

Information on Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) published by Bundesverband der Gipsindustrie e.V.

Bundesverband Gips and individual member's EPDs based thereon actually still comply with DIN EN 15804:2014-07 and provide the information requested in this standard.

Meanwhile, this standard has been withdrawn and replaced by DIN EN 15804: 2020-03 including further developed requirements.

For expired EPDs according to DIN EN 15804: 2014-07 the following is recommended:

In general EPDs will be no longer prolonged if the validation time is already exceeded (mostly 5 years after issue date), because of standard withdrawal and different requirements.

Nevertheless the use of the provided data is possible because the Assessment System for Sustainable Building is still based on this standard, and environmental characteristics of production in Germany in sum have been remained or even improved.

Examples:

- Energy management implementation and partially inclusion in Emission Trade System (ETS) have lead to a reduction of fossil fuel use in factories.
- The National electricity mix used today is more environmental friendly because of higher proportion of renewables.
- Moist flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) gypsum will be replaced by dry raw materials like natural gypsum or recycled gypsum that can be processed with lower energy demand, due to the National closure plan for coal and lignite fired power plants, making FGD gypsum less available.
- Production locations have been kept stable, so that transport distances are mainly unchanged, whereas emission requirements on motor techniques have been further improved at the same time.

The Association therefore recommends to use the assessments (mostly related to production phase only) without any modifications, even if environmental effects might be less significant. The advantages of gypsum products compared to other building materials will stay to be valid under those assumptions.

Follow-up procedure and release of EPDs according to DIN EN 15804: 2020-03?

According to the revised standard it is no longer possible to publish data for construction products on the production phase only. From now on declarations have to be performed from "cradle to grave" including the full life cycle approach. Scenarios have to be developed that additionally include dismantling operations and waste management (recycling or disposal) of gypsum products.

Beside this the number of indicators has been enlarged. Life Cycle Assessment programmes are already adapted or will be adapted soon. The Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) developed by the EU Commission for application on all products should be integrated into the existing approach for construction products, f.e. by additional parameters or by changing units for reporting.

Beside construction products the gypsum industry also produces products for special applications, that might profit from the revised procedure for life cycle assessment. Accordingly, the enhancement of environmental profiles has to be agreed and to be prepared.

The next steps into this direction will be:

- Development of a LCA calculation tool for all gypsum products
Reasoning is that gypsum industry follows an integrated approach from raw material quarrying to final products, where many products are fabricated by comparable production steps or plant techniques.
- New calculation of indicators according to DIN EN 15804: 2020-03
In a first step only the LCA part of the EPD will be calculated. Other parts of the EPD like technical information or certificates will not be touched, because this information is easily available by Declarations of Performance (DoP) and further information, provided by the producers. The general claim settled is that all existing declarations will be updated in the EPD format. New information formats beside EPDs will be discussed, too.
- Monitoring of developments in assessment systems for sustainable buildings and possible inclusion of environmental product information into Construction Product Regulation
We have already monitored an intensive change in public and legal expectations on environmental information. Technical building requirements in the use phase (for example on noise or fire) should be better aligned with environmental information up to the construction element level, and should be adaptable to Building Information Modelling (BIM) reporting in the future.

The association's purpose is to have new and updated environmental declarations available as soon as valid requirements are settled. Recent developments for starting a revision of the Construction Product Regulation, possible additional information requirements to implement Europe's "Green Deal", awaited updates of assessment systems on sustainable buildings and BIM - all contribute to an uncertainty that cannot be satisfied by simple prolongation or adaption of existing EPDs today.

For the existing EPDs an update and release parallel to the inclusion of data in ökobau.dat is planned after the adaption of the German National Assessment System on Sustainable Buildings (BNB) on the standard DIN EN 15804: 2020-03. Until this time we ask all clients to keep on using the existing EPDs as published.

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