer Goods Act

The products shall meet the requirements of the German Lebensmittel- und Bedarfsgegenständegesetz (Food and Consumer Goods Act), as amended.

**Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with the requirement in Annex 1 to the Contract.*

### 3.3 Bleaching ban

The fibres used in the products must not be bleached.

**Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with the requirement in Annex 1 to the Contract.*

### 3.4 Use of plastic fibres in tea filter papers

Provided that tea filter papers are manufactured by the use of plastic fibres their percentage of the total fibre material shall be less than 30 weight percent. These plastic fibres shall not impair the compostability of the filters.

**Compliance Verifications:**

*The applicant shall specify the plastic fibre material, give their percentage in the tea filter paper in weight per percent and confirm the compostability in Annex 1 to the contract.*

### 3.5 Exclusion of halogenated compounds

No halogenated compounds, except for auxiliaries listed in the 36th/1 Recommendation of the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment may be used in the entire manufacturing process of the products.

### **Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with the requirement in Annex 1 to the Contract.*

### **3.6 Paper preparation**

Neither complexing agents nor chemical auxiliary agents that contain glyoxal or formaldehyde as constituents or are able to split off formaldehyde may be used in the entire manufacturing process of the products.

### **Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with these requirements in Annex 1 to the Contract.*

### **3.7 Requirements on wastewater**

With respect to wastewater, the products shall meet the following requirements:

#### **3.7.1 Direct dischargers**

Direct dischargers shall, in the manufacture of filter papers, comply with the lower wastewater emission limits described in the "Reference Document on Best Available Techniques in the Pulp and Paper Industry"<sup>1</sup> of the EU Commission and listed in Table 3-1<sup>2</sup>.

### **Compliance Verification:**

*As a direct discharger the filter paper manufacturer shall in Annex 1 to the Contract declare compliance with the emission values listed in Table 3-1 and report the measured emission values in Annex 2a to Contract.*

#### **3.7.2 Indirect dischargers**

Indirect dischargers shall comply with the limits listed in Table 3-1 for wastewater volume flow and AOX. Indirect dischargers shall give the emission values for the other parameters listed in Table 3-1.

### **Compliance Verification:**

*As an indirect discharger the paper manufacturer shall declare in Annex 1 to the Contract compliance with the limits for the wastewater volume flow and for AOX. As regards the other parameters listed in Table 3-1 the indirect discharger shall list the emission values in Annex 2a to the Contract.*

#### **3.7.3 Manufacturers of tea filter paper**

Manufacturers of tea filter paper shall specify the emission values for the parameters listed in Table 3-1.

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<sup>1</sup> BREF (Best Available Techniques Reference Document) German Summary at: [www.umweltbundesamt.de/nfp-bat/kurzue.htm](http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/nfp-bat/kurzue.htm)

<sup>2</sup> In the absence of reference values for paper filters for use with hot and boiling water the values for tissue are used alternatively.

Table 3-1; Maximum Allowable Values for Emission Parameters (Wastewater) during paper manufacture expressed as annual averages

Parameter	Lower Reference Value according to BREF <sup>1</sup>
Wastewater volume flow	10 m <sup>3</sup> /ADT*
COB (Chemical Oxygen Demand)	0.4 kg/ADT
BOD <sub>5</sub> (5-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand)	0.15 kg/ADT or 25 mg/l
Filterable substances	0.2 kg/ADT
AOX	< 0.01 kg/ADT
Total N (inorganic + organic N) (TNb <sup>**</sup> )	0.05 kg/ADT or 15 mg/l
Total P	0.003 kg/ADT or 1 mg/l

\* ADT = Air dried ton

\*\* Total bound nitrogen or TNb is a sum parameter for the total water pollution with nitrogen compounds. Nitrogen may be present as ammonium, nitrites, nitrates or organic nitrogen compounds. A proper method for determining this parameter is DIN EN 12260.

### **Compliance Verification:**

**Manufacturers of tea filter paper shall list in Annex 2a to the Contract the emission values for the parameters listed in Table 3-1.**

### **3.7.4 Emission values for the manufacture of pulp**

The emission values for the parameters listed in Table 3-2 shall be obtained from the pulp manufacturers for the manufacture of pulp and confidentially provided to RAL.

Table 3-2; Maximum Allowable Values for Emission Parameters (Wastewater) during pulp manufacture expressed as annual averages

Parameter	Lower Reference Value according to BREF <sup>1</sup>
Wastewater volume flow (process water without cooling water)	35 m <sup>3</sup> /ADT*
COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand)	8 kg/ADT
BOD <sub>5</sub> (Five-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand)	1.5 kg/ADT or 25 mg/l
Filterable substances	1.4 kg/ADT
AOX	< 0.01 kg/ADT
Total N (inorganic + organic N) (TNb <sup>**</sup> )	0.2 kg/ADT or 15 mg/l
Total P	0.02 kg/ADT or 1 mg/l

\* ADT = Air dried ton

\*\* Total bound nitrogen or TNb is a sum parameter for the total water pollution with nitrogen compounds. Nitrogen may be present as ammonium, nitrites, nitrates or organic nitrogen compounds. A proper method for determining this parameter is DIN EN 12260.

### **Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall name the pulp manufacturer(s) in Annex 1 to the Contract and attach Annex(es) 2b to the Contract completed by the **pulp manufacturers** to these application documents.*

### **3.8 Origin of primary fibres and forest certification systems**

The wood fibres used for the manufacture of filter papers must come from forests managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner which are recognised according to a globally accepted forest certification system. From the ecological point of view, great significance is attached to the FSC certificate. The wood used for fibre production must not, under any circumstances, originate from forests of high conservation value.

If, in exceptional cases, fibres are used that are made of bamboo plants and/or other suitable fibre plants, as for example abaca or sisal, these fibres too must come from sustainably managed sources.

Plantations of such plants must not be, or have been, established on land covered by forests of high conservation value. Here, the reference year is 1994.

#### **Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall name the manufacturers of wood fibres in Annex 1 to the Contract and present a certificate for the pulp fibres.*

*Moreover, the applicant shall name the manufacturers of other fibrous raw materials in Annex 1 to the Contract and provide evidence of their sustainable management. Also, the percentage of the different fibrous materials in the product shall be given in weight percent.*

*The correctness of the data provided in Annex 1 to the Contract shall be confirmed once a year in accordance with Annex 6 to the Basic Criteria*

- *by a certification body accredited by Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle (DAkkS) (national accreditation body) for ISO 14001 for the scope of paper mills (NACE 17.12) or*
- *by an environmental auditor accredited for this scope (NACE 17.12) by Deutsche Akkreditierungs- und Zulassungsgesellschaft für Umweltgutachter mbH (DAU) (German Association for Accreditation and Recognition of Environmental Auditors) in accordance with the Umweltauditgesetz (Environmental Audit Act) or*
- *by an accredited FSC certifier or*
- *by a UBA-recognised expert in the field of fibrous raw materials, waste paper grades and waste paper recycling.*

### **3.9 Consumer Information**

A note printed on the packaging shall inform the consumer that coffee and tea filters can be composted along with their contents.

#### **Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with the requirement in Annex 1 to the Contract.*

### **3.10 Packaging**

The packaging material shall consist of at least 95 percent of paper and/or board made from recycled fibre material. Pulp for a possibly required fresh fibre content in the covering layer must not, under any circumstances, originate from forests of high conservation value (see paragraph 3.8).

No halogenated plastics may be used for the outer packaging.

**Compliance Verification:**

*The applicant shall declare compliance with the requirement in Annex 1 to the Contract and present a product sample as well as a sample of the product's packaging.*

**4 Applicants and Parties Involved**

Manufacturers of final products according to Paragraph 2 shall be eligible for application.

Parties involved in the award process are:

- RAL gGmbH to award the Blue Angel Environmental Label,
- the federal state being home to the applicant's production site,
- Umweltbundesamt (German Environmental Agency) which after the signing of the contract receives all data and documents submitted in applications for the Blue Angel in order to be able to further develop the Basic Award Criteria.

**5 Use of the Environmental Label**

The use of the Environmental Label by the applicant is governed by a contract on the use of the Environmental Label concluded with RAL gGmbH.

Within the scope of such contract, the applicant undertakes to comply with the requirements under Paragraph 3 while using the Environmental Label.

Contracts on the Use of the Environmental Label are concluded to fix the terms for the certification of products under Paragraph 2. Such contracts shall run until December 31, 2023. They shall be extended by periods of one year each, unless terminated in writing by March 31, 2023 or March 31 of the respective year of extension.

After the expiry of the contract, the Environmental Label may neither be used for labelling nor for advertising purposes. This regulation shall not affect products being still in the market.

The applicant (manufacturer) shall be entitled to apply to RAL gGmbH for an extension of the right to use the ecolabel on the product entitled to the label if it is to be marketed under another brand/trade name and/or other marketing organisations.

The Contract on the Use of the Environmental Label shall specify:

- Applicant (manufacturer)
- Brand/trade name, product description
- Distributor (label user), i.e. the above-mentioned marketing organisations.