

GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



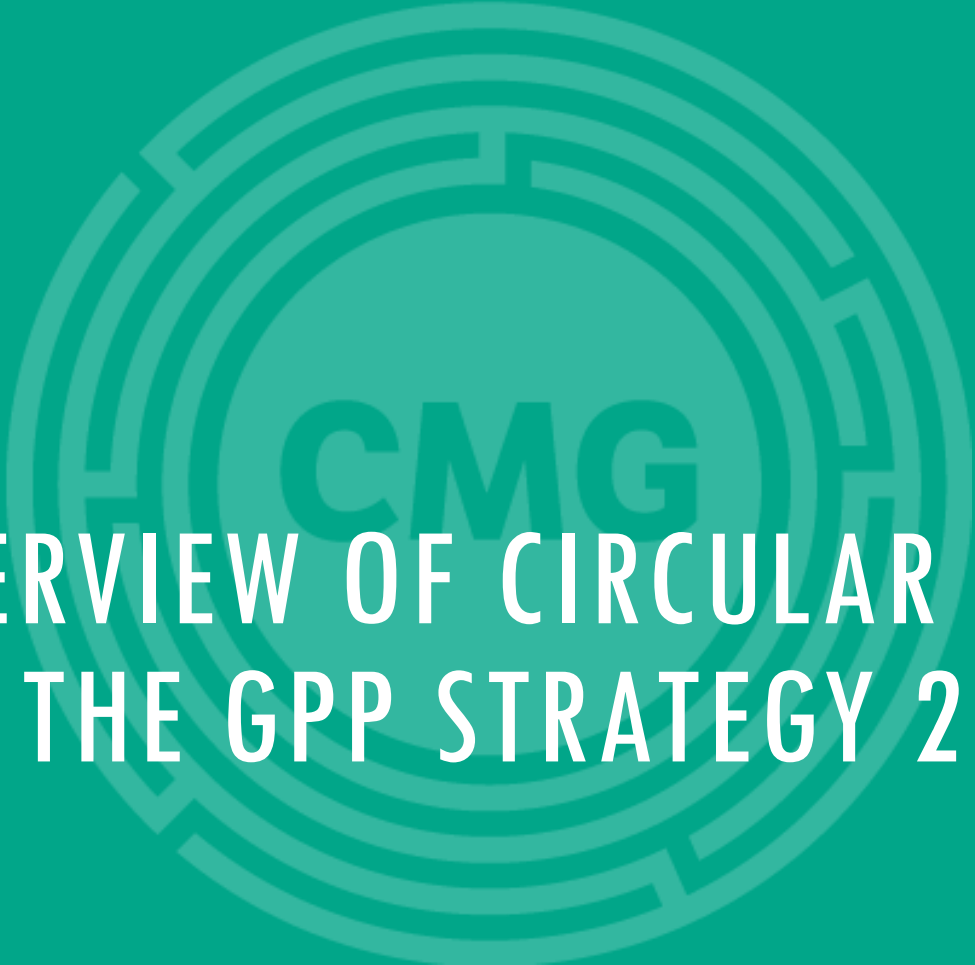
Ross McCarthy
Managing Director
Keystone Procurement





LEARNING GOALS

1. Overview of Circular 17/2025 and the Green Public Procurement (GPP) Strategy 2024-2027 & key requirements under Circular 17/2025
2. Sustainability obligations in Irish public procurement, building a plan, common reasons tenders fail on sustainability grounds, audit expectations and compliance risks
3. Developing a green procurement strategy for an implementation roadmap
4. Writing clear, compliant sustainability requirements
5. Clarifications, transparency, and audit-ready records
6. Working with suppliers to improve sustainability outcomes; monitoring and reporting sustainability performance through a project lifecycle
7. Embedding green procurement into templates and processes
8. Green procurement examples



1. OVERVIEW OF CIRCULAR 17/25 AND THE GPP STRATEGY 24-27

WHAT IS GREEN PROCUREMENT

- Green Public Procurement (GPP) is also referred to as sustainable procurement
- GPP is defined by the European Commission as a “process whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, service and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life-cycle when compared to goods, service and works with the primary function that would otherwise be procured”
- It applies to expenditure above and below the EU threshold
- The 2014 directives allow for environmental considerations to be taken into account during the pre-procurement work, during the design and management of the process and as part of the contract management cycle
- The circulars and strategies build on the directives

OVERVIEW OF GREEN PROCUREMENT

- Some of the basic levels of compliance are covered in the declarations contractors are asked to abide by, especially above the EU threshold
- In some categories, details of environmental and product management systems are employed, typically as selection criteria
- For some categories, criteria like life cycle costing are used as contract award measures

OVERVIEW OF GREEN PROCUREMENT

The directives further allow for:

- The specification of environmental management systems
- The specification of criteria linked to the *material substance* of the tender
- The specification of life cycle costing
- Eco-labels and similar



OVERVIEW OF GREEN PROCUREMENT

- There are a number of overlapping sources for green procurement including:
 - EU Treaties
 - EU Procurement Directives
 - Government Procurement Agreement (WTO)
 - Bi-lateral agreements
 - Local circulars like 17/25



OVERVIEW OF GREEN PROCUREMENT

- Some examples of green procurement
 - Energy efficient devices
 - Furniture made from sustainable products (timber etc)
 - NZEBs (near zero energy buildings)
 - Recycled paper products
 - Eco-cleaning products
 - Electric vehicles
 - Nuclear, geothermal, wind, solar and hydro energy

PUBLIC POLICY DRIVERS

Policy initiative	Mechanism	Requirement	Impacts
Applying Green Public Procurement criteria	Climate Action Plan / Programme for Government	All procurement using public funds must include green criteria by 2023.	All public bodies and any other organisation spending public funds
Applying Green Public Procurement criteria	Energy efficient public procurement regulations S.I.s 151/2011, 426/2014 and 646/2016	Public bodies may only procure equipment or vehicles which are included on the Triple E Register or which meet the relevant energy-efficiency criteria.	All public bodies
Planning	Circular 17/2025 (replaces Circular 20/2019)	Corporate Procurement Plan must state where GPP criteria will be used in upcoming procurements	Departments (Civil Service)
Reporting progress	Circular 17/2025	Updated: annual reports to EPA (tenders using GPP criteria, incl. social enterprise awards) and to SEAI (M&R system, explanation where GPP criteria not used) - first due 2026, covering 1 Jan-31 Dec 2025, and annually thereafter. Also now published per-competition via eForms.	Departments – to be extended to other public bodies

OTHER LEGISLATIVE FACTORS

- Article 11 of EU Treaty on the functioning of the European Union states: *Environmental Protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union's policies and activities, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development*
- In 2020, the EU adopted a *Green Deal* policy which is the trigger and driver for mandatory green public procurement in key sectors that are especially deleterious to the environment
- Some obligations already exist like Environmental Impact Assessments for certain construction projects, energy efficiency standards for certain devices, and rules on waste and hazardous substances
- Timber, wood and paper products are subject certification and a chain of custody requirement
- IT equipment must meet minimum energy efficiency standards as well as recycling through the WEEE (Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment) directive
- The priority areas selected for GPP also include food waste, vehicles, cleaning products and services, construction, energy and textiles
- NEW: Circular 17/2025 (effective 21 July 2025) now updates 11 of the 54 actions in Buying Greener: GPP Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027, and formally replaces Circular 20/2019

CIRCULAR 17/2025 & BUYING GREENER STRATEGY – OVERVIEW

- Circular 17/2025 (21 July 2025, Dept of Public Expenditure/OGP) issues updated GPP instructions to all public sector bodies
- Implements 11 of the 54 actions in “Buying Greener: GPP Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027”
- Formally replaces Circular 20/2019 (Environmental & Social Considerations in Public Procurement)
- Buying Greener sets 54 actions and 12 sectoral/product targets across the public sector
- GPP criteria can be applied at every stage: subject matter of the contract, exclusion grounds, selection criteria, technical specifications, award criteria, life-cycle costing, and contract performance clauses
- Five general EU law principles still govern any GPP criteria used: Equal Treatment, Non-Discrimination, Proportionality, Transparency, Mutual Recognition – and criteria must link to the subject matter of the contract

CIRCULAR 17/2025 – KEY ASPECTS

Area	Requirement	Who/when
GPP criteria	Include GPP criteria from national guidance where they are available, appropriate and proportionate. Criteria must relate to the subject matter and comply with equal treatment, non-discrimination, proportionality, transparency and mutual recognition.	All public sector bodies
Above-threshold tenders	Include GPP criteria, where possible, in every competition above the applicable national advertising threshold.	All public sector bodies; from 21 July 2025
Procurement planning	Explain in corporate policies, strategies and Corporate Procurement Plans how the organisation will meet its obligations under Buying Greener.	All public sector bodies
GPP Criteria Search	Actively promote the OGP's GPP Criteria Search internally and record this commitment in the Corporate Procurement Plan.	All public sector bodies
Consistency throughout procurement	Once GPP criteria are adopted, reflect them consistently from the business case and specification through selection, evaluation, award and contract management.	All relevant competitions
Staff training	Establish and fulfil annual GPP training commitments, prioritising the goods, services and works most relevant to the organisation.	All public sector bodies
eForms	Record the use of GPP in the procurement notice/eForms for each competition.	All public sector bodies

CIRCULAR 17/2025 – KEY ASPECTS

Area	Requirement	Who/when
Central arrangements	Use central purchasing arrangements where possible. These can assist authorities because future arrangements should include relevant GPP criteria.	All public sector bodies
Life-cycle costing	Consider acquisition, operational, end-of-life and, where measurable and verifiable, environmental externality costs—not merely the purchase price. Requirements must remain proportionate.	Where relevant and appropriate
SME impact	Avoid GPP criteria, evidence requirements and contract reporting obligations that impose disproportionate costs or administrative burdens on SMEs.	All GPP procurements
Market consultation	Consider preliminary market consultation to test whether the market, including SMEs, can deliver the proposed environmental outcomes.	Particularly where criteria may be demanding or novel
Advance notice	For above-EU-threshold contracts, consider a Prior Information Notice communicating planned GPP requirements so the market has time to prepare.	Recommended rather than mandatory
Social value	Consider socially responsible procurement alongside GPP, including participation by social enterprises and community organisations and, where legally appropriate, reserved contracts.	Recommended
Innovation	Consider innovation procurement where an environmental need cannot adequately be met by existing market solutions.	Recommended
Internal communication	Circulate the requirements to all staff involved in procurement and to bodies, offices and agencies under the organisation's aegis.	Immediate

CIRCULAR 17/2025 – CONSTRUCTION-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Contracting authorities procuring works must:

- Specify low-carbon construction methods and low-carbon cement materials as far as practicable.
- Use whole life-cycle costing for all works contracts falling under the Capital Works Management Framework.
- Apply the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment's technical guidance when procuring low-carbon cement materials.
- From 2026, incorporate low-carbon components, sustainable building processes and appropriate construction GPP criteria into the Preliminary Project Brief.
- Use Construction Products Regulation data where available and apply EN 15978:2011 where relevant.
- For building projects exceeding 1,000 m², use whole life-cycle analysis under EN 15978 where appropriate to optimise life-cycle global warming potential and support embodied-carbon declarations for buildings completed after 31 December 2027.

CIRCULAR 17/2025 – REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

The reporting obligations differ by organisation:

Government departments

- From 2026, covering the 2025 calendar year and annually thereafter, departments must report to the EPA on:
- Tenders awarded to social enterprises and voluntary or community organisations where GPP criteria were applied.
- GPP implementation in contracts above the applicable national advertising thresholds.
- The reasons GPP criteria were omitted from tender documents where national criteria were available.

Bodies subject to the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate

- From 2026, covering 2025 and annually thereafter, these bodies must explain through the SEAI Monitoring and Reporting system why GPP criteria were not included in above-threshold tender documents where national criteria were available.



CIRCULAR 17/2025 – KEY GPP ACTIONS

- Contracting authorities should now:
 1. Update their Corporate Procurement Plan and relevant procurement policies.
 2. Introduce a mandatory GPP review at business-case and procurement-planning stage.
 3. Require procurement documents above national thresholds to include GPP criteria or record a reasoned justification for omission.
 4. Build the EPA/OGP GPP guidance and GPP Criteria Search into tender-document templates.
 5. Add fields to procurement trackers for:
 - Availability of national GPP criteria
 - Criteria included
 - Reason for omission
 - Relevant eForms information
 - Award to a social enterprise or voluntary/community organisation
 - Contract-management evidence and outcomes.



CIRCULAR 17/2025 – KEY GPP ACTIONS

Contracting authorities should now:

6. Review works templates for life-cycle costing, low-carbon cement and the 2026 construction requirements.
7. Establish an annual, category-focused GPP training programme.
8. Review evidence and reporting requirements for proportionality and SME impact.
9. Use preliminary market consultation before imposing novel or potentially burdensome requirements.
10. Assign responsibility for annual EPA and/or SEAI reporting and retain a clear audit trail.

Where applicable national GPP criteria exist, the procurement file should contain either the criteria used or a documented, proportionate justification for not using them.

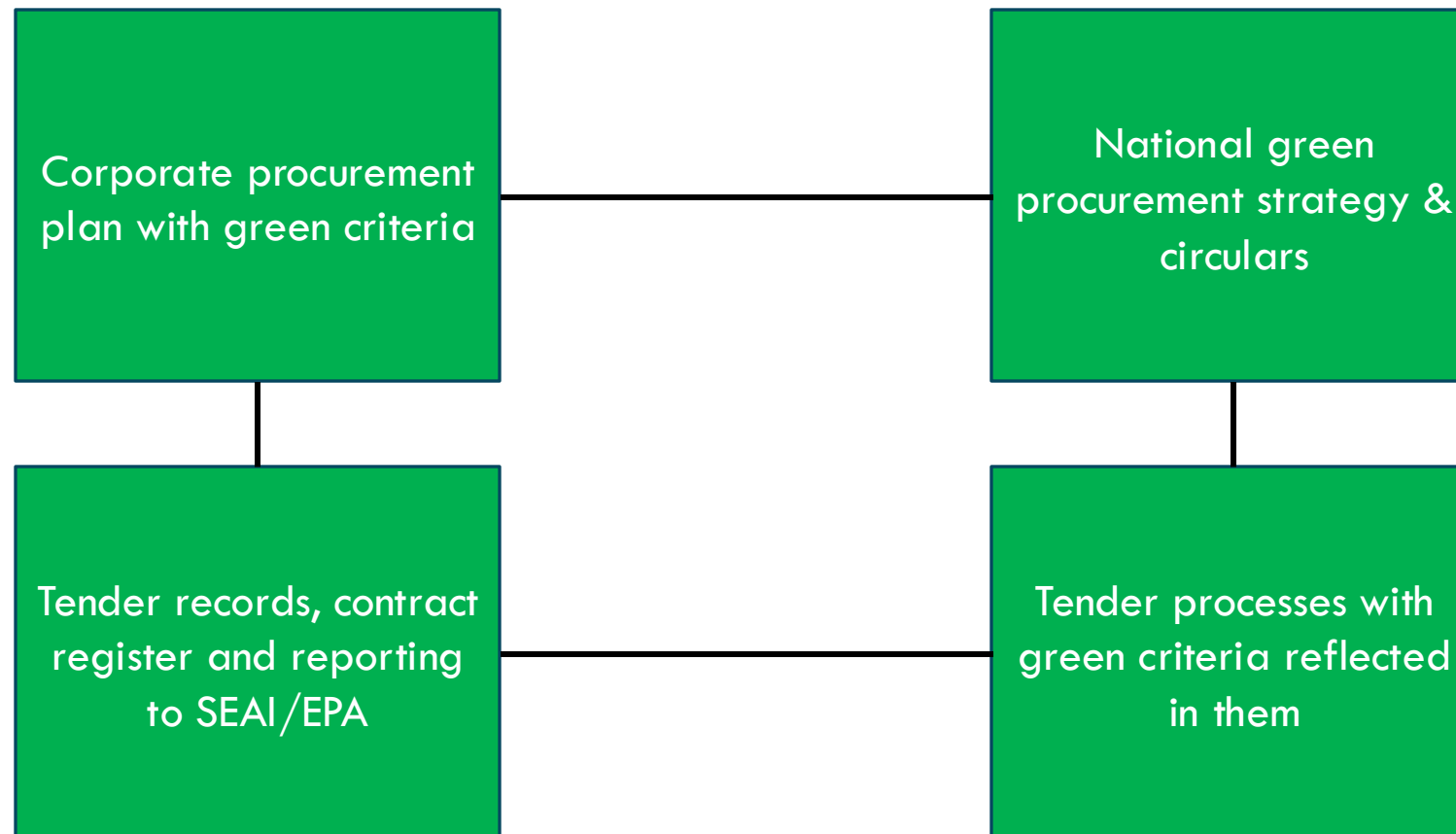
MANAGING ANY IMPACT ON SMES

- Government is committed to facilitating SME participation in public procurement
- GPP criteria, and related reporting/monitoring requirements, must not be applied in a way that discourages SMEs through additional cost or administrative burden
- Preliminary market consultation is encouraged to understand market capacity and maturity to deliver sustainable solutions
- For above-EU-threshold contracts, consider publishing a Prior Information Notice on eTenders to give the market time to prepare
- A 12-month impact assessment of the Circular's effect on SMEs will be carried out



2. SUSTAINABILITY OBLIGATIONS IN IRISH PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

THE BUILDING BLOCKS





ENVIRONMENT AND PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVES

- Art 18.2 - Contractors must comply with environmental obligations set out in Irish Law, EU Law or international conventions
- Art 69.3 – Abnormally low tenders must be rejected where it is because of anything in 18.2
- Art 58 / Ann XII – evidence of the environmental management measures a supplier uses in the execution of the contract can be requested at the selection stage
- Art 42.1 – technical specifications can be formulated with reference to production processes or other aspects of the life cycle such as disposal
- Art 67.2 – award criteria can include social or environmental characteristics of the goods, services or works being produced (energy from renewable sources, fair trade products etc)
- Art 43/44 – Third party ecolabels / certs can be required to demonstrate compliance with tech specs, award criteria and/or contract performance specifications provided they meet certain standards of openness and transparency
- Art. 68 – Life cycle costing can be applied to measure and compare costs including externalities
- Art 56.1 – can refuse to award contracts to companies that do not comply with requirements

PUBLIC POLICY DRIVERS

- The climate action plans Ireland is pursuing require measurement and management
- Carbon footprint at an organisational level comprises three scopes / sources

Scope 1 (direct)	Scope 2 (indirect via energy)	Scope 3 (supply chain)
• Fuel combustion • Company vehicles • Fugitive emissions	• Purchased electricity, cooling, heat and steam	• Purchased goods and services • Business travel • Employee commuting • Waste disposal • Use of sold products • Transportation and distribution (up- and downstream) • Investments • Leased assets and franchises

PUBLIC POLICY DRIVERS

- The reasons for mapping and addressing carbon footprint are clear on direct activities
- Procurement activity drives benefits from measuring Scope 3 emissions. By measuring Scope 3 emissions, organisations can:
 - Assess where the emission hotspots are in their supply chain
 - Identify resource and energy risks in their supply chain
 - Identify which suppliers are leaders and which are laggards in terms of their sustainability performance
 - Identify energy efficiency and cost reduction opportunities in their supply chain
 - Engage suppliers and assist them to implement sustainability initiatives
 - Improve the energy efficiency of their products
 - Positively engage with employees to reduce emissions from business travel and employee commuting

BENEFITS AND DRIVERS

- The single biggest trend is the coalescence of ESG in public limited companies (PLCs are companies listed on a stock exchange with shares members of the public can buy) in particular, and then via scope 3 measuring into their supply chains
- Green Public Procurement is being driven by public policy and impacts suppliers to the public sector
- Carbon taxes will penalise companies in the future so picking more climate sensitive solution is a better way to maintain cost certainty on multi-annual contracts

LIMITATIONS



- Avoid “boiling the ocean”
- Pragmatism is required – how deep into supply chains do you go
- Remember, you are looking to control what is materially linked to your tender and to take reasonable steps

BENEFITS AND DRIVERS - ANCILLARY

- Hawthorne effect – by measuring, behaviour changes. The culture of continuous improvement delivers supplier change and climate change outcomes
- The public sector benefits from being seen as a leader in driving this change through its choices and procurement activities
- It will often favour more local / proximate options vs long shoring and that helps to build Ireland / near abroad capacity and resilience

BECOMING STRATEGIC

- Organisations have to develop a policy for green procurement – this is an extension or a new filter for their existing procurement policy
- This is how these aims and goals become specific to the organisation's specific procurement requirements
- A procurement policy and strategy updated to reflect green procurement will mean the organisation is aligned and clearer on the requirements and:
 - More consistent in its procurement activities
 - Can leverage GPP materials and standards
 - Starts the process of being able to monitor GPP results

DEFINING PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

- The first step is to review all expenditure and prioritise the product and service areas they consume in terms of climate impact. Prioritisation factors can include:
 - Value of spend and frequency of spend
 - Environmental impacts and risks
 - Ability to improve - are there better standards available / better products or services?
 - Purchasing power – do you have influence over the supplier?
 - Cost of alternatives
 - Potential reputational risks
- Once this is done, a carbon prism can be laid over outlay and GPP can be prioritised for the areas of expenditure

MANAGING THE ROADMAP

Monitor	Report	Measure impact
• Track how many contracts have green criteria • Track what percentage of spend includes green criteria • Review how ambitious the criteria are • Consider what level of compliance there is in the contracts	• Ensure internal reporting is in place • Report to one central source • Consider cross sectoral benchmarking (e.g. within Education or Local Govt()) • Review vs Govt progress • Be aware of need for public reporting now and in future	• Have data on emissions, energy, resource usage and other impacts • Compare to baseline • Consider contributions to other targets • Compare to other organisations • Avoid double counting

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

- Contract management cycle should be measuring improvements during the contract lifecycle for carbon intense categories
- The main requirement is to show progress towards the designated carbon dioxide emissions reduction target

“If you can't describe what you are doing as a process, you don't know what you're doing.” W Edwards Deming



This cycle (PDCA) was developed by W Edwards Deming in manufacturing and is the basis for all ISO quality management systems



AUDIT EXPECTATIONS & COMPLIANCE RISKS

- Tender files need a clear audit trail: evidence of the GPP decision at business case, specification, selection, award and contract management stages
- Where national GPP criteria exist and are NOT used, this must now be explained as part of EPA and SEAI reporting – build the justification into the file as you go, not retrospectively
- Selection/award criteria and any life-cycle costing methodology must be transparent, proportionate, and clearly linked to the subject matter of the contract
- Weightings must be capable of genuinely influencing the outcome – a token GPP weighting that can never affect the result is a compliance risk
- Specify the method of verification (declaration, certificate, ecolabel, evidence) alongside every GPP criterion – never leave it assumed

COMMON REASONS TENDERS FAIL ON SUSTAINABILITY GROUNDS

- GPP criteria not clearly linked to the subject matter of the contract
- Award criteria weighted so heavily they distort competition on price/quality, or so lightly they cannot influence the outcome
- No stated method of verification for a sustainability requirement – unverifiable criteria are open to challenge
- Inconsistent treatment of environmental criteria across similar tenders or lots
- Life-cycle costing methodology not disclosed in the tender documents from the outset
- Reporting gaps – unable to evidence why national GPP criteria were, or were not, applied



3. DEVELOPING A GREEN PROCUREMENT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FIRST

- The strategy informs what needs to be procured
- The procurement strategy will be overly tactical and lack strategic focus if it is not directly supporting a competitive overarching strategy
- Assuming there is a strategy and there are strategic goals for the organisation, the role of the people responsible for procurement is to ensure that they source in a way that enables the organisation to achieve its goals
- Green procurement influences the strategy as a goal, an aim and a filter through which procurement activity can be seen

PROCUREMENT AUDIT

- The procurement strategy should drive out requirements for the organisation
- This will mean that different strategies are needed to support the foreseeable requirements of the organisation including the carbon intensive areas
- This can result in suppliers being deemed non-essential / unnecessary, core to requirements, or a new requirement needed to support the strategic plans
- A supplier review should be undertaken to analyse expenditure, categorise the expenditure and then map it to control limits to maximise value for money
- Green procurement is an additional filter added to this process

Non-core	Core requirement	New requirement
• Review supplier relationships • Drop suppliers	• Ensure continuity of supply from key suppliers • Ensure supplier relationship management is fit for purpose	• Engage in tactical / strategic sourcing • Make sure supply options meet requirements

REVIEW SUPPLIERS ON EXPENDITURE WITH GREEN CRITERIA

- The traditional approach doesn't easily cater for GPP as the focus is too narrow
- This is why we refer green procurement as a filter – it must be applied as a filter to challenge prevailing attitudes and cultural resistance – especially in carbon intensive categories

DEVELOP THE PLAN

A plan should then be developed for expenditure and it should cover:

Consolidation	Competition
Category	- Understand the nature of each category, how competitive they are and how important the underlying relationships are. Also, establish the relative importance of categories as a percentage of spend. Carbon load needs to be covered here at the outset.
Supplier	Make sure suppliers are allocated by category of spend (i.e. they could appear in different areas). Prioritise by carbon intensity.
Total spend	Analyse suppliers for core spend and any maverick / tail spending to maximise value for money. Focusing on expenditure quantum and carbon intensity means reductions will be front loaded.
Management approach	Consider how the categories are going to be managed and how the relationships with suppliers are best managed. What contract management structures and sustainability roadmap will be used?
Proposed action	Drop supplier(s), put out to tender, establish rotational framework, move to open pricing model etc. The actions above help to inform the planned actions.
Review cycle	- Understand how frequently you intend on going to market. Dynamic categories with lots of supply options can be left open and dynamic, more complex or strategically important requirements are better placed on longer term review. Applying a green filter to the review cycle may require less dynamism and more partnering (i.e. longer term contracts) if investment is needed by the supplier to meet expectations.

BUILDING AN INTERNAL IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

- Update your Corporate Procurement Plan to set out how your organisation will meet Buying Greener obligations
- Map spend categories against the 12 sectoral/product GPP targets and prioritise by carbon intensity and spend
- Set annual GPP training commitments and assign ownership
- Put EPA / SEAI / eForms reporting processes in place ahead of the 2026 deadline (covering 2025 data)
- Build GPP into templates, central purchasing arrangements and contract management practices
- Review and update the roadmap annually as Buying Greener targets are refreshed via future Circulars

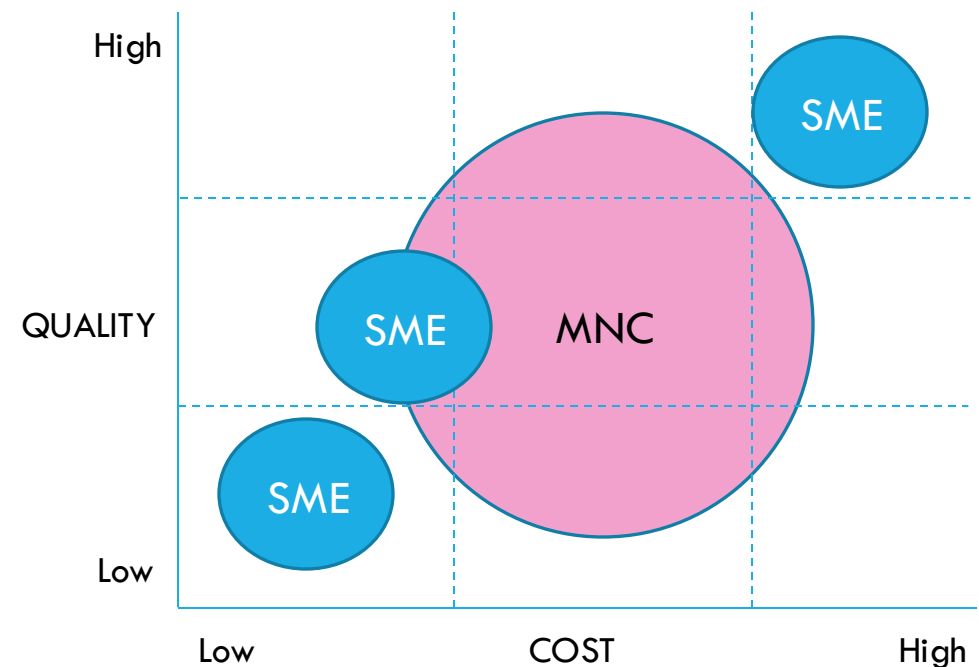
GPP AND MARKET ENGAGEMENT

The main benefits that arise from maintaining a focus on market engagement is:

- Ensuring you understand the key trends in categories and what companies are investing / not investing in their systems and processes
- This can help ensure that suppliers costs are competitive and sustainable while meeting GPP criteria set for their category
- You maintain a good understanding of what is happening by category and whether new and emerging trends can drive value for your organisation and further deintensify the carbon load
- For common requirements where there is low supply risk, you maintain an appropriate level of independence in evaluating supplier performance and the strategic value of the relationship – it helps organisations have the confidence to switch supplier

MARKET ENGAGEMENT

- First step is to start from the procurement plan and the plan for the category
- Analyse active suppliers in the marketplace using information sources
- At a category level, you may need an outline specification of what you want if it is a new or emerging requirement
- If it is an existing requirement, you should have access to a specification or be able to develop one that assists this process



USEFUL INFORMATION

If you want to see who has been awarded work, select “awarded” from this list

 Oifig um Sholáthar Rialtais
Office of Government Procurement

Q Advanced search Q Latest CFTs Q Latest Notices EN Log in

CFT Resource ID 

CFT CA Unique ID 

Description 

Maximum characters: 50000.

Procurement type 

Supplies

Publication date 

From: To:

CPV codes 

39830000-Cleaning products

Estimated value (EUR) 

Min: Max:

Title 

Name of Contracting Authority 

Workspace Status 

-Select Workspace Status-

Procedure 

-Select Procedure-

Deadline for tender submission 

From: To:

NUTS codes 

Tenders Opening Date 

From: To:

CANCEL CLEAR SEARCH

SEARCH RESULTS

10 Results Per page | Displaying all 3 matches.

#	Title --	Resource ID --	CA --	Info	Date published --	Tenders Submission Deadline --	Procedure --	Status --	Notice PDF	Award date --	Estimated value	Cycle --
1	Supply of Cleaning Chemicals and Consumables	2357455	Bus Eireann/Irish Bus		27/09/2023 10:29:55	20/10/2023 12:00:00	Negotiated with prior call for competition	Evaluation			375,000.00	1
2	Request for Tender Proposal For Supply of Catering, Hygiene and Cleaning Products	2234225	KARE_473		11/08/2023 12:19:35	15/09/2023 12:00:00	Open	Evaluation			135,000.00	1
3	Invitation to tender (ITT) for the Provision of a Hydrogen Peroxide Vapour (HPV) System	1837673	St James's Hospital		23/05/2023 15:07:23	23/06/2023 00:00:00	Open	Evaluation			150,000.00	1

10 Results Per page | Displaying all 3 matches.

REFER TO GPP CRITERIA TOOL

- Where requirements are broadly known, CAs can consider building RFIs / market engagement or direct to market tenders using the GPP criteria tool.
- The OGP's GPP Criteria Search tool at gppcriteria.gov.ie, which packages the EPA's national GPP Guidance and Criteria for direct use in tenders - now formally referenced in Circular 17/2025 and Buying Greener as the primary source of national GPP criteria
- The tool has been very well developed and will help to provide a practical, category by category framework for the key categories.
- We will be referring to this as we go through each of the priority categories today.

BENEFITS OF USING INFORMATION

- Key benefits that market engagement can drive include:
 - You can benchmark carbon intensity, where the market is and what price implications GPP may have
 - You can establish a budget for a tender and make green criteria conformance rather than performance criteria where relevant
 - You can use the dialogue to standardise expectations – you can also use the dialogue to stimulate market behaviour
 - You can attract better service providers



4. DEVELOPING CLEAR SPECIFICATIONS FOR GREEN PROCUREMENT



DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Define the contract's core purpose

Describe the goods, services or works being purchased and the environmental impacts arising from their production, delivery, use, maintenance and disposal. Focus on impacts attributable to the contract rather than a supplier's general environmental conduct.

Identify relevant national GPP criteria

Check the EPA's national GPP guidance and the OGP GPP Criteria Search. Select only criteria relevant to the particular contract and its material environmental impacts. If national criteria are unavailable, consider appropriate EU criteria or other recognised guidance.

Undertake preliminary market consultation

Test whether the proposed requirements:

- Can be met by a sufficient number of suppliers
- Reflect current market capability
- Are likely to exclude SMEs disproportionately
- Affect cost, competition or delivery times
- Can be verified using reasonably available evidence.

The consultation should describe the desired outcome without favouring a particular supplier or proprietary solution.

DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Procurement stage	Appropriate use
Technical specification	Mandatory environmental performance or characteristics of the deliverable
Selection criterion	Capability or experience genuinely necessary to perform the contract
Award criterion	Comparative environmental quality offering additional value
Pricing model	Relevant whole life-cycle costs rather than acquisition price alone
Contract condition	Obligations applying during delivery, reporting and contract management



DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Establish the subject-matter link

For each proposed criterion, ask:

- Does it concern the goods, services or works being purchased?
- Does it relate to their production, delivery, use, maintenance or disposal?
- Will it affect the performance or environmental impact of this contract?
- Can the authority assess or enforce it during this procurement or contract?

General requirements about a tenderer's entire business, unrelated contracts or overall corporate policy are unlikely to be sufficiently linked.

DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Test proportionality

Assess each requirement against:

- The contract's value, scale, duration and risk
- The significance of the environmental impact
- Market maturity and availability of compliant solutions
- Cost and administrative burden
- Availability of evidence
- Potential effect on competition and SMEs and
- The authority's ability to monitor compliance.

The requirement should go no further than reasonably necessary to achieve the identified outcome.

DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Use clear, measurable drafting

Avoid aspirations such as “demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability.”

State instead:

- The required outcome or performance level
- Any applicable standard or methodology
- How compliance must be demonstrated
- When evidence must be submitted
- How an award response will be scored and
- How the obligation will be monitored after award.

Performance-based or functional specifications may preserve competition better than prescribing a particular product or method.

DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Permit equivalent evidence

- Where standards, labels or certifications are referenced, use “or equivalent” where legally required and explain what equivalent evidence will be accepted.
- Do not require a particular certification if the same requirement can reasonably be demonstrated by other means.

Align the complete procurement package

- Ensure the specification, response schedule, award methodology, pricing schedule and contract provisions are consistent.
- A requirement should not appear in the specification without an associated method of verification and, where relevant, a contract-management mechanism.

DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Keep a short criteria-assessment record covering:

- The environmental impact addressed
- The link to the subject matter
- Market evidence
- The proportionality assessment
- SME and competition considerations
- Accepted forms of evidence and
- The reason for including, modifying or omitting available national GPP criteria.



DRAFTING CLEAR PROPORTIONATE GREEN CRITERIA IN SPECIFICATIONS

Before approving a criterion, the contracting authority should be able to complete this sentence:

“This requirement is included because it reduces [**identified environmental impact**] arising from [**specific aspect of the contract**]; the required standard is reasonable because [**market and proportionality evidence**]; and compliance will be verified through [**specified evidence and contract-management measure**].”

ROAD TRANSPORT VEHICLES AND SERVICES

Key impacts

- Climate change impacts linked to tailpipe emissions and fossil fuel extraction
- Air pollution from combustion engines (PM, NOX, NMHC)
- Fuel consumption and air pollution from tyre wear
- Emissions from electricity production for e-vehicles
- Impacts linked to batteries and their disposal
- Noise pollutions
- Air, water and soil pollution from lubricants and tyres

GPP criteria

- Setting maximum CO2 emissions based on vehicle type
- Require low / zero emission tech for heavy duty vehicles
- Set maximum air pollutant emissions based on real driving conditions
- Requirements for tyre pressure monitors and rolling resistance of tyres
- Min. energy efficiency and battery warranties
- Address climate impact air conditioning gases
- Max vehicle and tyre noise emissions
- Lower lubricants and maintenance activities

LIGHT VEHICLES EXAMPLE (1/3)

Criterion	Requirement
TS 1 – CO2 value	Core or comprehensive (must be zero after 2026) Must obtain certificate of conformance
TS-2 - Air pollution	Only needed with core CO2 value criteria Limit to 80% of max emissions Cert of conformance (some other scenario driven conditions also)
TS-3 – Energy consumption	Must provide driver with energy consumption figures Must provide technical documentation demonstrating this
TS4 – Traffic information and route optimisation	This may be relevant for cars in urban areas or a roving usage brief Must provide technical documentation demonstrating this
TS5 – Minimum battery warranty	Provide an 8 year warranty against below 70% capacity loss Include details of warranty in tender submissions

LIGHT VEHICLES EXAMPLE (2/3)

Criterion	Requirement
TS 6.1 – Tyre pressure monitoring	Tyre pressure monitoring system Details to be outlined in technical specification
TS 6.2 – Rolling resistance	High spec in KG resistance per tonne / Re-treaded tyres Details to be in technical spec (excludes snow tyres etc)
TS-6.3 – Eco-driving information	Information to be provided for all vehicle types (ICE, hybrid, E-car) Can offer training sessions Provide technical sheet with details
TS-6.4 – Noise	Tyre noise to be 3db below EU limits or rethreaded tyres Provide conformant label

LIGHT VEHICLES EXAMPLE (3/3)

From theses Criteria	Requirement
AC1 – Lower CO2	Provide marks for this. Compared using tech specs. Only relevant until 2026. Not relevant for e-cars.
AC2 – Energy efficiency	Provide marks based on the KW/100KM. It's a mathematical formula like classic pricing formula – lowest gets full marks etc
AC3 – Air pollution	Only relevant for ICE. Lowest scores highest marks.
AC4 – Zero tailpipe emission capability	Only relevant for ICE. Lowest scores highest marks.
AC5 – Speed limiter	Marks awarded where vehicle has a limiter (not for all vehicles – e.g. Garda patrol cars etc).
AC6 – Battery warranty	Highest marks for longest comprehensive warranty.
AC7 – Noise emissions	Highest marks for vehicles compliant with lowest levels of noise limits. To be validated and proven.

ICT PRODUCTS AND SERVICES (1/4)

General impacts

- Climate change is linked to the energy consumption of ICT products
- Impact on air, water, soil, biodiversity and human health of hazardous substances found in ICT products
- Climate change effects and natural resource depletion linked to manufacturing delivering and disposing of new products
- Specific environmental impact of battery production and end of life, including use of hazardous materials
- Climate change effects and natural resource depletion linked to frequent replacement of ICT products
- Use of fossil fuels and accumulation of plastic waste
- End of life impacts including the release of hazardous substances into the soil, air and water

Data centres

- Electricity consumption of ICT on servers in Data Centres
- Mechanical and electrical system impact in data centres regulating the internal temperature in the centres
- Direct and indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions linked to data centre operations:
 - Electricity consumption
 - Refrigerants
 - Manufacturing of ICT systems
 - Unexploited opportunity for waste heat reuse
- The use of high global warming gases in cooling systems

ICT PRODUCTS AND SERVICES (2/4)

- Public sector can influence the driving of standards.
- GPP covers the purchase or lease of ICT equipment and provision of facilities or services including via the Cloud

Stationery ICT Devices	Mobile ICT Devices	Equipment in the Triple E register
• Desktop computers • All in one computers / integrated desktop computers • Workstations • Computer displays	• Notebook / laptop computers • Two in one notebook / laptops • Mobile thin clients • Tablets • Smartphones	• Rack mounted servers • Enterprise storage equipment • Precise cooling • Centralised direct current power distribution • Power management • Uninterruptible power supply • Blade servers • Enterprise communication equipment • ICT Optimisation solutions



ICT PRODUCTS AND SERVICES (3/4)

General GPP criteria

- Specify ICT products which are highly energy efficient and free of hazardous substances or which contain these in minimal amounts considered to be safe
- Extend product lifespan including through service level agreements, manufacturers warranty, availability of spare parts and repairability of products
- Encourage the supply of refurbished products where possible
- Improve battery endurance and electrical performance and inform users about battery usage
- Require testing for durability (maximise life span)
- Apply criteria for interoperability and reusing of components
- Encourage use of recycled plastic in ICT equipment
- Ensure equipment can be effectively recycled or reused
- Require reporting on end of life destination

Data centre GPP criteria

- Design and construction to achieve high energy efficiency performance
- Requirement highest share of renewable energy possible in the provision of data centre services
- Ensure waste heat reuse (in building / district heating)
- Avoid use of refrigerants with high GWP wherever possible



ICT PRODUCTS AND SERVICES (4/4)

Evaluating life cycle costs in ICT & Data Centres

- A spreadsheet to assist with life cycle costing is available here: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm
- The tool should be adapted to suit the needs of the CA

SAMPLE — MOBILE PHONES

- You have to pick from 35 technical specs, 15 award criteria and 4 contract performance criteria.

Tech specs	Award criteria	Contract Performance Criteria
Production compliance w standards Battery endurance Warranties Spare part availability Design for repair Battery performance Eco-design End-of-life service Drop testing Standardised ports	Production compliance w standards Battery endurance Life-cycle costs Additional warranty Durability testing Recyclability (all parts & coatings) Env impact of deliveries Refurbished / remanufactured equipment (battery & power and external power criteria)	SLA reporting Environmental performance End destination of equipment Refurbished equipment



FOOD AND CATERING SERVICES (1/3)

- Agriculture is responsible for 10.3% of EU GHG emissions, 70% of these come from the animal sector
- Meat and dairy production are high in water use, impact on land and similar in effect to palm oil and soya
- Agriculture is the primary driver of species collapse and biodiversity loss in every part of the world
- Food waste is a large part of this impact (20% of food in the EU is wasted with sub-sectors like schools and hospitals wasting up to 65%)
- Life cycle analysis shows transport is a very small part of the carbon intensity
- In Ireland, agriculture accounts for 34% of emissions (2018) compared to 21% for transport and 20% for energy. It is expected to hit 38% by 2030
- Agri-food accounts for 7% of GDP, 9.8% of exports, 8.5% of employment and 67% of all land usage

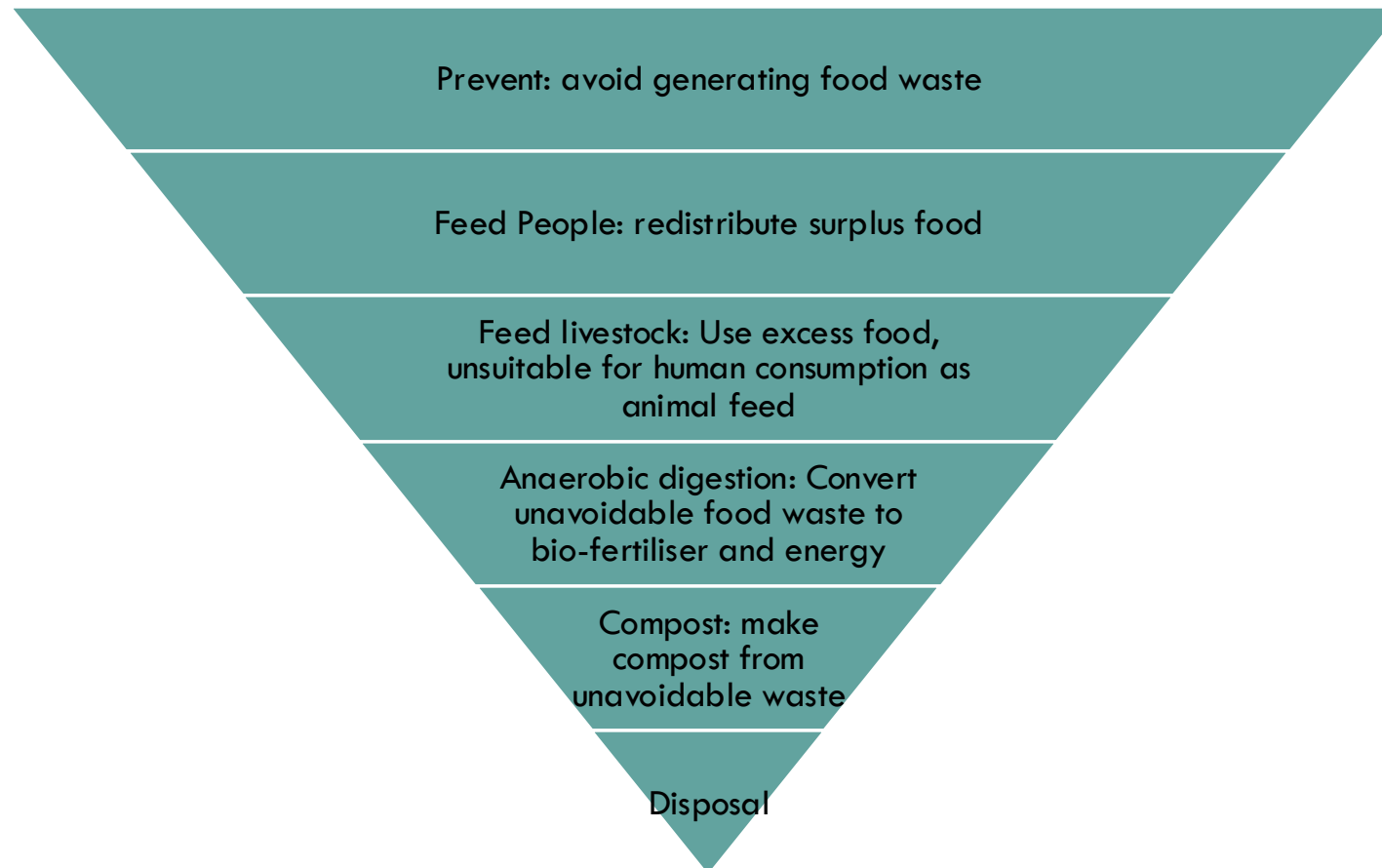
FOOD AND CATERING SERVICES (2/3)

- Tenders should consider the below

Summary of Irish GPP criteria for Food and Catering		
	Procurement of sustainable food and beverages	Procurement of catering services
Selection of criteria	Food safety management systems	Environmental competence
Technical specifications	Sustainable meat, poultry, eggs, fruits & veg, Organic food products, sustainable marine products, food packaging, egg production methods, environmentally responsible vegetable fats	Plant based menus, provision of tap water, food and beverage waste prevention, general waste prevention, disposal of food waste and FOGs, recycling and residual waste, service items and consumables, energy and water use, transport, cooking appliances, dishwashers, refrigeration
Award criteria	Additional organic food products Egg production methods Meat and dairy production Fair and ethical trade products	Food procurement, environmental innovation, cleaning consumables, chemical products for hand washing, dishwashing and cleaning, kitchen roll and paper, low and zero emission delivery vehicles, reduction of transport emissions through logistics and route planning
Contract performance clauses	Evidence of compliance with environmental requirements	Environmental reporting and audits, staff training, record of food purchases, purchase of new kitchen equipment, food and beverage redistribution, delivery vehicles and transport plan



FOOD AND CATERING SERVICES (3/3)



CLEANING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- This area is often overlooked for sustainability
- Impacts on workers as well as the environment
- GPP criteria focus on:
 - Raw material use, manufacturing, transport and disposal of cleaning supplies and packaging
 - Climate change and air, water and soil pollution linked to chemicals used in cleaning products
 - Risks to human and animal health from cleaning chemicals
 - Energy and water consumption during cleaning operations
 - Wastewater discharge
 - Sorting of waste for recycling, composting or energy recovery

Focus on:

- Reduction in product usage and packaging by environmentally conscious cleaning methods
- Use of eco-labelled cleaning products, accessories (e.g. microfibre cloths) and consumables (e.g. paper products) with lower environmental impact
- Training of staff in water and waste management
- Use of concentrated products and correct dilution practices
- Use of energy-efficient vacuum cleaners



DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & MGT OF OFFICE BUILDINGS (1/3)

- Construction of and use of buildings accounts for half of all materials extracted from the earth, consumes 40% of all energy, a third of all water and generates a third of all waste
- All member states in EU are committed to new buildings meeting nearly zero energy building standards
- For all major renovations (more than 25% of a building) an energy performance level of B2 must be achieved
- GPP criteria impact on and must consider the following areas:
 - How the design team and contractors are selected
 - The performance requirements for the building and how they are reflected in the detailed design
 - Strip out, demolition and site preparation works
 - Building construction or major renovation works
 - Lighting, heating and energy related products
 - Completion and handover
 - Facilities management



DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & MGT OF OFFICE BUILDINGS (2/3)

- All works projects need to consider life-cycle analysis, state of the art technology and circular economy considerations like
 - Recycled concrete
 - Recovery of demolition waste
 - Use of building management systems
 - Low or zero energy sources
- Energy efficient design (ISO 50001) and Excellence in Energy Efficiency Design (EXEED) should be specified as requirements for the certification of the buildings
- The OPW is examining how timber can be used more in construction in line with Art 51 of the Climate Action Plan
- Fixtures, fittings and furniture account for 30% or more of the embodied GHG in offices over a 40 year period – moving to a circular approach to design and fitout can reduce this dramatically (reusing existing materials / products)

DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & MGT OF OFFICE BUILDINGS (3/3)

Climate Action plan actions:

- Rollout of support scheme for renewable heat
- Phase out of fossil fuel heating systems such as oil & gas
- Promote use of heat pumps or other renewable heating
- Improve and increase energy labelling on homes and public buildings
- New ways of delivering deeper and more effective energy upgrades
- Raise energy standards to NZEB including within supply chain, methods, software
- Rollout and development of district heating

Level S Framework

- Level S promotes lifecycle thinking for building using core sustainability indicators, tested with and by the building sector, to measure carbon, materials, water, health and comfort, climate change impacts. It takes lifecycle costs into account
- New EU GPP criteria for office buildings and schools based on Level S are expected (new build and renovations)
- Level S is an open-source standard that is freely available to anyone in the sector to examine

LIGHTING

- Lighting units and controls are in the SEAI triple E register so public bodies can only purchase triple E rated items. These are items specifically designed to provide high efficiency in interior / exterior lighting
- GPP covers the procurement of lighting audits, lighting units, controls, road lighting and traffic signals
- Pretender engagement and market consultation is considered important to ensure the specifications reflect requirements and the latest market technology so the most energy efficient solutions are being sought
- The choice of contract can be audit, design, installation and/or maintenance – it could be one for all these requirements or it could be four separate contracts
- Major cost drivers include installation costs, energy consumption during lifetime, maintenance & cleaning costs, replacement of lighting sources and cost of disposal of light sources
- Cost savings of up to 85% over 15 years available with higher levels of CO2 savings
- Additional information and tools on the GPP site



PUBLIC LIGHTING — KILKENNY CC & OTHERS

Link to tender documents [here](#).

This tender was led by Kilkenny County Council on behalf of Carlow, Meath, Louth, Tipperary County Council, Offaly, Kildare, Wicklow, Westmeath and Kilkenny.

The tender is a public lighting energy efficiency project across these regions.

The retrofit entails switching 205,000 public lights to LED. Once complete, the project is set to reduce CO2 emissions by 20,000 tonnes each year, reduce energy and maintenance costs by 55% while saving the local authorities €12m in energy and maintenance costs annually (source [here](#)).



HEATING EQUIPMENT (1/2)

- GPP focuses on:
 - Gas, electric and solid fuel boilers including biomass boilers and cogeneration equipment
 - Water heating
 - Electric and fuel-driven heat pumps
 - Steam systems
 - Solar thermal collectors
- Action 60 of CAP calls for the banning of oil boilers from 2022 and gas boilers from 2025
- The triple E register and EU Energy Labels govern this area with A+++ as the most efficient energy label and G as the least efficient
- Eco-design regulations set requirements for energy efficiency, nitrogen oxide emissions levels, volume for storage water heaters, heat losses from water tanks

HEATING EQUIPMENT (2/2)

Environmental impacts of heating

- Energy consumption during its usage
- Emission of GHGs due to emissions
- Sub-optimal performance due to mal usage or maintenance
- Air emissions during in-use phase
- Noise during usage

GPP addresses this by:

- Specify minimum energy efficiency levels, ensure compliance with eco-design principles and correct installations and commissions
- Awarding marks for products with lower GHG and pollutant emissions and use of refrigerants with lower global warming potential
- Requiring comprehensive user instructions to be provided with products and contract clauses to ensure contractor is responsible for ongoing environmental performance
- Awarding marks for products with noise emissions below set limits

ENERGY RELATED PRODUCTS

- GPP covers products via EU Eco-design regulations and Energy Label regulations including:
 - Air conditioners
 - Residential ventilation units
 - Cooking appliances (professional and household)
 - Dishwashers (professional and household)
 - Electronic displays and televisions
 - Refrigerating appliances (professional, household and vending machines)
 - Washing machines and tumble dryers (professional and household)
 - Vacuum cleaners
- Irish GPP incorporates the Triple E register and Energy Efficiency Regulations
- Lifecycle costs to be considered in criteria along with reparability of products and spare parts

What to do:

- Select products subject to Ecolabel standards
- If there are no Ecolabels for a product, ensure they meet energy efficiency benchmarks laid out in the regulations
- For office ICT equipment, only buy products that comply with the minimum requirements set out in the Energy Star Programme (also see IEE 1680 standards and EPEAT labels)
- Purchase tyres that comply with fuel efficiency classes defined in EC Regulation 1222/2009
- For service contracts ensure products bought by suppliers meet requirements like ecolabels / EEE
- Purchase / lease buildings that with the minimum energy performance standards

PAPER PRODUCTS AND PRINTING

GPP aiming to address:

- Destruction of forest and loss of biodiversity / climate impact from unsustainable timber harvesting
- Emissions to air and water during pulp and paper production, conversion and printing
- Energy consumption during pulp and paper production, conversion and printing
- Water consumption during pulp and paper production
- Landfill due to failure to recycle paper products, especially where products also contain non-paper elements

Recommended actions

- Ensure paper is from legally, safely harvested timber
- Promote the appropriate use of recycled paper products
- Reduce emissions to water, air and soil during production
- Promote energy efficient production of paper products
- Reduce environmental damage or risks linked to hazardous chemicals
- Promote responsible waste management for print and stationery products
- Ensure staff are trained (in-house or print partners) on efficient paper usage

Note 1: paper certification varies

Note 2: EU Ecolabels address water, energy & chemicals



TEXTILES

GPP textile focus is on:

- Textile clothing and accessories (uniforms, PPE and accessories that are 80% textile fibres)
- Interior textiles: products for interior use consist of at least 80% textiles (bed linen, table linen and curtains)
- Textile fibres, yarn, fabric and knitted panels: intermediate products intended for use in textile clothing and accessories and interior textiles including upholstery fabric and mattress ticking prior to the application of backings and treatments for a final product
- Non-fibre elements: intermediate products that are incorporated into clothing, accessories and interior textiles. This includes zips, buttons, membranes, coatings and laminates that form part of the structure of clothing or textile products
- Textile fibres include natural fibres, synthetic fibres and man-made cellulose fibres

Criteria

- The EU has detailed criteria for textile products and services
- Consult staff to ensure proposals are fit for purpose
- Examine the care requirements and consider stain resistance, water absorption etc.
- Consider the fibre sourcing, chemical restrictions, durability & lifespan, energy conservation during use and has reusable / recyclable the materials are

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

This is the third largest category of expenditure at 14% of the total in Ireland. The focus should be on identifying and rewarding enhanced environmental offers. All criteria should be linked to the subject matter of the contract and avoid generalities

- In selection criteria: this could entail seeking details of environmental management systems and it could be scored rather than pass/fail. Evidence of the ability to manage their impact on the environment should come through and examples of how this was done on prior contracts can be sought
- In technical specifications: steps can be taken to limit travel or specify public transport/walking/cycling, the avoidance of printed material, evaluating environmental criteria in advance, specifying energy efficiency of materials if/where relevant
- In award criteria: give marks for proposals to address the environmental impact of services which deliver measurable reductions in emissions, energy or resource usage. The CA can propose measures or let the supplier propose them. They become part of the contract
- In contract performance clauses: include performance objectives and reporting requirements to demonstrate progress in reducing consumption of resources

CASE STUDY 1 — SELECTION CRITERIA

In this scenario, the professional service provider does not opine upon or provide advice that environmental criteria are core to.

It is appropriate therefore to seek information on their environmental management systems.

- Questions can be asked about accreditation standards you can look for copies of their (in-house) system at short notice. You can ask about how they manage their suppliers and their carbon intense purchasing.
- Depending on the level of detail provided and the volume of responses received, on a relative and comparative basis, this can be enough to exclude some participants from a tender process.

CASE STUDY 2 — AWARD CRITERIA

In this scenario, the green criteria are specifically relevant to the material substance of the tender. Examples could include:

- Approach to designing an environmentally efficient hosting environment for an IT system or website
- Approach to using energy efficient, recycled and low carbon materials in building design
- Competence and knowledge of sustainability as it relates to the performance of internal audit reviews

PURCHASING ELECTRICITY

Public sector is responsible for 16% of electricity consumption in Ireland as at 2020

- OGP frameworks are used to centrally purchase electricity. Public bodies can buy 100% green energy in a mix that is managed between imported renewable energy and renewable energy on demand in Ireland.
- The more the public sector buys renewable energy, the more viable these sources become
- Microgeneration can also help via Solar PV or similar



5. CLARIFICATIONS, TRANSPARENCY, AND AUDIT-READY RECORDS

MANAGING CLARIFICATIONS COMPLIANTLY

- **Establish a single clarification channel:** require all tender queries to be submitted through eTenders or the designated procurement portal. Avoid substantive communications through personal email, telephone calls or informal meetings.
- **Set clear rules and deadlines:** state the clarification deadline, expected response arrangements and the authority's right to circulate anonymised questions and answers to all tenderers.
- **Apply equal treatment:** provide all tenderers with the same material information at the same time. If a response could affect how tenders are prepared, issue it to everyone—not only the tenderer that raised the question.
- **Protect confidentiality:** remove the tenderer's identity and commercially sensitive information before publishing a clarification. Do not withhold information merely because a tenderer has labelled it confidential; assess whether disclosure is necessary for a fair competition.

MANAGING CLARIFICATIONS COMPLIANTLY

- **Answer clearly and consistently:** ensure responses are approved by the appropriate procurement and technical personnel. Avoid answers that contradict or informally amend the procurement documents.
- **Issue formal amendments:** where a clarification changes a requirement, timetable, pricing basis, evaluation approach or contract term, issue a clearly identified corrigendum or revised document. Do not use a clarification response to make a hidden material change.
- **Extend deadlines where necessary:** allow sufficient additional time where new information or an amendment could materially affect tender preparation.
- **Maintain version control:** use unique document names, version numbers and issue dates. Identify superseded documents and state expressly which version tenderers must use.
- **Keep a clarification register:** record:
 - Date and time received;
 - Tenderer reference;
 - Question raised;
 - Internal owner;
 - Approved response;
 - Date and method of publication;
 - Whether an amendment or deadline extension resulted; and
 - Any confidentiality decision.

MANAGING CLARIFICATIONS COMPLIANTLY

- **Preserve the complete portal record:** retain published notices, tender documents, clarification messages, responses, amendments, access records, submission receipts and relevant system timestamps.
- **Document material decisions:** maintain contemporaneous notes explaining decisions such as refusing a requested change, accepting alternative evidence, extending a deadline or determining that information is confidential.
- **Manage pre-closing clarifications separately from post-submission clarifications:** after the deadline, seek clarification only where legally permissible. Clarification should explain or confirm an existing tender, not permit a tenderer to submit a materially improved or substantially new offer.
- **Control post-submission communications:** issue requests in writing, specify exactly what must be clarified, impose the same response deadline in comparable circumstances and retain both the request and response.



MANAGING CLARIFICATIONS COMPLIANTLY

- **Avoid unequal assistance:** do not advise an individual tenderer how to satisfy a requirement or repair its tender. Where ambiguity originates in the authority's documents and affects the competition generally, address it consistently for all participants.
- **Maintain an audit trail of evaluation-related clarifications:** record why clarification was necessary, the legal and procedural basis for allowing it, who approved it and how the response affected—or did not affect—the evaluation.
- **Use declarations of interest and controlled access:** record evaluator conflicts, confidentiality undertakings, document access and any changes to the evaluation team.
- **Complete a procurement-file checklist:** before award, confirm that the file contains the approval to procure, notices, all document versions, clarifications, amendments, submissions, opening record, evaluation material, approvals and the reasons for material decisions.



6. WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES

WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS

- **Mobilisation:** confirm the sustainability commitments made in the successful tender, agree responsibilities, establish baselines and finalise the evidence and reporting arrangements.
- **Contract-management plan:** translate commitments into specific actions, owners, milestones, KPIs and reporting dates. Sustainability should be a standing part of the contract-management agenda.
- **Performance monitoring:** review agreed measures such as energy use, emissions, waste, recycled content, transport impacts, packaging, repair, reuse and end-of-life arrangements, depending on the contract.

WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS

- **Proportionate evidence:** require only evidence needed to demonstrate performance, using existing supplier data where possible. Accept appropriate equivalent evidence rather than insisting unnecessarily on particular certificates.
- **Regular performance reviews:** discuss results, emerging risks and opportunities at scheduled supplier meetings. Compare actual performance against the baseline, targets and tender commitments.
- **Corrective action:** where performance falls below the contractual standard, agree a time-bound improvement plan with named actions, responsible persons and follow-up dates. Apply contractual remedies where necessary.

WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS

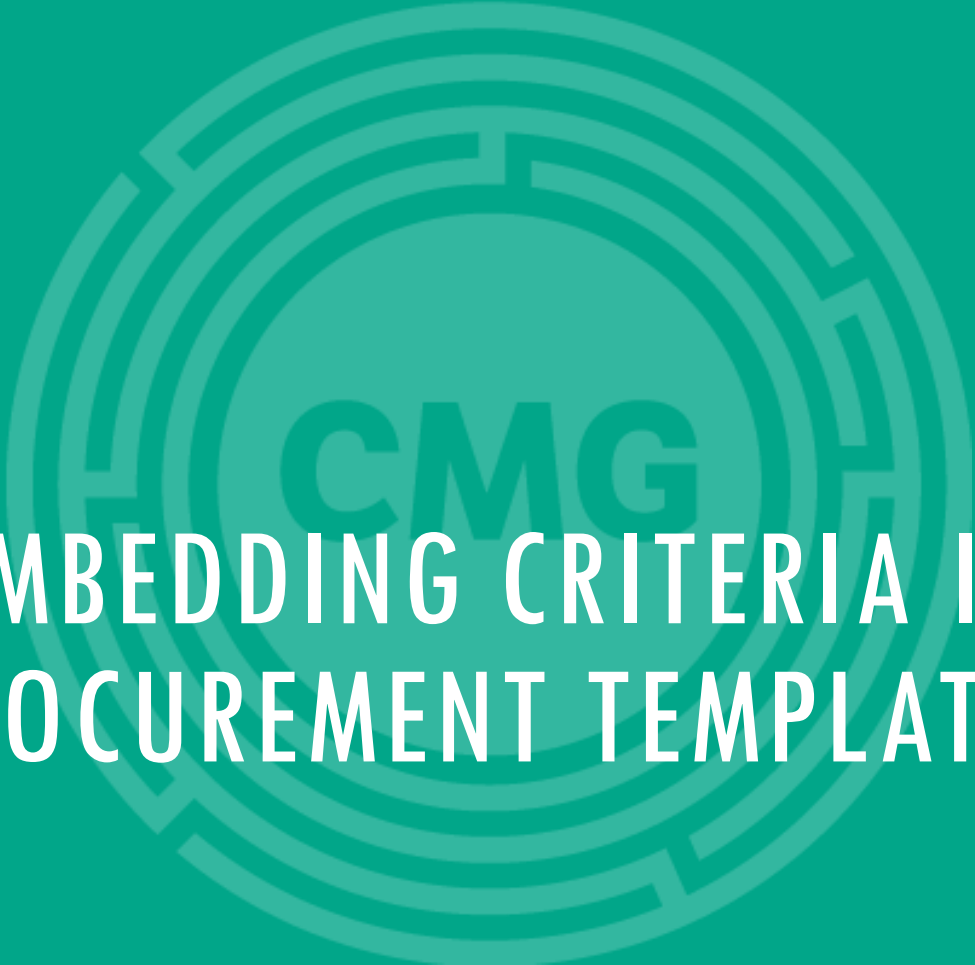
- **Supplier development:** where appropriate, help suppliers understand reporting expectations, calculation methodologies and the authority's environmental priorities—particularly where smaller suppliers have limited reporting capacity.
- **Supply-chain engagement:** require the principal supplier to engage relevant subcontractors and provide consolidated performance information where the contract permits this.
- **Recognition and incentives:** where included in the contract, use gain-sharing, extensions, performance payments or other lawful incentives to encourage performance beyond minimum requirements. Do not introduce material post-award benefits that were absent from the competition.

WORKING WITH SUPPLIERS

- **Governance and escalation:** distinguish minor reporting failures from persistent or material environmental non-performance and apply a clear escalation route.
- **Change control:** document any agreed sustainability improvement and ensure it does not materially alter the contract or breach the applicable contract-modification rules.
- **Contract close-out:** verify final performance, capture environmental outcomes and lessons learned, and use the evidence to improve specifications, criteria and KPIs in the next procurement.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEGOTIATING WITH SUPPLIERS

- What are you negotiating / discussing and how does it relate to the tender and contract?
- What are the likely objectives of each party? What negotiating style are the opposite side likely to take?
- What is the opponent's BATNA (Best Alternative To No Agreement) and their resistance points to our positions?
- What skills / knowledge do the other side bring to the table (negotiating / deal making skills; legal, financial or technical expertise; neutrality/facilitative role)?
- What interests or interest groups do members of the team represent?
- What is the level of authority of the opposing side (high or low – the latter being higher risk where a hard bargain is driven)?



7. EMBEDDING CRITERIA INTO PROCUREMENT TEMPLATES

EMBEDDING GPP INTO TEMPLATES & PROCESSES

- Build GPP prompts into standard business case, Preliminary Project Brief and RFT/ITT templates so criteria are considered by default, not as an afterthought
- Corporate Procurement Plans should name the categories where GPP criteria will be used and commit to using GPP Criteria Search
- Standardise verification/evidence requirements in template clause libraries (declarations, certificates, ecolabels)
- Use central purchasing arrangements where available – Circular 17/2025 requires all new central arrangements to include contract-specific GPP criteria, where possible
- Build LCC spreadsheets/templates directly into tender documentation packs for relevant categories
- Train staff on how to identify, user and apply green criteria
- Ensure green criteria are used holistically and proportionately

EMBEDDING GPP INTO TEMPLATES & PROCESSES

- **Introduce a “comply or explain” control:** where national GPP criteria are available, the procurement file must identify the criteria used or contain an approved, reasoned justification for their omission.
- **Create a GPP applicability assessment:** include a short checklist covering contract category, principal environmental impacts, applicable guidance, market maturity, SME impact, proportionality and proposed verification.
- **Assign responsibility and approval:** identify who selects the criteria, who validates their proportionality and who approves departures from the relevant national criteria.
- **Create category-specific template modules:** develop pre-approved clauses for recurring categories rather than relying on one generic sustainability clause. Each module should include specifications, award criteria, evidence requirements, contract conditions and KPIs.

EMBEDDING GPP INTO TEMPLATES & PROCESSES

Separate requirements by procurement stage - templates should distinguish clearly between:

- Technical specifications
- Selection criteria
- Award criteria
- Life-cycle costing
- Contract-performance conditions and
- Contract-management KPIs.

Require a subject-matter and proportionality statement: for each material criterion, record the environmental impact addressed, its connection to the contract and why the level imposed is reasonable.

Build preliminary market consultation into the process where required: require consultation where criteria are novel, demanding, costly or potentially restrictive. Consultation should test market capacity, SME impact, acceptable evidence and likely cost implications.

EMBEDDING GPP INTO TEMPLATES & PROCESSES

Use outcome-based drafting: specify the environmental performance required rather than prescribing a particular technology, brand or production method unless objectively necessary.

Provide for equivalent evidence: standard clauses should state when equivalent standards, certificates, ecolabels or other supporting evidence will be accepted and how equivalence will be assessed.

Align the evaluation documents: ensure every scored green criterion has:

- A clear response requirement;
- A disclosed scoring methodology;
- Defined evidence expectations;
- Appropriate weighting; and
- A corresponding contractual commitment where relevant.

EMBEDDING GPP INTO TEMPLATES & PROCESSES

- **Avoid double counting:** template guidance should prevent the same environmental feature being rewarded under several award criteria unless each criterion assesses a genuinely distinct benefit.
- **Make commitments contractually enforceable:** transfer successful tender commitments into the contract, implementation plan, mobilisation requirements, KPIs and reporting schedule.
- **Develop proportionate contract-management templates:** include reporting frequency, data definitions, baselines, targets, audit rights, corrective-action procedures and remedies appropriate to the contract's value and environmental risk.
- **Include SME safeguards:** require procurement teams to consider whether certifications, data-reporting obligations, minimum thresholds or recurring reporting costs could unnecessarily restrict SME participation.
- **Capture data once:** configure procurement initiation forms and trackers to record applicable GPP guidance, criteria used, reasons for omission, eForms entries, social-enterprise awards and EPA/SEAI reporting information.

EMBEDDING GPP INTO TEMPLATES & PROCESSES

- **Introduce stage-gate reviews:** do not permit publication until the GPP assessment, specifications, verification, evaluation method and contract provisions have been checked for consistency.
- **Maintain a controlled clause library:** give clauses an owner, category, source, date of approval and review date so that outdated criteria are withdrawn when EPA, EU or sectoral guidance changes.
- **Undertake post-contract review:** record whether the criteria worked, whether evidence was practical, what additional costs arose and whether the promised environmental outcomes were achieved. Feed the results back into future templates.

LIFE CYCLE COSTING

- Is Life Cycle Costing (LCC) appropriate
- Liaise with users and potential suppliers in market consultation pre tender
- Identify the main financial and environmental costs
- Develop a method that captures this (spreadsheets may be done by GPP)
- Set the evaluation period (e.g. for a three year period) and other parameters (reductions sought)
- Identify the data that must be supplied by suppliers to validate this
- Include spreadsheet with RFT for LCC evaluation
- Evaluate compare and assign marks based on LCC
- Include data from LCC spreadsheet in contract terms

LIFE CYCLE COSTING

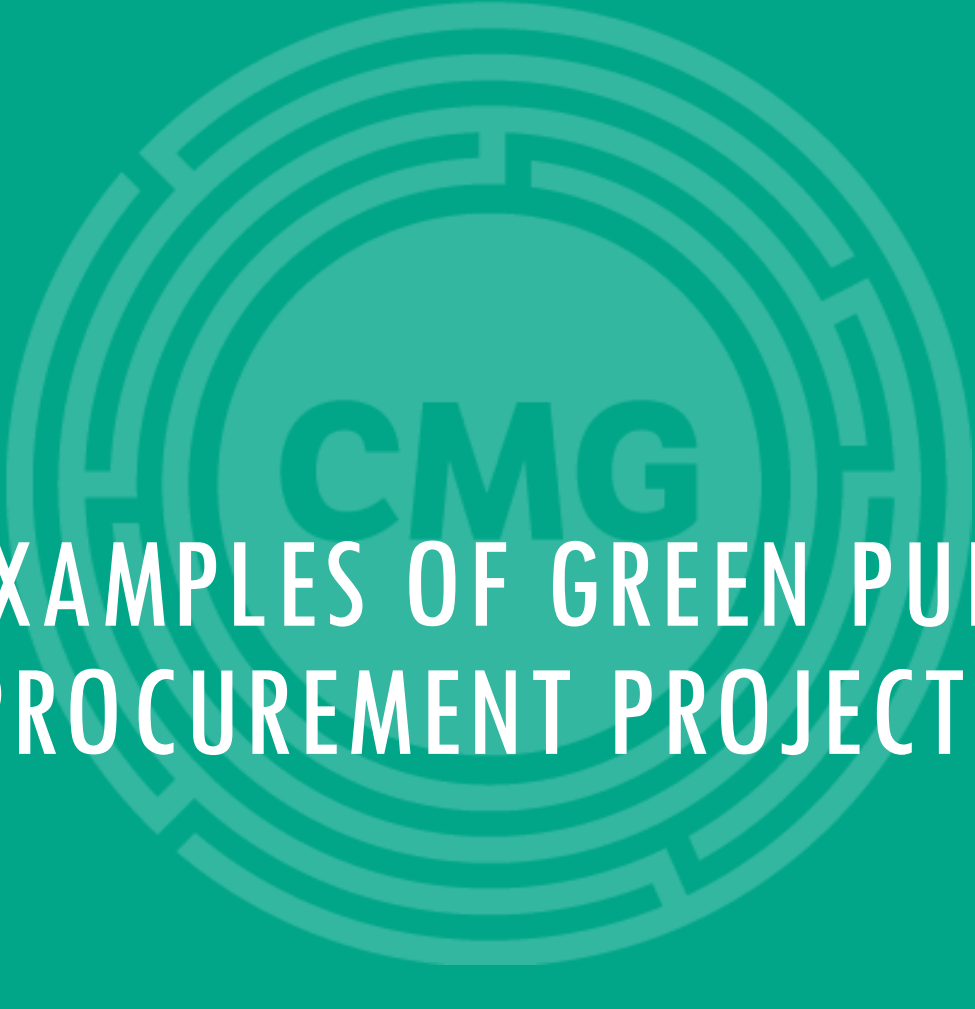
Typical definition is:

- Cost of purchasing item +
- Cost of managing / running / consuming item +
- Cost of disposal where relevant.

= Total Cost of Ownership

Visit GPP sites for LCC templates

S.I. 284/2016 requires award on Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), which can account for whole life-cycle costs, not just acquisition cost. Circular 17/2025 now mandates whole life-cycle costing for ALL works contracts under the Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF)



8. EXAMPLES OF GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROJECTS

USE OF SOCIAL CLAUSES IN PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

- Wallonia is a French-speaking region with legislative and executive powers within the Belgian federal state, with a population of 3.658 million (01/01/2022). Since 1996 the region has had a long history in the use of social clauses in public works contracts and is one of the first regions in Europe that developed a system to monitor their use.
- The Walloon Government imposed, within the framework of the 'first Alliance Employment-Environment', the obligation to integrate social clauses in construction works contracts with a value above €1.5 million. A circular dated 21 July 2016 lowered this ceiling to €1 million, below which any contracting authority remains free to voluntarily insert social clauses in its works contracts.
- Large government, industry and civil society network was established to drive this.

USE OF SOCIAL CLAUSES IN PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

The social clauses foreseen for works contracts aim at achieving different social objectives:

- Promoting the socio-professional integration of job seekers, apprentices or persons with disabilities.
- Fostering the contracting authority's social responsibility, by contributing to the fight against unemployment, the socio-professional integration of young people, disadvantaged/fragile groups.
- Allowing construction companies to find an answer to the recruitment difficulties they sometimes face.
- Reinforcing traditional companies' social responsibility, through the collaboration with social economy enterprises and/or by training job seekers or apprentices on the job.

Wallonia region defined two types of social clauses to be included in contract performance conditions:

- The training clause: obligation for the contractor to train job seekers or apprentices during the execution of the contract, for a number of hours defined in the tender documents.
- The flexible clause: obligation for the contractor either to train job seekers or apprentices for a number of hours or to subcontract to a work integration social enterprise (WISE) a percentage of the contract value awarded.

USE OF SOCIAL CLAUSES IN PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

- An innovative feature introduced in Wallonia to counteract the injection of the cost of training into the price offer, and consequently an effect on competition, is the integration of a reimbursement item entitled 'social clause training service'. At the end of the contract, the contracting authority calculates an amount to be reimbursed to the contractor based on the hours of training carried out and according to a pre-established hourly cost indicated in the specifications.

Table 1

Social clauses indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of contracts awarded which include a social clause	122	186	287	349	405	491
Value of contracts awarded which include a social clause	n.a.	312.170.547,27 €	398.660.418,44 €	551.421.448,54 €	602.412.164,20 €	740.482.472,00 €
Number of interns/apprentices trained in the execution of work contracts	95	214	410	583	696	856
Number of contracts concluded with WISEs	20	39	75	83	131	147

Source: Wallonie Service Public (Décembre 2021), *Clauses sociales dans les marchés publics de travaux. Rapport de mise en œuvre données au 31/12/2021*, p. 3

USE OF SOCIAL CLAUSES IN PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

The process developed for the inclusion of social clauses in public works contracts has brought the following benefits:

- Tackling shortages in the construction sector: the use of social clauses in the performance of works contracts allows recruiting trainees and workforce from a disadvantaged background. According to Forem (Employment Agency) figures for 2021, 97% of the trainees involved in the execution of such works' contracts have been trained in workstations where there is staff shortage or critical availability.
- Consolidating collaborations between traditional companies and social economy enterprises, both in the framework of public contracts and in bilateral relations: the number of contracts concluded with WISEs increased from 20 in 2016 to 147 in 2021.

Distribution by gender of beneficiaries of social clauses in public works contracts confirms that construction is a heavily male dominated sector. In 2021, 91% of trainees were men, while 2% were women and the remaining 7% is unknown.

BUILDING NET-ZERO ENERGY INNOVATION

- Prague is the capital and largest city in the Czech Republic, as well as the regular seat of its central authorities. It is home to about 1.3 million people. The Supreme Audit Office (SAO) of the Czech Republic (or NKÚ in Czech) is an independent constitutional entity who supervises the management of the state property and of the state budget. The SAO decided to terminate the office building lease from its commercial provider and build its first permanent headquarters reusing a brownfield site in the centre of Prague. “The SAO had strived for a longer time to acquire its own head office that would be worthy of SAO’s status as an independent constitutional institution”.
- By having their permanent seat, the SAO aims to better ensure the fulfilment of its legal obligations in the area of security, sustainability and environmental protection.
- The building will also host the Parliamentary Library, the Archive of the Chamber of Deputies (part of the Czech Parliament), a depositary capacity for archival documents and collections, as well as appropriate premises for the presentation of those documents to the public.
- The concept of the building should tackle:
 - Accessibility, flexibility and adaptability of the spaces.
 - Floor designed to allow easy access to utilities (power-line communication).
 - Modularity with regard to utilities’ control and replacement.



BUILDING NET-ZERO ENERGY INNOVATION

From the start, the SAO was driven by the ambition to build a net-zero energy building with the lowest life-cycle costs and the longest service life. Academic experts from the Czech Technical University (CTU) identified and developed a specific method for assessing the building service life and maintenance costs.

The project set high requirements for the effective and economic operation of the building. Pushing for innovation in the Czech procurement context, the SAO decided to use a combination of tools such as FIDIC Yellow Book for Design-Build, and Building Information Modelling (BIM)³ for the evaluation of life cycle costs of the building.

BUILDING NET-ZERO ENERGY INNOVATION

In total, three tenders were published: one for the principal architect, one for the civil engineering company and one for the construction company.

Among the main tasks of each, the principal architect was in charge of the initial design, documentation for the permits, preparation for the interior and the final certificate of the building. The engineer was the mediator between the contracting authority and the supplier, worked as project manager for the design and implementation phase, facility manager and cost manager. As for the contractors, they were responsible for the project documents for various stages of the project using BIM.

The tenders for the architect and the civil engineer company were evaluated based on the most economically advantageous tender: 50 points were given to the quality criterion and 50 points to the cost criterion. Both tenders did not include sustainability award criteria. But quality award criteria were set to assess the experience of the architect with regard to design using Building Information Modelling, as well as according to function and performance, a model called Design-Build that allows focusing on function, rather than on descriptive technical requirements. The quality of the civil engineering company was evaluated based among others on their capacity to provide BIM coordination services.

A single design and build approach was used to conduct the tender.



BUILDING NET-ZERO ENERGY INNOVATION

Environmental benefits were achieved during the construction process:

- Recycled concrete from the previous structures on site (approx. 100 m³)
- Sand from the construction pit used for the construction itself (approx. 8,000 m³)
- Using a concrete facility on the nearby riverbank (with raw materials being transported by water)
- The sustainable construction brought savings of 22,5 tons CO₂ (the figure was calculated and provided by the contractor and tackled issues of emissions transport connected to construction materials i.e. difference between transport of gravel from specified storage to the construction site via vehicles or via ships).
- Wireless light-control saved wiring material.

BUILDING NET-ZERO ENERGY INNOVATION

Environmental benefits to be gained as a result of the design phase using BIM:

- The building will consume a very low amount of energy (almost net-zero consumption)
- Smart heating-cooling system using thermo-hydraulic solutions. The system will be supplemented by heat recovery, stored in summer season
- By determining the ratio between the glazed and fixed part of the façade, i.e. between temperature gains and losses, supplemented by external centrally controlled blinds, the light and thermal quality of the indoor environment can be optimised, saving energy, money and reducing the amount of pollutant that would otherwise be produced during energy production.
- Green roofs will benefit the top floors, will bring additional thermal insulation and will also be beneficial for neighbouring buildings.

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING OF PRODUCTS FOR EVENTS

- The Hague is one of the four largest municipalities in the Netherlands with approximately 525,000 inhabitants. The municipality of The Hague wants to shape the City's sustainability and set an example including by pursuing a sustainable purchasing policy.
- The city is working towards becoming a climate-neutral municipality by 2030. In the coalition agreement 2018-2022 'City of opportunities and ambitions', sustainability is one of the key themes. In addition to environmental issues, The Hague's policy on sustainable procurement pays a lot of attention to Social Return, SME-friendliness, and innovation.
- The Hague 2016 Policy Rules on Social Return position Social Return as an instrument that gives shape to social objectives through municipal procurement policy. The municipality does this by strategically combining objectives, and by using purchasing power to realise social and economic objectives together with entrepreneurs. In this way, the city provides additional employment opportunities for people distant from the labour market. It also provides companies with advice on how to implement the Social Return aspect in their tenders and helps them in finding personnel belonging to the Social Return target group.

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING OF PRODUCTS FOR EVENTS

- Various teams within the municipality of The Hague are responsible for facilitating events and meetings, such as receptions, dinners, openings, and lunch buffets. If their own stock of materials for such events is insufficient or unavailable, they hire additional materials from a supplier. These include chairs, bar stools, screens and tableware. The events and meetings vary in size, duration and number of visitors; thus, the size of the supply can vary enormously.
- The municipality currently has several suppliers for the provision of these materials. With this tender, the municipality wished to contract a supplier for a five year period.
- In compliance with its policies, the City imposed sustainability requirements in the purchase of materials for events and related services.

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING OF PRODUCTS FOR EVENTS

- The contract was awarded to the tenderer with the most economically advantageous tender, determined on the basis of the best price-quality ratio. The maximum score was 600 for price, and 900 for quality. The price/quality ratio was therefore 40/60.
- The quality criterion included two sub-criteria: a) Sustainability and innovation (maximum 450 points) and b) Services (maximum 450 points).
- Sustainability & Innovation: Tenderers had to describe their role in achieving sustainability and innovation, covering at least the topics listed below and leaving room for other proposals:
 - The choice of materials and products when purchasing new materials;
 - Emission-free transport;
 - Handling of the materials at the end of the depreciation period;
 - Materials used for disposable items;
 - How the tenderer would ensure a sustainable and innovative approach to the implementation of the contract.



SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING OF PRODUCTS FOR EVENTS

For the execution of the contract, the tenderer had to employ people belonging to the following categories for an amount equal to at least 5% of the value of the contract:

- Persons registered as unemployed jobseekers, irrespective of being recipients of benefits or not;
- Persons with an occupational disability benefit;
- Persons suffering from physical, mental or intellectual disability who fall under the scope of the law for social work;
- Students who are looking for an internship or workplace;
- Persons performing sheltered work as referred to in the Work and Assistance Act;
- Persons who have accepted employment with the contractor less than 12 months prior to the conclusion of the contract and who previously belonged to one of the aforementioned categories may also be placed under the scheme.

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING OF PRODUCTS FOR EVENTS

The contracting authority received seven technical offers, from small and medium enterprises based in The Hague and the surrounding area. During the procurement phase, there were no significant questions from bidders concerning the environmental and social aspects. However, the contracting authority found it difficult to verify bidders' claims in relation to the fulfilment of social and environmental criteria.

The successful tenderer was David van Schie, whose offer got maximum points (450) against the sustainability and innovation criterion. Among the other bidders, one got 360 points, three got 270 points and two got 180 points. The economic offer of David van Schie was not the best, the tender was successful because it scored very high with reference to the sustainability and innovation criterion.



SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING OF PRODUCTS FOR EVENTS

- Materials and choice of products when buying new materials. When buying furniture, it mostly buys wood, steel, aluminium or zinc materials because they can be repaired (as opposed to plastics). It buys linen produced in Europe, and of high quality to ensure a long life. The appliances it uses have the highest available energy label.
- Zero emission transport. All their cars are electric, while vans and trucks have a Euro 6 engine. Drivers are trained to drive in a fuel-efficient way. David van Schie does its best to plan transport in an efficient way, using specific rental software that allows for the most efficient planning and routing.
- Disposal of materials. 65% of materials get a second life (internal reuse or they are sent to another country), and 30% is recycled. They buy glasses from [Rebottled](#), a Dutch company that collects empty wine bottles and transforms them into drinking glasses.
- Use of materials for disposable articles. David van Schie only uses paper cups and wooden stir sticks. 20% of plastics that are used to protect goods during transport is recycled. The other 80% is biodegradable.
- Innovative and sustainable working method. David van Schie sorts its waste into different waste streams. They use energy efficient appliances. Goods are transported in carts and sturdy boxes that are infinitely reusable.



IRISH PRISON SYSTEM — MATTRESS DISPOSAL

Tendered requirements:

- Environmental Criteria set for waste permits, certificates and quality management systems
- Introduced social clause in Award Criteria on the employment of past offenders (worth up to 20% if 3 or more employed and trained)

Results:

- Reduced landfill by 100%, Recycled up to 80% (textiles were recycled to mattresses or to carpet underlay, foams returned into the circular economy, steel springs recycled to steel manufacturers, polymers recycled or made into refuse derived fuel (RDF))
- And four people who had been through the prison system in permanent employment benefiting them, their families and society
- Lower costs to IPS and 2 social enterprises employed

EXAMPLE - VEHICLES

The Ville de Niort (France) has a car procurement strategy, which includes the use of LCC in the procurement process. The criteria used in the last procurement (7 vehicles) were:

- Guarantee and after sales service (25%)
- Car's technical value (15%)
- Car's safety (5%)
- Delivery time (5%)
- Financial and ecological cost (50%)

The cost criteria was calculated as: “total cost per kilometre”, and included the following costs:

- Acquisition cost (including subsidies and taxes)
- Fuel cost (according to the assumption of 7.000 to 10.000 km/year, 10 years lifetime, 95% urban use)
- Maintenance costs (detailed information obtained from the Ville owned garage)
- Environmental cost (monetised according to the Clean Vehicles Directive)

EXAMPLE — RESIDENCES IN HELSINKI



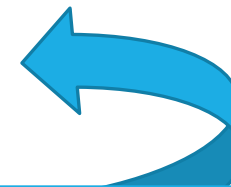
GPP IN PRACTICE, #104, 2021, ASETELMAKATU DB PROJECT

Award Criteria

- Quality: 50% weighting split as follows:
 - Life cycle carbon footprint 14%
 - Energy efficiency 6%
 - Architectural & technical quality 30%
- Price 50%

Spec/Selection Criteria

- Externally verified EMS
- Wooden materials required
- Energy spec to be $<75 \text{ kWhE/m}^2$
- Use renewable energy, including solar
- Heating control to ref external temperatures and forecasts
- Design must favour sustainable solutions and materials
- Construction to be implemented in a fossil fuel free manner



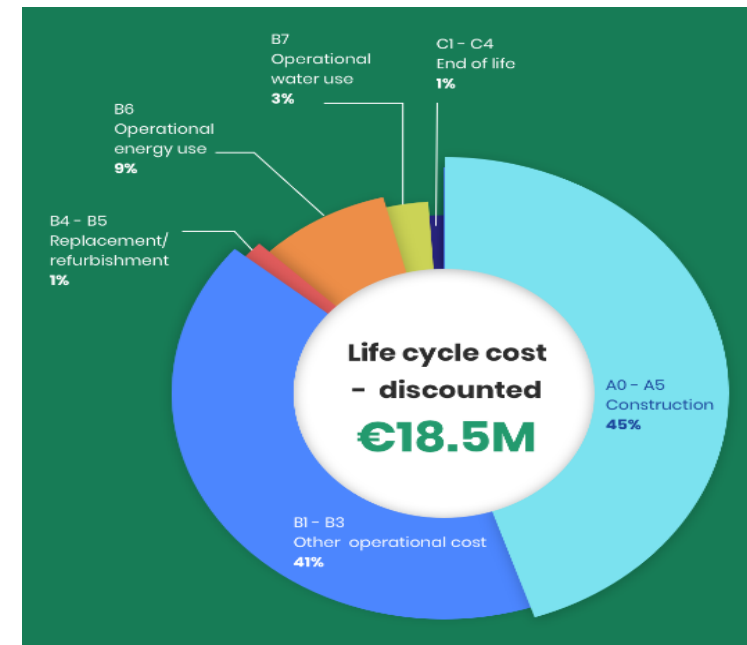
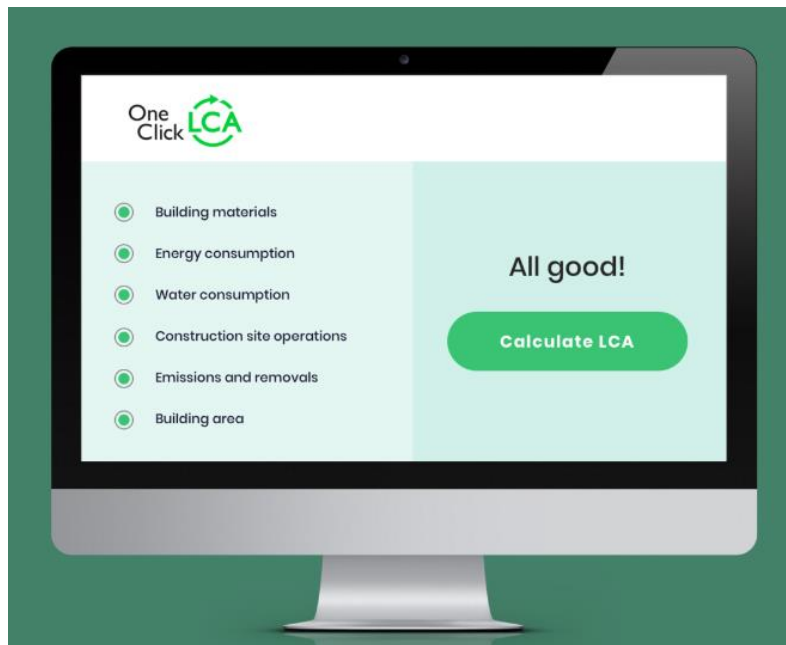
Using the One
Click LCA tool

LIFECYCLE EMISSION TOOL SELECTED

Binova One Click LCA tool

Automates LCA with BIM tools and

Calculates costs from all life cycle stages



[HTTPS://WWW.ONECLICKLCA.COM/CONSTRUCTION/LIFE-CYCLE-ASSESSMENT-SOFTWARE/](https://www.oneclicklca.com/construction/life-cycle-assessment-software/)

Measured and calculated twice – after design approved and on completion.
€50K penalty avoided as it met targets with 20% less emissions due to wooden build

The logo features the letters 'CMG' in a bold, sans-serif font, centered within a circular maze-like pattern. The maze consists of several concentric rings with various openings and dead ends, creating a complex geometric design. The entire logo is rendered in a light teal color against a darker teal background.

CMG

14. USEFUL SOURCES

KEY IRISH / NATIONAL GPP REFERENCES

- Circular 17/2025: Updated Green Public Procurement Instructions for Public Sector Bodies (DPER/OGP, 21 July 2025) – [gov.ie / per.gov.ie](https://gov.ie/per.gov.ie)
- Buying Greener: Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027 (DECC) – gov.ie/DECC
- GPP Criteria Search (OGP online tool, packages EPA national GPP criteria by category) – gppcriteria.gov.ie
- EPA GPP Guidance and Criteria – epa.ie
- SEAI Monitoring & Reporting system (public sector energy/GPP reporting) – seai.ie
- eTenders (Prior Information Notices, eForms GPP publication) – etenders.gov.ie
- OGP Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF) – constructionprocurement.gov.ie