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## ECOLABELLING

*Innovations in circular economy  
– environmental labels and declarations*



# BLUE ANGEL

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# Label history

## **An environmental label with a long history**

The environmental label was created in 1978 on the initiative of the German Federal Minister of the Interior and approved by the Ministers of the Environment for the German federal states. Since then the Blue Angel has been a market-based, voluntary instrument of environmental policy. Its scientific and holistic approach, as well as its independence thanks to the broad-based involvement of professional and commercial groups and the Environmental Label Jury, provide the foundations for the trust that consumers have placed in the environmental label.

# Blue Angel

**A reliable environmental label that provides clear orientation when it comes to making environmentally friendly purchases. This was the idea behind the Blue Angel when it was introduced in 1978 as the world's first environmental label.**

**The Blue Angel is the environmental label of the German Federal Government and identifies products and services which are particularly environmentally friendly.**

# Blue Angel - Institutions



## **Owner: Federal Ministry for the Environment**

The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) is the owner of the label. It defines the fundamental guidelines for the award of the Blue Angel and appoints the members of the Environmental Label Jury.

## **Specialist expertise: Federal Environmental Agency**

The experts at the Federal Environmental Agency (UBA) develop the specialist criteria that a product or service must comply with in order to be certified with the Blue Angel. It also regularly checks the criteria to ensure they conform to the latest technological standards.



# Blue Angel - Institutions



## **Independent decision makers: The Environmental Label Jury**

The Environmental Label Jury is an independent, impartial and voluntary body that ensures the reliability of the Blue Angel. It decides which new product groups are added and discusses and approves the Basic Award Criteria proposed by the UBA. This decision-making body comprises 15 representatives from environmental and consumer associations, trade unions, industry, the trade, crafts, local authorities, academia, the media, churches, young people and the German federal states.



## **Tester: RAL gGmbH**

As an independent organisation, RAL gGmbH (a non-profit private limited company) checks compliance with the requirements after the submission of the product-specific application by a company and concludes contracts on the use of the Blue Angel with the companies.

# Blue Angel - today

**The Blue Angel** Established in 1978 – the first Ecolabel worldwide

- 120 product groups,
- 1,500 companies,
- 12,000 products and services.

**Strict criteria based on environmental performance:**

- 20 – 30 % best of the market,
- criteria are revised after 2-4 years,
- Testing is usually conducted by laboratories according to ISO 17025.

# Awarding process

- Firstly check whether Basic Award Criteria already exist for the product or service you offer on the market.
- **The supplier submits their application**  
In order to use the environmental label, verification of compliance with the requirements is sent to the awarding body RAL.
- **RAL**  
Checks the application for the use of the environmental label for compliance with the stipulated requirements.
- **Federal state**  
Submits statement.
- **RAL**  
Conclusion of the contract on the use of the environmental label with the supplier/manufacturer.
- Advertising by the supplier using the environmental label based on the contract on the use of the environmental label concluded with RAL.

# Award criteria

- resource-saving production (water, energy, (recycled) materials),
- sustainable production of resources,
- avoidance of harmful substances in the product,
- reduced emissions of harmful substances in the ground, air, water and indoors,
- reduced noise and electromagnetic radiation,
- efficient use, e.g. products which save energy or water,
- longevity, ability to repair and recycle the product,
- good fitness for use,
- compliance with international occupational safety standards,
- take-back systems and shared-use, services, e.g. car sharing.

# Thank you for your attention

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