

Final Implementation Plan for Updated EPEAT Criteria

Introduction

The Global Electronics Council (GEC) is a non-profit that leverages large-scale purchasing power, both public and private sector, as a demand driver for more sustainable technology. By deciding to buy sustainable technology, institutional purchasers can “move the needle” toward a more sustainable world. GEC also helps manufacturers understand the sustainability impacts of their technology, commit to address those impacts, and act to change operational, supply chain, and procurement behaviors. GEC is the manager of the ecolabel EPEAT™, which is used by more purchasers of electronics than any other ecolabel worldwide.

EPEAT is a comprehensive sustainability ecolabel that helps purchasers identify more sustainable electronic products that have superior environmental and social performance. EPEAT establishes criteria that address priority sustainability impacts throughout the life cycle of the product, based on an evaluation of scientific evidence and international best practices.

GEC is undertaking a multi-year initiative to update its EPEAT Criteria to align with priority sustainability impacts of electronic products and their supply chains. GEC is doing this to ensure the criteria:

- Meet purchaser demands with an increased focus on climate change and supply chains,
- Address sustainability impacts consistently across product categories, and
- Respond to rapid changes in both technology and market trends.

The priority sustainability impact areas are Climate Change Mitigation, Sustainable Use of Resources (or Circularity), Reduction of Chemicals of Concern, and Corporate ESG Performance. When complete, these updated criteria will be applied across all EPEAT product categories, starting with Computers and Displays, Imaging Equipment, Mobile Phones, Servers, and Televisions.

Through extensive stakeholder consultation, GEC has finalized the implementation plan for the updated criteria for the above five product categories. This implementation plan includes the timeframe for when EPEAT-registered products must meet the updated criteria and other critical activities needed for an efficient and effective transition to the updated criteria.

This document contains the following information:

- Background:
 - GEC Criteria Development Process
 - Consultation on Updated Criteria Implementation Plan
- Final Implementation Plan:
 - Implementation Schedule for All Updated Criteria
 - Climate Change Mitigation Criteria and Early Adopter Status
 - Other Critical Implementation Elements

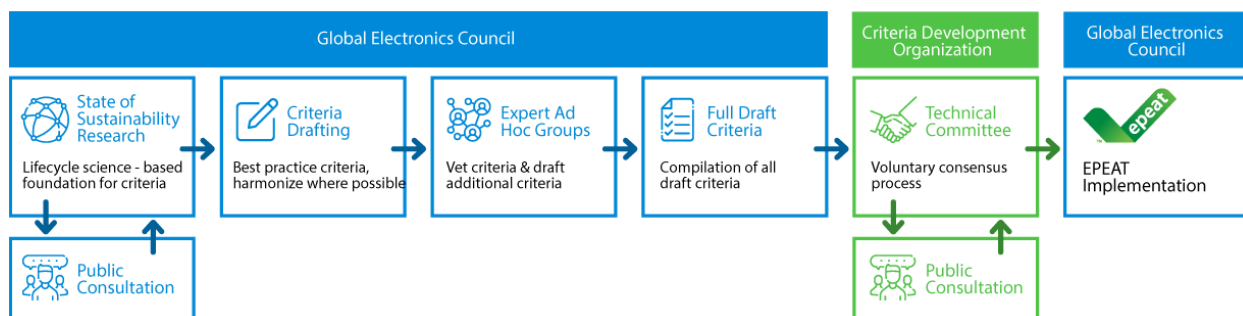
The information in this document applies to all existing Participating Manufacturers and GEC-approved Conformity Assurance Bodies and may also be of interest to Purchasers and other EPEAT stakeholders interested in the transition to the updated EPEAT Criteria.

Should you have any questions about this document, please email us at EPEAT@GEC.org.

Background

GEC Criteria Development Process

Criteria are being revised through GEC’s Criteria Development Process, which includes expanded stakeholder engagement and a streamlined process with multiple opportunities for engagement. Each of the four priority sustainability impact areas (Climate Change Mitigation, Sustainable Use of Resources, Reduction of Chemicals of Concern, and Corporate ESG Performance) are a separate criteria development project to enable maximum engagement of stakeholders and allow experts to engage in the process on topics that align with their areas of expertise. The policies governing GEC’s Criteria Development Process (P74) are [publicly available](#) and the graphic below illustrates the steps in the process.

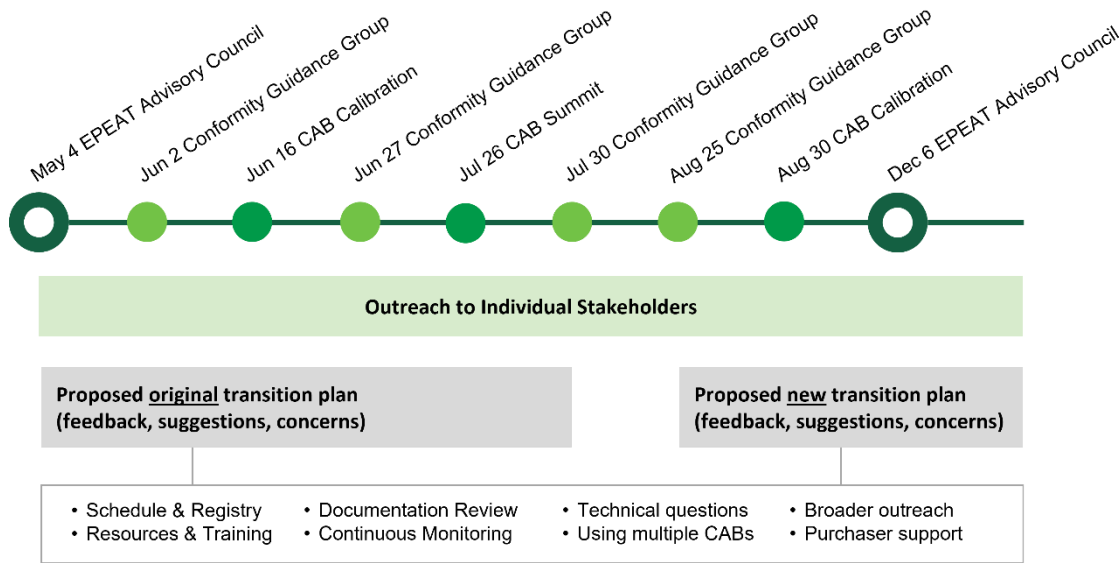


Development of the updated criteria is still underway, with the final criteria, expected to be published by September 30, 2023. The most recent version of the criteria development schedule can be found on the [EPEAT Announcements Page](#).

Consultation on Updated Criteria Implementation Plan

GEC undertook extensive stakeholder consultation throughout 2022, including outreach to Participating Manufacturers, GEC-approved Conformity Assurance Bodies, purchasers, and other EPEAT stakeholders. From May to July 2022, GEC sought feedback and suggestions on the original proposed implementation plan via individual calls with various stakeholders, as well as meetings with broader groups including the Conformity Guidance Group and the Advisory Council. In August, GEC refined the original plan based on the preliminary feedback that had been received, and re-engaged stakeholders to solicit comments on a revised implementation plan through the remainder of the year.

Key consultation activities undertaken by GEC in the development of this implementation plan are highlighted in the graphic below.



Considerations for Evaluating Plan Options

GEC identified basic overarching principles to guide the development of the implementation plan, to ensure that all options were examined in a balanced manner that also aligned with the EPEAT Program’s responsibilities and requirements as a Type 1 ecolabel. To this end, GEC’s decisions were guided by a commitment to being fair, objective, and transparent in the development of the plan.

It was important to GEC that the implementation plan not provide preference to a single product category, product type, or Participating Manufacturer. Perhaps just as importantly, GEC also ensured that the final plan could be implemented consistently by all CABs and Participating Manufacturers.

GEC relied on these basic principles to guide its decision-making process and balance a variety of competing interests in developing this implementation plan in a credible, and objective way.

Overarching Principles:

Credibility
Consistency
Objectivity
Transparency
Leadership

Final Implementation Plan

Implementation Schedule for All Updated Criteria

All key dates in the transition to the updated EPEAT Criteria are identified in the table and graphic below. In recognition of the strong desire from all EPEAT stakeholders to have certainty and clarity on the path forward, the transition schedule presented in this document is now final and will not be adjusted moving forward.

The final criteria are expected to be published in September 2023, and Participating Manufacturers will be able to access the back-end of the Registry for all criteria roughly 12 months from this time, in September 2024. Between September 2023 and September 2024, CABs and Participating Manufacturers will work together on necessary conformity assurance activities, including Documentation Review for the updated criteria.

The public EPEAT Registry will then launch on April 1, 2025, when products meeting the updated criteria from all sustainability impact areas will become visible. New products can be registered against the old criteria until April 1, 2025, however all active products must meet the updated criteria by December 31, 2025. After this date, products registered against the old criteria will be archived.

Cognizant of purchaser’s strong desire to begin procuring products that meet the updated criteria as soon as possible, and aware of the reality of long product development cycles, GEC believes this schedule strikes a fair balance and will ensure a successful transition to the updated EPEAT Criteria.

Final Schedule for Transition to All Updated Criteria	
September 30, 2023	(1) Estimated publication date of final criteria <i>(Note that each set of criteria will be publicly available upon its individual publication date)</i>
September 30, 2024*	(2) Manufacturers can access new back-end of Registry.
April 1, 2025*	(3) Public launch where products meeting updated criteria from all impact areas available on EPEAT Registry Date up to which new products can be registered against old criteria
December 31, 2025*	(4) Products meeting old criteria will be archived after this date.

*Indicates firm date that will not change



Climate Change Mitigation Criteria and Early Adopter Status

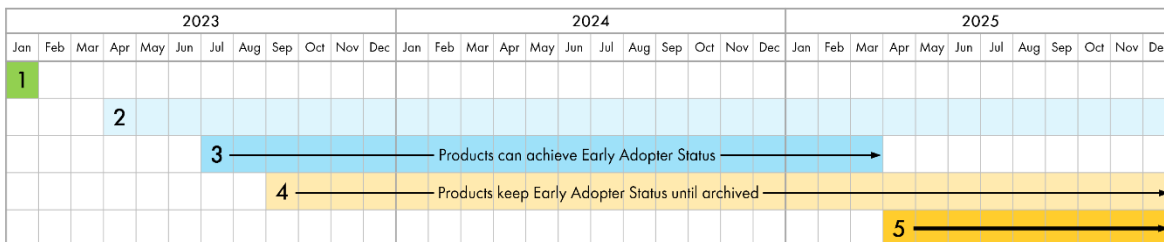
The Climate Change Early Adopter Status will provide Participating Manufacturers an opportunity to proactively address purchaser and policy maker demands for products that help drive climate change impact reductions in the interim—instead of waiting until the transition to the updated criteria is fully completed in 2025. The Early Adopter Status will allow EPEAT to meet these stakeholder demands for EPEAT-registered products that further reduce climate change impacts, and also provide recognition to brands that are first movers. To this end, EPEAT-registry users will be able to search and filter for

products that have achieved Early Adopter Status to ensure these products are easy for purchasers to identify.

Key Details About Early Adopter Status:

- To achieve Early Adopter Status, a product must demonstrate conformance with all required Climate Change Mitigation Criteria and be verified by a Conformity Assurance Body as having done so.
- Early Adopter Status can be achieved only by individual products (and not on a per manufacturer basis).
- Participating Manufacturers are not required to obtain Early Adopter status.
- Early Adopter Status will not affect a product’s tier level of bronze, silver, or gold.
- Products can obtain the Early Adopter Status between July 1, 2023 and March 30, 2025.
- Products that have achieved Early Adopter Status will appear in the EPEAT Registry as early as September 30, 2023.
- Products keep the Early Adopter Status until they are no longer active in the Registry.

Climate Change Early Adopter Status: Key Dates	
March 30, 2023	(1) Estimated publication date of Climate Change Mitigation criteria
April 30, 2023	(2) Training & resources available; manufacturers can begin officially working with CABs
July 1, 2023	(3) Manufacturers can access new back-end of Registry for Climate Change Mitigation criteria
September 30, 2023	(4) Early Adopter Status appears in the EPEAT Registry
March 30, 2025	Last day products can achieve Early Adopter Status
April 1, 2025	(5) Public launch where products meeting updated criteria from all impact areas will be available on the EPEAT Registry



Other Critical Implementation Elements

In addition to the schedule, there are many other activities that are just as important for a successful transition from a conformity assurance standpoint. Consistency, transparency, objectivity, and efficiency are key principles driving all transition elements.

Supporting Resources

The EPEAT Program will develop conformity resources for each criterion, approximately within two months of publication of the criteria for each sustainability impact module. The actual schedule may differ based on number/complexity of criteria. Resources will be available on the back-end of the EPEAT Registry.

Training

An on-demand training for CAB Auditors and Participating Manufacturers will be available approximately two and a half months after publication of the criteria for each module. CAB Auditors must pass training and exams for each module to be qualified to perform Documentation Review and Continuous Monitoring activities.

Documentation Review

Auditors must complete the Auditor training and achieve 75% or higher on the corresponding exam to complete Documentation Review. CABs can help Participating Manufacturers with questions as soon as criteria are published, before completing training.

Continuous Monitoring

The EPEAT Program has developed the following Continuous Monitoring plan to balance the needs of all stakeholders.

2023	2024	2025
Product testing Round (Level 2) to existing criteria. Round will launch in Q1.	Product testing Round (Level 2) to existing criteria. Round will launch in Q1.	Product testing Round (Level 2) to updated criteria. Round will launch later in 2025.
Round(s) assessing publicly available information (Level 0) to existing criteria	Round(s) assessing publicly available information (Level 0) to existing criteria	Round(s) assessing publicly available information (Level 0) to updated criteria

The EPEAT Program will follow up on inconclusive Level 0 investigations to ensure information is available. If publicly available information cannot be found, Level 1 investigations will be initiated.

Questions Arising During Documentation Review

The EPEAT Program will develop and publish a Question-and-Answer document available to Participating Manufacturers and CABs that is updated at the same time each week to identify newly answered questions that have arisen during the transition process.

The EPEAT Program will continue to hold monthly CAB Calibration Meetings with all CABs to review questions that arise during conformity assurance activities.

The EPEAT Program has also scheduled monthly Conformity Guidance Group meetings for the remainder of 2023. The Conformity Guidance Group (CGG) is open to all stakeholders including Participating Manufacturers, GEC-approved CABs, and purchasers. The CGG is not a standing committee and there are no standing members. Participants may register for each meeting using the links below. Currently, each meeting is scheduled in one timeslot to bring all attendees together, however, additional timeslots may be added to a monthly meeting depending on the topic(s) to be discussed.

- [February 16, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/11pm China](#)
- [March 16, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [April 13, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [May 11, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [June 15, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [July 13, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [August 17, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [September 14, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [October 12, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/10pm China](#)
- [November 16, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/11pm China](#)
- [December 14, 2023: 7am Pacific/10am Eastern/4pm Germany/11pm China](#)

Manufacturers Using More than One CAB

Participating Manufacturers may choose to use different CABs for different categories, and product registration and product listings on the EPEAT Registry will remain by product category. Except for consumables, product energy efficiency, and some criteria with small differences in language and/or requirements for different product types, criteria will be identical across the Computers and Displays, Imaging Equipment, Mobile Phones, Servers, and Televisions product categories. Corporation level criteria are criteria where evidence is required to cover all of these product categories which the manufacturer has EPEAT-registered products.

If a Participating Manufacturer uses different CABs for different product categories, they may choose one of the following options:

- 1) Participating Manufacturer selects a single CAB which will complete Documentation Review of all corporation level criteria. All Continuous Monitoring investigations for the corporation level criteria will be implemented by this CAB.

- 2) Participating Manufacturer has both CABs complete Documentation Review of the corporation level criteria. Continuous Monitoring investigations will be implemented on a product category basis by the CAB for the product category.