

# Hong Kong Green Label Scheme

## Product Environmental Criteria for Laundry Detergents (GL-003-001)



### BACKGROUND

The Hong Kong Green Label Scheme (HKGLS) is an independent and voluntary scheme, which aims to identify products that are, based on life cycle analysis consideration, more environmentally preferable than other similar products with the same function. The Scheme is organized by the Green Council (GC) with contributions from the HKGLS Advisory Committee and a number of supporting organizations.

The prime objectives of HKGLS are:

- For Consumers: assist in making purchases of products that are less harmful to the environment;
- For Industry: stimulate development and production of environmentally preferable alternatives.

This specification sets out the requirements that laundry detergent products will be required to meet in order to be licensed to use the HKGLS label. The requirements include environmental criteria and product characteristics. The specification also defines the testing and other means to be used to verify conformance with the environmental criteria and product characteristics.

### POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Laundry detergents are consumed in large quantity in Hong Kong every day. These detergents contain various chemical substances such as surfactants, softeners, bleaches, preservatives, dyes, perfumes corrosion inhibitors, enzymes and so forth. The discharge of the laundry detergents and/or their prepared solution presents a significant burden on our environment in terms of wastewater loading and subsequent treatment, resource consumption and disposal of packaging materials.

### LABEL OBJECTIVE

The aim of the environmental criteria developed for laundry detergents is to:

- Reduce the toxicity of wastewater arising from the use of laundry detergents, and to help reduce the environmental loading of sewage treatment facilities and the receiving water bodies; and
- Minimize waste production by reducing the amount of primary packaging and promoting its reusability and/or recyclability.

### PRODUCT DEFINITION

This document and all product environmental criteria therein apply to all detergents in powdered, liquid or other forms intended for washing with textiles in washing machines and by hand. The document does not cover separate detergent components (e.g. softeners, whiteners etc) and specific products for carpet washing and/or commercial, industrial washing of textiles.

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**PRODUCT ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA**

The table below sets out the product environmental criteria for Laundry Detergents (GL-003-001) under the HKGLS.

The product criteria refer to a functional wash. One functional wash is defined as 3.5 kg of normally soiled laundry in water. Individual criteria are given accordingly in gram of detergent per washing (g/wash).

Criteria	Verification Method
1. The detergent shall be easily biodegradable <sup>1</sup> .	A,C
2. The pH of the laundry detergent solution prepared in accordance with the dosing quantity specified on the package shall not exceed 11.0.	A,C
3. The detergent shall not contain the following substances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDTA (Ethylene diamine tetra-acetic acid);</li> <li>• APEO (alkyl phenol ethoxylate);</li> <li>• Chlorine bleaching agents;</li> <li>• NTA (Nitrilotri acetic acid);</li> <li>• Phosphate; and</li> <li>• Whitening agents</li> </ul>	A,C
4. Colouring matters / dyes / pigments in the product must be approved for use in foodstuffs <sup>2</sup> or cosmetics by relevant national or local environmental regulations.	A or C
5. Phosphonates in the product shall not exceed 1.0g/wash.	A,C
6. Packaging Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum packaging limit: 18g per 100g of product in use.</li> <li>• General packaging requirements (refer to criteria for packaging materials: GL-Packaging).</li> </ul>	B,C,D

Legend:

A – Analytical testing shall be performed by laboratories that meet the requirement laid out in the EN45001 standards or any equivalent systems (e.g. HOKLAS, IEC/ISO 17025).

B – Inspection of product samples

C – Review of supporting information as required by the GC

D – Interviews with relevant personnel and/or site visits to relevant facilities

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Note:

1. Tests for “Easy Biodegradability” in accordance with the Annex to Commission Directive 67/548/EEC dated 31 October 1993. USEPA Method as specified at 40 C.F.R. Part 796.3180.
2. List of permitted colorants in food is stated in Schedule 1 of Cap 132 H of Colouring Matter in Food Regulations.