

Criteria Modules by Sustainability Impact

The Global Electronics Council (GEC) is undertaking a multi-year initiative to update its EPEAT criteria for its Type 1 ecolabel to align with priority sustainability impacts of electronic products and their supply chains, including Climate Change Mitigation, Sustainable Use of Resources (or Circularity), Reduction of Chemicals of Concern, and Corporate ESG Performance. When complete, these “modular” criteria will be applied across all EPEAT product categories, including Computers and Displays, Mobile Phones, Imaging Equipment, Servers, Televisions and Network Equipment.

GEC seeks involvement from all interested and materially affected stakeholders, including industry, government policy, purchasers, NGOs, and academics. Since EPEAT is used globally, GEC welcomes participation from stakeholders around the world to ensure global relevance of criteria.

How Will the Criteria Be Developed?

Criteria will be developed using GEC’s new Dynamic Criteria Development Process, which aims to expand stakeholder engagement through a streamlined process with multiple opportunities for engagement. Each of the four sustainability impact modules will be 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.

The graphic below illustrates the steps in the criteria development process. Table 1 outlines the multiple options for stakeholder participation in each sustainability impact module, what is expected of participants, and how to get involved. Stakeholders can choose how they would like to participate, and in which sustainability impact modules. The anticipated timeline for each sustainability impact module is also provided below.

Steps in GEC’s Criteria Development Process



Table 1: Stakeholder Participation Options

Participation Option	What Is Expected?	How to Get Involved
<p>Public Comment on the Draft State of Sustainability Research. The State of Sustainability Research is an analysis of available science and data on the life cycle impacts for the topic, and strategies to reduce these impacts. This research is the foundation for criteria development.</p>	<p>Interested stakeholders can submit public comments on any aspects of the research, as well as submit additional data for consideration for inclusion in the research document. The public comment period is open for 30 days.</p>	<p>Stakeholders are notified of the release of draft State of Sustainability Research through the GEC newsletter and on the EPEAT Announcements webpage (https://epeat.net/announcements).</p> <p>Stakeholders can also request to be added to the “interested stakeholder” list to receive direct notification by email. To receive direct email notifications, send an email to Criteria@GlobalElectronicsCouncil.org.</p>
<p>Expert Ad Hoc Groups. Multi-stakeholder group of individuals with expertise on a specific topic(s). Expert Ad Hoc Groups serve in an advisory capacity to review and draft criteria to address the sustainability impacts.</p>	<p>Active participation in the review and drafting of criteria. Expert Ad Hoc Groups are expected to convene for 8–12 weeks by conference call, generally every 2 weeks. Calls are scheduled to accommodate the different time zones of participants. Electronic discussion and submission of comments is also used as needed and to address time zone challenges.</p>	<p>Stakeholders are notified when Expert Ad Hoc Groups are being formed through the GEC newsletter and on the EPEAT Announcements webpage (https://epeat.net/announcements).</p> <p>Stakeholders can also request to be added to the “interested stakeholder” list to receive direct notification by email. To receive direct email notifications, send an email to Criteria@GlobalElectronicsCouncil.org.</p>
<p>Technical Committee. The Technical Committee is the voluntary consensus body. The Technical Committee debates the merits and effectiveness of proposed criteria to ensure the criteria address priority sustainability impacts identified in the State of Sustainability Research with the goal of moving the industry and its supply chain to innovate and adopt best practices that achieve</p>	<p>Each Technical Committee is expected to convene for 7 - 12 months. Technical Committee meetings will occur monthly via teleconference.</p> <p>Voting members are expected to review documents in advance of meetings, provide comments on criteria and actively engage in discussion (either on calls or by electronic means), and participate in the</p>	<p>GEC is partnering with NSF International, an organization with extensive expertise in managing voluntary consensus processes, to convene and manage the Technical Committee.</p> <p>Voting membership on the Technical Committee is open to all interested parties by submitting the Technical Committee Application Form. To participate as an Observer, stakeholders should contact NSF at GBaragar@nsf.org.</p>

Participation Option	What Is Expected?	How to Get Involved
<p>credible, verifiable reductions in sustainability impacts and increase transparency. The Technical Committee is made up of up to 21 voting members, representing a balance of stakeholder interests, and observers.</p>	<p>ballot process to approve criteria and reconcile stakeholder differences.</p> <p>Observer status allows individuals to attend Technical Committee meetings and receive documents provided to the Technical Committee.</p>	
<p>Public Comment on Draft Criteria. The full draft of criteria for each sustainability impact module are available for public comment. There are 2 opportunities to submit public comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The full draft criteria document is made available for public comment, concurrent with its release to the Technical Committee. This initial public comment period is open for 60 days. 2) Revisions made to the full draft criteria document by the Technical Committee, based on comments received, are open for public comment for 30 days. The 2nd public comment is limited to changes made to the initial draft. 	<p>Interested stakeholders can submit public comments on the draft criteria. The 1st public comment period is open for 60 days. The 2nd public comment period is open for 30 days.</p>	<p>Stakeholders are notified of the release of the draft for public comment through the GEC newsletter and on the EPEAT Announcements webpage (https://epeat.net/announcements).</p> <p>Stakeholders can also request to be added to the “interested stakeholder” list to receive direct notification by email. To receive direct email notifications, send an email to Criteria@GlobalElectronicsCouncil.org</p>

What Topics Will Be Covered in Each Sustainability Impact Module?

Climate Change Mitigation	Sustainable Use of Resources (Circularity)	Corporate ESG Performance	Reduction in Chemicals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reducing embodied carbon through manufacturing energy efficiency and renewable electricity sourcing ✓ Product energy efficiency ✓ Reduction of high global warming potential chemicals in manufacturing ✓ Carbon footprint analysis, reduction and transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recycled content in product and packaging ✓ Critical minerals and rare earth elements ✓ Design for repair, reuse and recycling ✓ Product longevity and repairability ✓ Responsible end-of-life management ✓ Water use efficiency and transparency ✓ Reducing supply chain manufacturing waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Social performance and auditing of labor, human rights and worker health and safety in the supply chain ✓ Responsible mineral sourcing ✓ Environmental management systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reduction in hazardous substances in the product ✓ Chemical substance inventory and transparency ✓ Alternatives assessment to identify safer substances ✓ Manufacturing process chemicals

In addition to above sustainability impact modules that will apply across EPEAT product categories, GEC will consider product-specific criteria for imaging equipment consumables, applying the same criteria development process outlined above. Criteria for imaging equipment consumables will focus on reducing the life cycle sustainability impacts of consumables -- specifically ink and toner cartridges/containers and paper use -- relative to the footprint of imaging equipment devices, including business practices and design of the imaging equipment device to enable circularity.

What is the Timeline for the Developing Criteria for the Sustainability Impact Modules?

Sustainability Impact Module	Stakeholder Engagement	Schedule
Climate Change Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public comment on State of Sustainability Research Expert Ad Hoc Groups Technical Committee 1st Public comment on draft criteria 2nd Public comment on draft criteria Publication of final criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 7–May 7, 2021 June–August 2021 October 2021–Feb 2023* October 6–December 6, 2021 August 31–September 30, 2022 March 2023*
Sustainable Use of Resources (Circularity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public comment on State of Sustainability Research Expert Ad Hoc Groups Technical Committee 1st Public comment on draft criteria 2nd Public comment on draft criteria Publication of final criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 13–October 13, 2021 December 2021–April 2022 May 2022–September 2023* May 18–July 18, 2022 May/June 2023* TBD 2023*
Reduction of Chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public comment on State of Sustainability Research Expert Ad Hoc Groups Technical Committee 1st Public comment on draft criteria 2nd Public comment on draft criteria Publication of final criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 10–January 7, 2022 March–June 2022 July 2022–May 2023* July 13–September 12, 2022 April/May 2023* September 2023*
Corporate ESG Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public comment on State of Sustainability Research Expert Ad Hoc Groups Technical Committee 1st Public comment on draft criteria 2nd Public comment on draft criteria Publication of final criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 14–May 14, 2022 July–September 2022 October 2022–August 2023* November 10, 2022–January 9, 2023 May/June 2023* September 2023*
Product-Specific Criteria: Imaging Equipment Consumables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public comment on State of Sustainability Research Expert Ad Hoc Groups Technical Committee 1st Public comment on draft criteria 2nd Public comment on draft criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 18–October 18, 2022 December 2022–March 2023* March–August 2023* March–April 2023* July 2023*

Sustainability Impact Module	Stakeholder Engagement	Schedule
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of final criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2023*
Product-Specific Criteria: Product Energy Efficiency**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment on State of Sustainability Research*** • Expert Ad Hoc Group <p><i>In consultation with stakeholders, GEC decided not to pursue additional product energy efficiency criteria at this time.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See <i>Climate Change Mitigation</i>

*Anticipated timeframes, based on process requirements and number/complexity of criteria

** Criteria are in addition to product energy efficiency criteria in Climate Change Mitigation module

***Product energy efficiency was addressed in the Climate Change Mitigation research.

Criteria Documents and Supporting Research

Below are the most current documents for each module as of the date of this overview. Please refer to the Table above for anticipated schedule for completion of the criteria module.

- Climate Change Mitigation
 - [State of Sustainability Research](#), Final, October 2021.
 - [Draft Criteria for 2nd Public Comment](#), August 31, 2022.
- Sustainable Use of Resources
 - [State of Sustainability Research](#), Final, November 2021.
 - [Draft Criteria for 1st Public Comment](#), May 4, 2022.
- Chemicals of Concern
 - [State of Sustainability Research](#), Final, February 2022.
 - [Draft Criteria for 1st Public Comment](#), June 29, 2022.
- Corporate ESG Performance
 - [State of Sustainability Research](#), Final, July 2022.
 - [Draft Criteria for 1st Public Comment](#), November 10, 2022.
- Consumables for Imaging Equipment
 - [State of Sustainability Research](#), Final, November 2022.
 - Draft Criteria for 1st Public Comment – *not yet available*

What is the Timeline for Implementing Sustainability Impact Modules in EPEAT?

After extensive stakeholder consultation throughout 2022, GEC released the implementation plan for the updated EPEAT Criteria in January 2023. The [Final Implementation Plan for Updated EPEAT Criteria](#) identifies key dates in the transition process and provides additional details on other key activities that will support an efficient and successful transition, including recognition for manufacturers who adopt the Climate Change Mitigation Criteria early (called ‘Early Adopter Status’).

GEC plans to apply two of the four sustainability impact modules – Climate Change Mitigation and Corporate ESG Performance – to the proposed category for Health and Wellness Wearable Electronic Devices (“Wearables”). The timeline for implementation of the proposed wearables product category, including the criteria from the two sustainability impact modules, will be communicated upon completion of the Wearables criteria and solicitation of stakeholder feedback on an implementation timeline.

About GEC

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™, 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.

Contact Information

Ms. Erica Logan
Director, Sustainability Impact Criteria
ELogan@GEC.org

Ms. Patricia Dillon
Vice President, Criteria & Category Development
PDillon@GEC.org