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Opportunities to Earn Points in LEED v5 Using FSC-certified Wood

A new scoring methodology developed by USGBC ranks **FSC-certified products the highest in LEED v5**. The following document provides information on what the changes are, how the new systems work, and how you can use **FSC-certified wood to achieve higher points** in projects registered under the **LEED v5 standard**.

BACKGROUND

In 2025, LEED, Living Building Challenge, BREEAM, WELL, and Green Star committed to enhance consistency across rating systems by adopting a **common language** to align data and metrics to **simplify materials assessment and reporting**.

THE INTENT

- To encourage the use of products and materials that have sustainability information available and that have environmentally, economically, and socially preferable impacts in alignment with industry momentum.
- To reward project teams for selecting products from manufacturers who have disclosed sustainability information about their products and have optimized their products across multiple criteria areas.

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LEED v5 - Criteria Areas, Achievement Levels, and Multi-Attribute Scores - Explained

USGBC combined aspects of Materials and Resources Credits in LEED v4 and v4.1, in alignment with the mindful Materials Common Materials Framework and the AIA Materials Pledge, to arrive at the following **Criteria Areas.**

CRITERIA AREAS

Ecosystem Health

Materials that disclose, reduce and reverse impacts on the environment throughout the materials supply chain.

Climate Health

Products that quantify, reduce, or reverse the embodied carbon emissions associated with a building product's lifecycle.

Human Health

Products that minimize negative human health impacts

Social Health & Equity

Products from manufacturers that uphold human rights throughout the supply chain, protecting workers and communities impacted by material extraction and production.

Circular Economy

Products that are designed to be cycled after use, contribute to waste minimization, reduce reliance on virgin materials, extend the lifecycle of building materials.

LEED v5 PRODUCT ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

There are three **Achievement Levels for Products**. Evaluations are based on how products perform with respect to these achievement levels.

1X MULTIPLIER

Level 1

A product in this level achieves a first step towards sustainability for a criteria area and **earns a 1x multiplier**.

2X MULTIPLIER

Level 2

This level represents a leadership position in the marketplace for a given sustainability attribute. **Products scored at this level earn a 2x multiplier**.

3X MULTIPLIER

Level 3

Products that earn this level represent the forefront of sustainability and **earn a 3x multiplier**.

MULTI-ATTRIBUTE SCORING OF PRODUCTS

Here is a small section, as an example, of the table of **Eligible Product Documentation**, their corresponding **Criteria Area** scores that have currently been evaluated by USGBC, and their **Multi-Attribute Scores**.

	Criteria Areas					
Eligible Product Documentation	**Human Health**	**Climate Health**	**Ecosystem Health**	**Social Health & Equity**	**Circular Economy**	**LEED Multi-Attribute Score (max = 5)**
Declare (v2.0)	1	-	-	-	-	1
Declare: Third-party Verified and Red List Free or Red List Approved (V2.0)	2	-	-	-	-	2
EPD: Product-Specific Type III	-	1	-	-	-	1
EPD: Optimized (>20% reduction in GWP)	-	2	1	-	-	3
EPD: Optimized (>40% reduction in GWP and >10% reduction	-	3	2	-	-	5
Global Green TAG: Product Health Declaration	2	-	-	-	-	2
Green Seal GS-11 Certified	2	-	-	-	-	2
HPD: Pre-Checked for LEED, min 1000ppm	1	-	-	-	-	1
HPD: Third-Party Verified, 10ppm, Avoidance of Chemicals of High Concern	-	-	1	-	-	2
HPD: Pre-Checked for LEED, min 1000ppm	-	2	1	-	2	5

The full table of is available through the resource document: LEED v5 BPSP Criteria Areas and Achievement Levels. Ecolabels and standards evolve between LEED version updates, and this system allows for more frequent product documentation and criteria area scoring updates.

Individual products selected for compliance with the BPSP MRc4 credit may have more than one eligible Criteria Area attribute (determined by product documentation) that can be scored.

Multiple scores can be added together for a combined **Multi-Attribute Score (MAS)** for that product, but only the highest value in **each specific criteria area** will be awarded. Double counting is not allowed within a specific criteria area.

For example, if a product scores a "2" in Human Health for one product documentation (let's say Global Green Tag) and a "1" in Human Health for another, say HPD-Pre-checked for LEED, only the "2" will count toward the total under the human health criteria area. However, if a product scores a "2" in Human Health (say Global Green Tag again) and a "1" in Climate Health (say EPD: Product Specific Type 3), those scores can be added together for a total score of 3.

The **total value** of an eligible product (by cost, volume, units, etc.) is multiplied by its **MAS** to arrive at its **Adjusted Value**.

FSC MULTI-ATTRIBUTE SCORES

For a wood product to be eligible for points in all LEED v5 Rating Systems, at least 50% of the product, by volume or mass, must be wood that carries approved MAS documentation in one or more of the Criteria Areas.

- **FSC® 100% products score highest in LEED v5 compared to all other forest product certifications.**
- **FSC Mix (% and Credit) products with a MAS of 4 are widely available.**

	Criteria Areas					
Eligible Product Documentation	**Human Health**	**Climate Health**	**Ecosystem Health**	**Social Health & Equity**	**Circular Economy**	**LEED Multi-Attribute Score (max = 5)**
Wood Products: "FSC 100%" label	-	-	3	2	-	5
Wood Products: "FSC Mix" label	-	-	2	2	-	4
Wood Products: "FSC Recycled" label	-	-	1	-	1	2
Wood Products: Legal Sourcing with Disclosure	-	-	1	-	-	1

Here's the section of the table showing where FSC product documentation and Multi Attribute Scores currently land. **FSC 100% products have a score of 5**. FSC Mix (% and Credit) products with a **MAS of 4** are widely available.

Other Eligible Product Documentation can be added to **FSC product documentation**. For example, if you have an FSC Mix product (which scores a 2 under Ecosystem Health and a 2 under Social Health & Equity) for a score of 4, and the product also has HPD Pre-Checked documentation (which scores 1 under Human Health). This HPD score of 1 can be added to the Mix score of 4, for a **Multi-Attribute Score of 5** for the product.

Where Does This New Scoring Methodology Apply?

BPSP MRc4 AND PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Manufacturer-provided product documents that meet the USGBC approved list of Eligible Product Documentation will be eligible for reward in:

Building Product Selection and Procurement: Materials and Resources credit 4 (MRc4), in both Building Design and Construction (BD+C) and Interior Design and Construction (ID+C). This credit rewards the selection of eligible interior and enclosure materials from the following product categories:

- Paints and Coatings
- Adhesives and Sealants
- Flooring
- Walls
- Ceilings
- Insulation
- Furniture
- Composite Wood
- Plumbing Fixtures

Points Awarded & Calculating Adjusted Value

Points are awarded for achievement of whole product categories.

- For both **BD+C and ID+C**, if a product category's **adjusted value exceeds 100% of its total original value**, it earns **1 point**, up to a maximum of **5 categories and 5 points for BD+C.**
- For **ID+C**, if a product category's **adjusted value exceeds 200% of its total original value**, it earns 2 points, up to a **maximum of 10 points for ID+C.**

CALCULATING A PRODUCT CATEGORY'S ADJUSTED VALUE

Each individual product's value (cost, area, volume, or unit) is adjusted based on its Multi-Attribute Score (MAS): Product value × MAS = Adjusted value. **Total product Adjusted Value per Category is determined by this equation:**

Product category adjusted value for LEED =

$$100 \times \frac{(\text{Product A MAS} \times \text{Product A Value}) + (\text{Product B MAS} \times \text{Product B Value}) + (\text{Product C MAS} \times \text{Product C Value}) + (\text{Product D MAS} \times \text{Product D Value}) +}{(\text{Total value of all products in category})}$$

Here is an example of calculations for the Flooring Category of a hypothetical project.

PRODUCT A: WOOD

Original value: $50,000
MAS: 4
Adjusted value: $200,000

+

PRODUCT B: CONCRETE

Original value: $75,000
MAS: 1
Adjusted value: $75,000

+

PRODUCT C: VINYL

Original value: $100,000
MAS: 0
Adjusted value: $0.

Total Value ($225,000)

Total Original Value of the three flooring products used in this project is **$225,000**. Total Adjusted Value of materials in the Flooring category: **$275,000 ÷ $225,000** (Total original value of Flooring Products), which = 1.22.

1.22 x 100 = 122%. The Adjusted Value exceeds the Original Value, so the Flooring Category receives 1 point. An easier way to look at it is that the Adjusted Value of all products in a Category must exceed the Total Value of all original products.

As you can see, using FSC® wood with a high MAS can lift a category with non- or low-scoring materials to an adjusted value that earns a LEED point.

Structural Materials, Low-Embodied Carbon, and Paper Products

Structural FSC-certified wood products fall under the LEED v5 Project Priority pilot credit: MRpc181: Multi-Attribute Structure, Enclosure, Hardscape, and Other Building Materials.

- Projects leveraging this pilot credit must have a total of **15 permanently installed products with a minimum multi-attribute score of 3 per product** to earn **1 LEED point**.
- Projects leveraging this pilot credit with a total of **30 permanently installed products with a minimum multi-attribute score of 3 per product** will earn **2 LEED points**.

Low carbon products, including FSC® wood, can contribute up to **4 points under ID+C** and **6 points under BD+C** in: MRc2: Reduce Embodied Carbon, Materials and Resource.

FSC wood can also be used to satisfy prerequisite: MRp2 : Quantify and Assess Embodied Carbon. Note that earning points under different credits is **cumulative**. If you're using wood, use **FSC-certified** and you can earn points in **MRc4 categories**, in the **pilot credit just mentioned**, and the same wood can apply to **MRc2 and MRp2**.

Lastly, FSC certified paper products (NOT under the MAS System) contribute points under: LEED v5 Operations and Maintenance (O+M): Existing Buildings, Green Cleaning Indoor Environmental Quality EQc7.

Note: LEED v4 & 4.1 are active for new registrations until June 30, 2027, and projects will have until June 30, 2033, to submit their initial certification application.

Projects registered after June 30, 2027, must use LEED v5.

Addendums to LEED v5 are scheduled every 6 months, with Q1 and Q3 releases.

For more information and sourcing assistance, contact:

Jeff Welch, Market Development Manager
j.welch@ca.fsc.org

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