

ECOGLO DECLARES ITS PRODUCTS FOR ARCHITECTS



Completed in 2014, Te Kura Whare was the first certified Living Building in New Zealand

Ecoglo International

Ecoglo International, the photoluminescent exit signage specialist, is now able to achieve 'Declare' label certification – arguably the world's most comprehensive building product accreditation – across its full ranges of 'glow in the dark' passive exit signs and emergency visibility products.

As architects, builders and clients demand ever-higher 'green credentials' from specified products, it's often hard to identify which products actually live up to their claims of sustainability.

Ecoglo International, based in New Zealand and Australia, has made architects' choices easier with the announcement that it can now custom-manufacture all products in its passive photoluminescent (PL) exit signage and emergency/safety visibility prod-

uct ranges to 'Declare' label standards.

The Declare label, administered by the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) in Washington, USA, was created in 2012 to allow manufacturers worldwide to showcase a range of formally ascribed product attributes, ranging from life expectancy and materials composition to end-of-life reuse options. Most importantly, the label requires manufacturers to declare that their products, including all components and coatings, do not contain any chemicals or materials on an ILFI-prescribed Red List of hazardous or toxic substances. This Red List references more than 500 prohibited items within 20 classes of chemicals and materials, including chlorinated polyethylene and chlorosulfonated polyethylene, asbestos, perfluorinated compounds (PFCs), lead, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in wet applied products, to name a few.

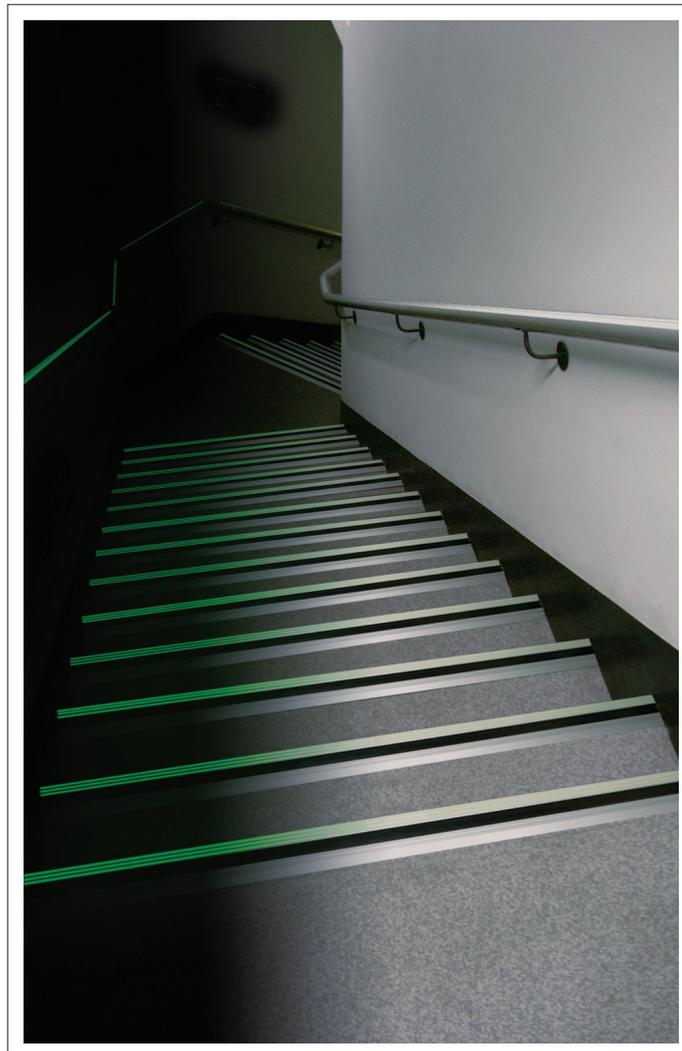
Declare.

The Declare label requires manufacturers to declare that their products do not contain any 'Red List' ingredients

Living Building Challenge

The Declare label works hand in hand with a number of ILFI green building programs, including the Living Building Challenge – an intensive building design initiative demanding the use of Declare label products, where possible, within a suite of uncompromising performance- and design-based criteria. In terms of performance, Living Buildings must transcend mere sustainability and actually achieve 'Positive Energy, Net Positive Water, and Net Positive Waste'. In other words, Net Living Buildings must generate more energy than they consume, harvest all water and treat all wastewater on site, and actively make use of materials that would otherwise have been discarded.

To date only 100 buildings in the world have achieved Living Building status; another 500+ projects are aspiring to join the club.



Ecoglo's involvement with ILFI and the Declare label program began with an approach from New Zealand architects Jasmox, who were seeking Living Building status for their Te Kura Whare project near Whakatane.

Completed in 2014, the Te Kura Whare project is the only certified (non-residential) Living Building in New Zealand, and is widely recognised as the greenest building in the country.

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"Jasmox asked if we could supply emergency visibility 'step edge' products up to the Declare label standard," says Mark Watson, Ecoglo's Technical Manager, "and we realised immediately that the requirements of the Declare label were far more detailed than any other green label we had dealt with. Essentially, every component from every member of the supply chain must meet Declare label standards – that degree of transparency is unprecedented." Since its initial work with Jasmox, Ecoglo has collaborated with a number of high-profile Australasian architects, including Wellington-based Tennent Brown Architects, to produce products that meet the requirements of the Declare label. "These custom-made products range from PL exit signs to step edge products, guidance strips and markers, as well as handrail markers," Mark says.

Full Transparency

According to Mark, “complete transparency” is the cornerstone of the Declare label, representing the most important difference between it and other green certification schemes. By making full product disclosures in an open and publicly verifiable way, based on real-life performance rather than theoretical benchmarks, companies with Declare label accreditation are able to meet the most demanding requirements of sustainability-focused architects and building owners.

“We were really thrilled to meet the requirements of Declare accreditation for our custom-made passive PL exit signs, which are charged by exposure to surrounding natural or artificial light; now we are aiming to achieve the same status for our hybrid PL signs, which are charged by a combination of ambient light and electric LEDs incorporated into the actual housing of each sign,” Mark says. Hybrid exit signs, he explains, are ideal for darker areas of a building such as internal stairwells, where ambient light alone might be too weak to charge a PL sign.



Ecoglo can now custom manufacture exit signage and emergency visibility products to 'Declare' label standards.

Not just living buildings

Ecoglo's Declare-compliant products have applications wherever architects and their clients wish to attain the highest international levels of building sustainability, regardless of whether a project is a candidate for Living Building status.

“We find that there are many discerning clients who want to minimise the negative impacts of their building, particularly when retrofitting an older structure,” says Trevor Dimond, Ecoglo's Executive Chairman.

“We are always delighted to receive commissions for Declare-rated PL products; we believe it makes sense to refurbish buildings using the most responsible products possible, and we are in the process of making our complete 600-product inventory available as a Declare-labelled option.”

The requirements of Declare label compliance are updated regularly in accordance with refinements to the Red List of prohibited substances and other criteria. Ecoglo, Trevor says, is equally mindful of the need for ongoing product development in order to achieve world's best practice, and to serve the building industry as a world-class fabricator of sustainable products.

Full specification sheets of Ecoglo products are available to architects and builders by request.

Ecoglo International PL products are available worldwide and meet or exceed all relevant international building and compliance code requirements.

For more information about Ecoglo International's photoluminescent products, or to obtain high resolution image files of Ecoglo products, please contact:

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