

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUILDING PRODUCTS' ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT NOW ON SHOW

New Zealanders will be able to find out more about the environmental impact of various building products following the launch of a new programme that provides Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

The Australasian Environmental Product Declaration (EPD®) Programme has been set up so that construction product manufacturers in New Zealand and Australia can develop EPD, providing credible, science-based information about the environmental performance of their products.

Its launch in New Zealand has been supported by the BRANZ Building Research Levy.

Lynda Amitrano, BRANZ building sustainability manager, said the construction sector had led the development of EPDs internationally.

“We are very pleased EPDs have been introduced to Australasia. EPDs supply information about the environmental impact of a product. This international, scientific, unbiased analysis will help businesses, designers, and consumers fully understand the environmental impact of their products. “The process of developing an EPD can help companies identify opportunities for cost savings and improved environmental performance, whilst publication of an EPD provides transparency and a commitment to continuous improvement to their customers.

“EPDs present facts about a product’s environmental performance based on scientific principles and independent verification.”

In 2011, BRANZ research identified EPDs as a useful tool to help manufacturers communicate with their customers about the environmental aspects of their products, Ms Amitrano said.

The Building Research Levy has co-funded the development of the Australasian EPD® Programme accepted in Australia and New Zealand. The Australasian EPD® Programme is a not-for-profit strategic joint venture between the Life Cycle Association of New Zealand (LCANZ) and the Australian Life Cycle Assessment Society (ALCAS).

Construction products with EPDs are now gaining credits in green building rating systems around the world including LEED, BREEAM and most recently, Green Star in Australia.

Allied Concrete is the first New Zealand company to publish an EPD.

Chris Munn, National Technical Manager at Allied Concrete, said: “For us, the EPD format was a transparent and smart way to present our product’s environmental profile.

“As a result of developing our EPD, we can encourage our customers to select different concretes based on environmental considerations as well as structural performance. We also have a much better understanding of how our business operates.

“We can now drive efficiency improvements across the business and assess the environmental impact of business decisions. Publishing an EPD has been a great initiative for us. Our expectation is that the New Zealand Green Building Council will recognise EPD’s here in the near future.”

The Australasian EPD® Programme is aligned with the International EPD® System, one of the world’s longest established and largest EPD programme operators.

Bryan King, Director of the Australasian EPD® Programme, said: “This alignment provides greater global recognition and compatibility, as well as being a cost effective way for Australasian EPD producers to leverage existing information and experience.”

The EPD Programme was launched to the construction sector at the Building a Better New Zealand 2014 conference in Auckland on 3 – 5 September.

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About BRANZ

BRANZ is an independent and impartial research, testing, consulting and information company providing services and resource for the building industry. For more details see branz.co.nz

About Allied Concrete

Allied Concrete is a privately owned company, part of HW Richardson Group of Companies. The Group which originated in Southland has its Head Office in Invercargill. Allied Concrete and its associated companies have 50 concrete plants throughout the country as well as several mobile plants. Approximately half of its plants run in partnership with Holcim NZ.

Their environmental product declaration (EPD) is for ready mixed concrete using Holcim manufactured cement, and is representative of concrete produced at 28 Allied Concrete batching plants around New Zealand.

For more details see www.alliedconcrete.co.nz

The Allied Concrete EPD is published on the International EPD® System website: <http://www.environdec.com/en/Detail/?Epd=10094>

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About the Australasian EPD® Programme

The Australasian EPD® Programme and the International EPD® System operate an aligned programme for Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs). In partnership they operate a system to verify and register EPD®s and maintain a public library of EPD®s and Product Category Rules in accordance with ISO 14025.

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For more details see www.epd-australia.com

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