



**Guidelines**  
**for ecological detergents and other cleaning agents**

21<sup>st</sup> January 2016

**Certified ecological detergents and other cleaning agents (*German abbreviation: WPR*) for use in private households are characterized by their compliance with these relevant criteria as a minimum:**

**1. Biodegradability**

All substances used in a product shall be readily biodegradable under aerobic and anaerobic conditions. The requirements for biodegradability go far beyond the minimum statutory requirements. Poorly biodegradable surfactants and other substances which breakdown only with difficulty may not be used.

**2. Non-use of genetic engineering**

All ingredients, in particular enzymes, must not have been produced either from or by genetically modified organisms (analogous to the provisions in Article 9 of the EU Organic Regulation 834/2007). Compliance with this requirement is documented along the entire processing chain.

Only products, for which the manufacturer can guarantee that genetic engineering techniques have been excluded in the extraction of ingredients from microorganisms (enzymes), are covered by this guideline. Products that contain enzymes require a clear statement from the manufacturer declaring freedom from genetic engineering.

**3. Non-use of substances which have high toxicity for people and the environment, for example:**

- Compounds of organic chlorine chemistry (e.g. chlorinated hydrocarbons) and chlorine bleaches
- Phosphate-containing compounds
- Toxic heavy metals and their chemical compounds
- Phthalates
- Chelating agent EDTA (ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid) and its salts

**4. Non-use of plastic micro particles and particles of nanoscale size**

Ingredients which contain micro plastic particles or particles of nanoscale size<sup>1</sup> are not acceptable in ecological WPR, covered by this guideline.

These and numerous other criteria are described in detail in the following standards currently approved under the SRL for ecological WPR. To meet this guideline, products have to fulfill requirements on the absence of GMO in all stages of processing and to comply with one of the standards mentioned here. They have to be inspected and certified by independent certifiers.

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<sup>1</sup> Particles of nanoscale size: correspond to the current generally accepted view on the definition of nanomaterials, provided they have been produced synthetically or artificially and that they are not bound in compounds. (Source: [BUND](#))

**Currently these standards are approved:**

- **Ecogarantie**
- **Ecocert and Ecocert made with organic raw materials**
- **NCP: Nature Care Product**
- **ABG: Austria Bio Garantie**

The requirements of these standards have been reviewed and compared, providing the basis for ecological WPR. The approved standards are independent of the certification procedure and are constantly in development in an ecological sense.

The guideline for WPR promotes product innovation with the interests of people and the environment central to it. It requires the following **objectives to have been implemented** in the above-mentioned standards (if not already achieved) within three years:

**a) Non-use of petrochemical ingredients**

Alternative substances have to be developed and tested to replace the very few ingredients of (partial) petrochemical derivation which are currently still permitted in some standards. All approved standards are encouraged to integrate this requirement into their guidelines, by the end of 2018, provided they do not conflict with national legislation.

**b) Non-use of enzymes produced by Genetic Modification**

Some of the approved WPR standards cannot guarantee complete exclusion of genetic engineering at all levels of production. At the date of publication, enzymes, which are produced by genetically modified microorganisms, are permitted. By the end of 2018, the standards are encouraged to permit only enzymes that have not been produced by GMOs in their standards.

**c) Ingredients originating from organic farming**

If available, agricultural ingredients originate from certified organic farming. All approved standard owners are encouraged to implement this criterion into their regulations and to ensure its traceability by the end of 2018.

**d) No testing on animals**

Manufacturers reject testing on animals. In addition to legal requirements, all products meet these conditions as a minimum (in accordance with the criteria of the [Humane Cosmetics Standard \(HCS\)](#), [Leaping Bunny](#) and the [German Animal Welfare Federation](#)):

- i. No animal testing for development and production of either finished products or ingredients is carried out, commissioned or participated in.
- ii. No use of raw materials shall be used where their extraction is associated with cruelty to animals or their death, or where animals have been killed specifically to provide them. Raw materials from living animals should preferably originate from organic farming according to the EU Organic Regulation.

All approved standard owners are encouraged to integrate these criteria into their regulations and to ensure their traceability by the end of 2018. The current legal situation according to REACH must also be fulfilled, of course. Raw materials tested with alternative assay methods are to be used in preference if they are available.

**e) Dosage instructions and full declaration**

By the end of 2018 the approved standards shall require that clear and comprehensible dosage instructions can be found on the product itself and there is full declaration of all ingredients.

**f) Proof of sustainability**

By the end of 2018 the manufacturer is expected to provide proof of sustainability and to have this certified by recognized organizations (certifiers are, for example: CSE, BNN Sustainability Monitor, cradle to cradle, Common Good Balance, DIN ISO 14001, EMAS 3, B Corp, Green Brands and others). The aim is for continuous improvement in company sustainability performance.

The guideline for ecological detergents comes into force in **January 2016**. There is a transitional period for non-certified WPR until the end of 2017. Certified products, which fulfill the requirements of documented genetic engineering exclusion, will be listed in preference.

For standards and manufacturers there is a transition period until 31st December 2018 for the full implementation of the provisions of ecological WPR.

Only products carrying the label of one of the approved standards and complying with the additional requirements in terms of genetic engineering exclusion, can obtain the [BNN-identification code](#) (*German abbr.: IK*) **WP** for certified ecological WPR. Within the transitional period (until the end of 2017) products that do not fulfill all above mentioned requirements may use the abbreviation **S #** (conforming to BNN guidelines for organic product ranges). From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 these products will be graded **IK ##** (uncertified product).