

# NCP

## Nature Care Products Standard

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Developed by the Society for Applied Business Ethics (GfaW Gesellschaft für angewandte Wirtschaftsethik) in cooperation with EcoControl GmbH, INCI Experts GmbH, **Meta-Consort** and the working group "Raw Material for organic non-food products"

[www.angewandte-wirtschaftsethik.org](http://www.angewandte-wirtschaftsethik.org)

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture applies only to food and unprocessed agricultural products, the organic non-food sector needs further regulation. There are numerous standards for natural cosmetics for other organic non-food products however do not exist. The aim of the Nature Care Products Standard (NCP standard) is to close the gap of regulation and give a criteria base for the entire ecological and organic non-food area.

The NCP regulates the requirements for certified care products as well any non-food product based on natural raw materials. Care products are defined as any product used to clean, preserve or protect common utensils, plants, textiles or food. The NCP standard particularly includes detergents and cleaning agents, textile and leather care products, pesticides and fertilizers. Such care products will always have some impact on the environment, whether through their manufacture, use, or disposal. The NCP standard sets minimum requirements for the ingredients and manufacturing processes of care products and so insure a natural product that works harmony with nature. It is based on the requirements of the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture number 834/2007 and 889/2008.

The positive list compliments the NCP standard. This list includes all authorized substances and correlates in the field of biocides to the current Annex II of the Implementing Rules for regulation 889/2008. It sees itself as an open list and can be extended upon request by compliant raw materials.

The NCP label acts as an important guide for consumers to indicate certified natural care product in compliance with the standard.<sup>1</sup>

The CSE Certified Sustainable Economics Label ([www.cse-label.org](http://www.cse-label.org)) can also be used to build upon the NCP standard certification.

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<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, the current version of the Biocidal Regulation does not allow biocidal products to be labeled with "natural", "environmentally friendly", "harmless" or similar. For this reason, unfortunately, the standard owner advises not to use the NCP sign for biocides that fall under the biocidal regulations. It is advisable to clarify by means of a legal consulting whether an NCP certification may be indicated in the product descriptions or whether the indication "is approved for organic farming according to the EU Eco-Regulation" complies with the Biocidal Regulation.

## DEFINITION

Biocides are: “any substance or mixture, in the form in which it is supplied to the user, consisting of, containing or generating one or more active substances, with the intention of destroying, deterring, rendering harmless, preventing the action of, or otherwise exerting a controlling effect on, any harmful organism by any means other than mere physical or mechanical action” (Article 3, 1 (a) EU-Regulation Nr. 528/2012)

And

“any substance or mixture, generated from substances or mixtures which do not themselves fall under the first indent, to be used with the intention of destroying, deterring, rendering harmless, preventing the action of, or otherwise exerting a controlling effect on, any harmful organism by any means other than mere physical or mechanical action.” (Article 3, 1 (a) EU-Regulation 528/2012)

Synthetic: is in this standard all substances based on chemical processes which do not exist in nature or on petrochemical origin.

Natural: is in this standard all substances based on not-fossil plants, on animals or fungi.

## 1. THE NPC STANDARD'S RANGE OF APPLICATION

The NCP standard applies to all products used to clean, preserve, or care for plants, utensils, textiles, and food as well as other non-food products natural origin. It is based on the requirements of the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture number 834/2007 and 889/2008.

The standard is particularly designed for detergents and cleaning agents, leather and textile care products, sanitary products, pesticides, repellents for vertebrates and mollusks, insecticides, disinfectants, fungicides, acaricides, and fertilizers. Products used to clean, protect, or care for humans or animals are regulated by the NCS Natural Cosmetic Standard ([www.natural-cosmetic.cc](http://www.natural-cosmetic.cc)).

Upon the successful certification of the registered products, the label "NCP Nature Care Product" may be used for marketing purposes. In addition to the use of the label, the user may also advertize the ingredients in the product as organic. The user may also advertize the whole product as organic if at least 95% of the agricultural ingredients are certified organic. In this case, the proportions of the organic ingredients, expressed in percentages, must be indicated.

Compliance with the statutory provisions, in particular with regard to regulation (EC) 648/2004 (detergents) and its revisions, particularly in relation to the environmental compatibility of washing and cleaning agents, regulation (EC) 528/2012 (biocide)<sup>2</sup>, regulation (EC) 1272/2008 (CLP) and regulation (EC) 1907/2006 (REACH), regulation on fertilizers (DüMV), and the Plant Protection Act (Pflanzenschutzgesetz) is a prerequisite to receiving the NCP standard label. The requirements for the NCP standard go beyond these regulations.

## 2. GENERAL CRITERIA

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<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the current version of the Biocidal Regulation does not allow biocidal products to be labeled with "natural", "environmentally friendly", "harmless" or similar. For this reason, unfortunately, the standard owner advises not to use the NCP sign for biocides that fall under the biocidal regulations. It is advisable to clarify by means of a legal consulting whether an NCP certification may be indicated in the product descriptions or whether the indication "is approved for organic farming according to the EU Eco-Regulation" compies with the Biocidal Regulation

**Only** the raw materials, production processes, extraction agents and catalyzers defined in the NCP standard may be used to produce NCP certified products. The appendix contains a positive list of all tolerated raw materials for biocides and plant protection agents. It consists of the current Annex II of the Implementing Rules for the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture number 889/2008 and a few additional raw materials which are necessary as a carrier for active ingredients. If a material does not meet the criteria listed here, but is essential for the effectiveness of a product that would otherwise meet the NCP criteria, a request may be made for its inclusion in the criteria. The decision on its inclusion in the standard is based on the requirements set forth in the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture 834/2007 and 889/2008. Additionally, a justification of the materials inclusion and a statement attesting the irreplaceability of the raw material must be made.

NCP-certified products shall not contain SVHC substances (Substances of Very High Concerns)<sup>3</sup> or CMR substances, in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1272/2008 (CLP), except for the fragrances (according to ISO 9235). However, the final product may not be classified in the H400 series, according to Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 (CLP) on the classification, labeling and packaging of substances and mixtures.<sup>4</sup>

If no safety analysis and/or efficacy study for the active ingredients of biocides exists, at least one risk assessment analysis must have been carried out in accordance with the "Guidelines for Health Assessments" from the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung).

Testing on animals is not allowed in connection with the manufacture and distribution of NCP-certified products, with the exception of efficacy studies for raw materials used for biocides. Testing on animals in order to determine the LD<sub>50</sub> values for vertebrates and/or the aquatic toxicity for raw materials is not allowed. Data on similar substances may be used to calculate an analogy or data may be determined through in-vitro-experiments.

NCP-certified products are produced neither from nor by nor with the help of genetically modified organism (GMO). The PCR-Method is recognized.

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<sup>3</sup> As part of compliance with the REACH Regulation, SVHC substances must be labeled as such.

<sup>4</sup> The equation of the CLP Regulation (Regulation (EC) 1272/2008) is used for the calculation.

Threshold level correlates with EU-Regulation on Organic Agriculture: 0,9%

### 3. DEFINITION OF APPROVED GROUPS OF MATERIALS

The ingredients for care products that meet the NCP standards are divided into the following groups:

- **Natural Materials:** raw materials of vegetable, inorganic-mineral or animal origin which have not been chemically modified, as well as mixtures or the products of a reaction of these materials with each other.
- **Modified Materials:** raw materials derived from a natural substance in accordance with the definition provided above through approved chemical reactions.
- **Nature-identical Material:** substances which appear in nature but can't be gained by the allowed chemical processes.
- **Materials used for biocides, substances for the monitoring of pest, and repellents:** substances which are used to kill, deter, or attract pests.

### 4. RAW MATERIALS AND THEIR PRODUCTION PROCESSES

The following raw materials and production methods may be used for NCP-certified products:

#### 4.1 NATURAL MATERIALS

Only physical methods, with the use of the extraction agents and catalyzers listed in section 2.4, may be used for the extraction of natural materials. Additionally, enzymatic and microbiological methods are only permitted if they exclusively use enzymes or microorganisms that also occur in nature.

##### 4.1.1 NATURAL MATERIALS OF VEGETABLE OR ANIMAL ORIGIN

Plant and animal natural materials are preferably derived from certified organic

sources. Regarding the use of Gene Modified Organisms (GMOs), the requirements of the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture 834/2007 apply for both the finished product and the raw materials.

The use of all chemically unaltered natural plant substances (essential oils, fats, extracts, etc.) is principally allowed.

Animal raw materials used as a fertilizer or as a protective agent should be drawn either from excrements or from by-products of the slaughtering process. Animal and plant raw materials from endangered species may only be drawn from animal welfare.

Raw materials based on palm oil or palm-kernel-oil, which are not preventable, derive from sustainable cultivation, at least RSPO-origin, if available.

#### 4.1.2 MINERAL NATURAL MATERIALS

Mineral natural materials are generally permitted, provided they were obtained by physical methods and not chemically altered. Mineral salts such as magnesium sulfate or sodium chloride may be used in NCP-certified products. Exceptions are listed under section 3 "Prohibited Materials."

#### 4.1.3 FRAGRANCES

Fragrances that correspond to the ISO standard 9235, as well as biotechnology-derived fragrances, may be used in NCP-certified products. The certificate of compliance with ISO 9235 is sufficient for a certification under the NCP-standard.

#### 4.1.4 WATER

Water is a natural substance. Water can only be classified as a natural substance arising from agriculture, if it comes directly from a plant source. In this case, it can be designated as such if the original plant material is certified organic.



## 4.2 MODIFIED RAW MATERIALS

Modified raw materials may be obtained from natural materials, as defined above, by the following chemical reactions: hydrolysis (including saponification), neutralization, condensation by the elimination of water, esterification, transesterification, hydrogenation, hydrogenolysis, dehydrogenation, glycosylation, phosphorylation, sulfation, amidation, oxidation (with oxygen, ozone or peroxides) and pyrolysis. The use of organic halogen compounds for the production of modified raw materials is not permitted.

### 4.2.1 SURFACTANTS

Surfactants must be derived from raw materials of natural origin. All surfactants must demonstrate a biodegradability of > 60% within 28 days, in accordance with the OECD test 310 (EN ISO 14593, CO<sub>2</sub> headspace test) for aerobic degradation and OECD test 311 (EN ISO 11734) for anaerobic degradation.

Surfactants from coniferous resins are not permitted due to their aquatic toxicity.

### 4.2.2 EXTRACTION AGENTS AND CATALYZERS

The following extraction agents for natural materials are permitted: water, vegetable alcohol, carbonic acid, vegetable fats and oils, and glycerin stemming from plant material. Furthermore, only enzymatic and microbiological methods that also occur in nature may be used.

Pre-conservation as well as technical and chemical catalyzers, if they remain in the final product, must be used in accordance with the guidelines.

### 4.2.3 AEROSOLS

Propellant gases are considered to be components of the final product. NCP-certified products may use the following propellant gases: carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and compressed air.

### 4.3 NATURE-IDENTICAL RAW MATERIAL

The recognized nature-identical raw materials are listed in the white-list. The use of nature-identical raw materials has to be justified.

### 4.4 MATERIALS USED FOR BIOCIDES, SUBSTANCES FOR THE MONITORING OF PEST, AND REPELLENTS, AS WELL AS PLANT PROTECTION AGENTS

The positive list of biocides and plant protection agents sets forth all tolerated substances based on the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture 834/2007, without which no biocide, pest monitoring substance, or repellent could be effective or justifiable. It consists of the current Annex II of the Implementing Rules for the EU Regulation on Organic Agriculture number 889/2008 and a few additional raw materials which are necessary as a carrier for active ingredients. All other raw materials found in the finished product must comply with the NCP criteria.

## 5. PROHIBITED MATERIALS

Materials from the following groups may **not** be used for NCP-certified products:

- Materials of petrochemical origin, with the exception of the materials found on the positive list for biocides and plant protection agents
- Poorly biodegradable organic substances and anaerobically non-degradable organic substances listed in the DID list of the EU Regulations EcoLabel<sup>5</sup>
- Surfactants from coniferous resins
- EDTA-chelating agents, glutaraldehyde, formaldehyde or formaldehyde splitters
- Halogenated organic compounds
- Synthetic fats, oils, waxes or silicones
- Aromatic amines, ethanolamines and ethanol derivatives
- Synthetic fragrances
- Mercury

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<sup>5</sup> See: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/did\\_list/didlist\\_part\\_a\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/did_list/didlist_part_a_en.pdf) anaerob marked with "N" means NON-degradable, aerobic marked with "P" means POORLY degradable.

- Musk compounds
- Phthalates
- Polyethylene glycol (PEG) and PEG derivatives
- Synthetic surfactants such as alkylbenzolsulphonates
- Quaternary ammonium compounds
- Borium and its derivatives
- Phosphorus and synthetic phosphates
- Mineral acids (H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, HCl, H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, ...) and their derivatives
- Mineral bases, with the exception of NaOH, Ca(OH)<sub>2</sub>, Mg(OH)<sub>2</sub>, and KOH, as long as their concentrations in the final product do not exceed 0.05%.
- Ethoxylated substances

## 6. RADIOACTIVE RADIATION AND NANO MATERIALS

The treatment of vegetable and animal raw materials or the end product with ionizing radiation is not permitted. Raw materials that are required by the EU cosmetic regulation to indicate the presence of nano materials may not be used in NCP-certified products.

## 7. PACKAGING AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

NCP-certified products are required to use environmentally friendly packaging. This includes reusable packaging or disposable packaging made of recyclable material, such as PE and PP plastic, cardboard, paper or metal. Individual packaging for small amounts of product should be avoided or replaced by water-soluble packaging - preferably from organic origin.

Refillable packaging as well as a recycling or refill-service designed to minimize packaging should be offered on the market or to cooperation partners.

All reusable and refillable packaging should be labeled with instructions and information on the effects and safety aspects of the product and an instruction pamphlet with information on the efficient and proper use of the product must be included. This involves the necessary use of water softeners in hard water to minimize the non-degradable lime soap residue.

## 8. GOOD MANUFACTURING PRACTICE (GMP)

Any company that brings NCP-certified products on the market, must establish a quality management system (QM system) to ensure traceability and quality control in accordance with the HACCP and GMP for cosmetics (ISO 22716).

The QM system should also be expanded to include measures for environmental protection and sustainability as part of a continuous improvement. The Certified Sustainable Economics (CSE) Standard ([www.cse-label.org](http://www.cse-label.org)) provides a good orientation for this requirement.

## 9. CONDITIONS FOR PRESENTING

The products may be advertized as a “NCP Nature Care Product” and use the NCP Standard’s label for their product.

All base materials of the ingredients (for example: olive oil in soap) must be listed on the outside of the packaging in accordance with the INCI list, so far as the INCI provides information for the raw material. Ingredients should be listed in the prevailing official language(s) for the area(s) where the products are sold. All raw materials and catalyzers contained in the product, particularly pre-conservation and solvents must be listed by their INCI-appropriated name. If no INCI-appropriated name for the materials exist, then the product should indicate the common names used in the region.

A NCP-certified product may be labelled as a vegan natural product if no substance is of animal origin or is obtained from animal substances.

A NCP-certified product may be advertized as a "Bio Care Product" or "Organic Care Product" if at least 95% of the agricultural ingredients are certified organic. In this case, the proportions of the organic ingredients, expressed in percentages, must be indicated.

If the NCP-certified product contains certified organic ingredients, they may be labeled as follows:

1. Information on the organic quality of the ingredients used can only be indicated in the compulsory "Index of Ingredients" if they are labeled in such a way that consumers can unambiguously and precisely distinguish to which ingredients the label applies. In this case, the statement "organic quality" refers to the biological starting material in accordance with the standard. An asterics (\*) following the ingredient's name, for example, may be used as a precise indication of organic quality. This rule applies for the phrase "organic" or "certified organic" and for all synonymously used terms and applies for all languages used on the product.
2. The proportions of the organic ingredients in relation to the total of components in the final product must be indicated as a percentage. The percentages should be given as whole numbers, fractions should be rounded up. An example of an acceptable indication is: 100% of ingredients that apply for organic certification are certified organic, organic content of final product: 70%.
3. As mentioned in section 7.2, when calculating the percentages of organic ingredients, extraction agents should be managed as follows:
  - Organic ingredients are recorded in their full weight, for example, plant parts, pressed oils, pressed juices and essential oils.
  - Organic plant extracts can be recorded in their full weight, if the extracting agent (CO<sub>2</sub> for example) is no longer present in the final product or if the remaining extracting agent is also organic. Please use the following formula:

$$X = \frac{P}{P+E} \times 100$$

Where X = Percentage of organic material in the extract, P = Mass of the plant material used, E = Mass of the extracting agent used

4. For concentrates, the weight before concentration is not reported. Additionally, the water used to reconstitute the concentrates should not be taken into account.

## **10. CHANGE IN SUPPLIERS**

Raw material suppliers may be changed without a notification to the NPC-certifiers if the raw material in question is not subject to any restrictions. If the raw material is subject to restrictions, continued compliance with the restriction must be demonstrated upon examination.