



CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

PROCUREMENT GUIDE

Version 3.1

30 SEPTEMBER 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Foreword	3
	Introduction	4
	Glossary	6
1	Socially responsible procurement and tendering	7
1.1	Socially responsible procurement	7
1.2	Climate neutral procurement with the CO ₂ Performance Ladder	8
2	The CO₂ Performance Ladder as a procurement tool	9
2.1	In short: how does it work?	9
2.2	Legal framework for tendering with the CO ₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion	10
2.3	How does the CO ₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion work?	12
2.4	What is the effect of the CO ₂ Performance Ladder on projects?	14
3	How is the CO₂ Performance Ladder applied in tenders? ..	15
	Step 1: Policy framework for the contracting authority	17
	Step 2: Consideration of the use of the CO ₂ Performance Ladder	18
	Step 3: Preparation of the tender	18
	Steps 4, 5, 6 Publication of the tender, procedure and award	20
	Step 7: Closing the contract	20
	Step 8: Project implementation	21
	Step 9: Demonstration of the implementation level	21
	Step 10: Penalty	22
4	Implementation of projects with an award advantage	23
4.1	The project file	23
4.2	Dialogue during project implementations on CO ₂ reduction	25
4.3	Step-by-step plan and tips for a meaningful dialogue	26
	Links to relevant information	30
	Colophon	31
	Annex A: MEAT criterion text	32
	Annex B: Example implementation level tender form	38

FOREWORD

Dear reader,

The CO₂ Performance Ladder, in short “the Ladder”, has been used as a purchasing tool for 12.5 years by more than 150 contracting authorities in the Netherlands. Partly due to these tenders in the infrastructure and civil engineering, ICT, facility services, landscaping and waste sector, among other things, more than 1,100 organisations have now been certified for the Ladder. The Ladder is also used as a procurement tool in Belgium and SKAO is investigating its application in Europe as an tool for “*the power of procurement*”.

While the **CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook** [↗](#) is the core of the CO₂ Performance Ladder as a management system, this Procurement Guide is the core of the CO₂ Performance Ladder as a tendering tool. The requirements for certification and the manner of tendering with the Ladder are always evolving, to keep them in line with practice, the needs of organisations and (climate) policy as much as possible. This is the reason why this Guide has now been updated. In this guide, you can read how to use the Ladder effectively in tenders.



If you want to start applying the CO₂ Performance Ladder in tenders as an organisation, in this Guide you will find the considerations as to why, when and how you can use the Ladder as a MEAT criterion. If you have been using the CO₂ Performance Ladder as a tendering tool for some time, this updated guide will refresh your knowledge and the Dialogue (paragraph 4.2) may offer an interesting addition for even more impact on your project.

I wish you every success in applying the “power of procurement” to work together to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Sincerely,

Annemiek Lauwerijssen

Manager, The Foundation for climate friendly procurement and business

INTRODUCTION

This Procurement Guide 3.1 is the document for purchasers to use if you want to apply the CO₂ Performance Ladder Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) criterion in your procurement or tender. Chapter 2 describes how the application of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in tenders works, and in Chapter 3, you will find a number of clear steps on how a contracting authority can include the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion in a tender. In addition, Chapter 4 provides insight into the impact of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in the implementation of projects and how you as a contracting authority can make use of this, for example in the application of the dialogue to projects and the project file.

RATIONALE

A direct reason for updating this Guide is the publication of **Handbook 3.1** [↗](#) (June 2020)¹. This has resulted in an important further development of the standard for companies and contracting authorities: the requirements for companies on projects have been clarified and tightened in various ways. This makes the impact, measures and progress of CO₂ reduction on projects more visible to everyone. For example, it is now mandatory for all certified companies to create a project file for all projects that have been awarded with the CO₂ Performance Ladder, including planning and monitoring of the progress of CO₂ reduction at the project level. This development of the CO₂ Performance Ladder fits in well with the further professionalisation of Socially Responsible Procurement (SPP): contracting authorities not only want to manage and reward sustainability with SPP, but they also want to know what the impact is.

MAIN CHANGES

SKAO has been working with stakeholders such as contracting authorities and companies for some time to improve the distinctiveness of the CO₂ Performance Ladder. One of the products that has recently been developed is the Dialogue between client and contractor during project implementations. The Dialogue has been tested in practice by various companies and contracting authorities. The Dialogue approach is described in Chapter 4.

¹ CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1 is the standard that sets out the requirements and conditions in order for certificate holders to obtain and maintain a CO₂ Performance Ladder Certificate. The method of tendering using the Ladder and the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criteria can be found in this Procurement Guide (for contracting authorities).

APPLICATION OF THIS GUIDE


The tendering method with the CO₂ Performance Ladder has not been changed by the publication of Handbook 3.1. The MEAT criterion version 3.1 contains requirements that are set for the project to be tendered. These requirements match the requirements of the standard (Handbook 3.1) on the basis of which an organisation can obtain a CO₂ Awareness Certificate. The Handbook is authoritative for the explanation of the concepts that play a role in both the MEAT criterion and in the certification of the organisation.

The methodology described in this Guide can be applied in European tenders as well as in tenders based on the 2016 Dutch Works Tender Regulations, by public clients and special sector companies. The Procurement Guide version 3.1 has been reviewed and adopted by the SKAO Procurement Advisory Council, which consists of procurement experts from a number of contracting authorities. The Guide is intended for use of the Ladder in tenders in the context of the Netherlands.

The actual CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion is included in Annex A, including a reference to the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1.

GLOSSARY

The CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1 contains an extensive list of definitions of terms used. Below are the frequently used terms in this document, supplemented with some other definitions that are relevant to tendering with the Ladder:

- **Contracting authority:** (Art 1.1 of the 2012 Procurement Act): the state, any province, municipality, water board or public-law institution or partnership of these authorities or public-law institutions. NB: In this guide, the contracting authority is also referred to as the client.
- **Provider:** a provider is an organisation that proposes works, services and/or supplies. The organisation (*contracting authority*) purchases (acquires) works, services and/or supplies from suppliers. NB: In this guide, the provider is also referred to as the tenderer or contractor.
- **CO₂ Awareness Certificate:** document issued by a LadderCI recognised for that purpose, which demonstrates the justified confidence that the management system for the CO₂ awareness of an organisation meets the requirements for the level of the CO₂ Performance Ladder stated on the certificate.
- **Chain:** A chain is defined as a particular line of supplying and consuming companies and organisations.
- **LadderCI:** the LadderCI is a certifying institution that is accredited for the CO₂ Performance Ladder. An overview of accredited LadderCIs can be found [here](#) .
- **Socially Responsible Procurement (SPP):** in addition to the price of products, the services or works, the social and environmental aspects are also taken into account.
- **Projects:** a project may be a construction project on a construction site, a maintenance contract, a consultancy and design contract or a delivery of goods and services.
- **Project file:** a project file is a file of a project containing the substantiation of the implementation of the requirements of the CO₂ Performance Ladder for that specific project.
- **Projects for which a CO₂-related award advantage has been obtained:** these are the projects of an organisation in which the CO₂ Performance Ladder played a role in the tender. It is not relevant here whether or not the award advantage was decisive in obtaining the contract, or how the CO₂ Performance Ladder was requested in the tender.
- **Project statement:** a statement on whether the requirements of the criterion associated with the proposed implementation level have been met during the project implementation. The project statement must be issued by an independent Certifying Institution (CI) accredited as a LadderCI.

1

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT AND TENDERING

1.1

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT


Socially Responsible Procurement (SPP) is an effective way to help reduce CO₂ emissions, environmental impact and use of raw materials, to create an inclusive labour market and to tackle human and environmental abuses in international chains (National SPP plan, 2021). On the [PIANOo](#) website, you will find more information about the National SPP plan, the SPP themes and criteria and CO₂ pricing, among other things. With the CO₂ Performance Ladder as a purchasing tool, a contracting authority can transpose its aspirations with regard to CO₂ reduction into a concrete strategy to manage the energy consumption and CO₂ reduction of companies, their projects and the (material) chains. The Ladder can thereby give substance to the SPP themes of climate, environment and the use of sustainable materials.

PROCUREMENT WITH IMPACT AND THE POWER OF PROCUREMENT

Research by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment ([RIVM](#)), 2021) has shown that governments in the Netherlands jointly procure 85 billion euros each year. This research also shows which sectors have the most impact on the climate: construction, as well as commercial services, transport and energy procurement. Contracting authorities can have significant influence on the market through the size of their purchasing volume and the share they have in certain sectors and product groups. By focusing this influence on combating CO₂ emissions, environmental impact and use of raw materials, contracting authorities can set companies, sectors and material chains in motion. We call this positive effect on the market the *power of procurement*.

PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

Increasing numbers of contracting authorities are opting to obtain a CO₂ Awareness Certificate themselves. Certification on the Ladder has been designated by the national government as a best


practice for formulating stricter (CSR and SPP) objectives and aspirations, as well as for regularly monitoring their progress. Certification on the Ladder brings more focus, awareness and support for CO₂ reduction within organisations. It ensures that sustainability and CO₂ reduction increasingly become indicators in general business operations and in commissioning. It can also be a stepping stone to get started with CO₂ pricing. For more information about the “certified government”, visit the SKAO [website](#) .

The certification of contracting authorities on the CO₂ Performance Ladder is not a condition for the application of the tendering tool and is not further explained in this Procurement Guide.

1.2

CLIMATE NEUTRAL PROCUREMENT WITH THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

The CO₂ Performance Ladder is an SPP instrument that focuses on reducing the energy consumption and CO₂ emissions of companies, their projects and *supply chains*. The Ladder may be used in all product categories to manage CO₂, climate, environment, energy and sustainability. The Ladder is increasingly used in product groups where the CO₂ impact is relatively large, for instance, civil engineering, ICT, facility services, landscaping, the waste sector and sectors such as the healthcare sector.

When a contracting authority in a certain sector or region begins to tender with the Ladder, this has a direct effect on the market. Check [here](#)  for recent examples of CO₂ Performance Ladder projects.

Some advantages of procurement with the CO₂ Performance Ladder:

- **Robust and reliable** The CO₂ Performance Ladder has now been in existence for 12.5 years and with 150 contracting authorities and more than 1100 certified organisations, it is the largest sustainable procurement instrument in the Netherlands. The instrument is in line with European procurement guidelines and has already been used successfully for hundreds of projects.
- **User-friendly for purchasers** The performance that companies must meet for the MEAT criterion are tested and guaranteed by external parties. Self-testing by the contracting authority is thus redundant.
- **Effective and scientifically-proven** Procurement sets companies and markets in motion to reduce CO₂. [Research](#)  also shows that certified organisations reduce on average twice as fast as the Dutch average.
- **Encourages and rewards** The award advantage encourages companies in a positive way to seriously and structurally work on CO₂ reduction.

2

THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER AS A PROCUREMENT TOOL

2.1

IN SHORT: HOW DOES IT WORK?

The CO₂ Performance Ladder consists of:

- The **tendering instrument** [↗](#) with the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion. This has 5 different implementation levels for CO₂ management in projects, and challenges organisations to achieve CO₂ reduction within the framework of a project.
- The CO₂ Performance Ladder **certification scheme** [↗](#). Based on this scheme, organisations may implement a CO₂ management system. This also has 5 different levels that may be certified with the CO₂ Awareness Certificate as proof.

The core of the use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in tenders is that by applying the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion, suppliers receive an award advantage for CO₂ reduction at the project level. This can be demonstrated in two ways (for details, see Chapter 3, step 3):

- **OPTION 1** The provider demonstrates, at the project-specific level, with a *project statement* that it (at the project-specific level) meets the implementation level (and underlying levels) with which it has tendered;
- **OPTION 2** The provider has a *CO₂ Awareness Certificate*. The *CO₂ Awareness Certificate* is proof of certification based on the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1. The provider thereby demonstrates that the entire organisation acts in a CO₂-aware manner, in addition to the projects that the organisation carries out, where the levels of the certificate and of the MEAT criterion are comparable.

In a tender with the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion, having or obtaining a CO₂ Awareness Certificate is not a requirement, but a way to meet the MEAT criterion.

In both cases, the provider must demonstrate that it complies with the MEAT criterion within one year after the award and then annually, during the project duration. For short-term projects, upon project completion, it must be demonstrated that the MEAT criterion has been met.

If the tendering tool is used often in a particular sector, it is more efficient for market parties in that sector to be certified as an organisation. This encourages market parties to structurally and continuously work on CO₂ reduction in their business operations, projects and (at levels 4 and 5) also in the chain with other clients, subcontractors and materials. Certified organisations thus work on continuous improvement of their CO₂ management system and on the reduction of their CO₂ footprint, as well as doing this within their projects.

The major advantage of tendering with the CO₂ Performance Ladder for the contracting authority is that the performance of a company to meet the MEAT criterion is tested and guaranteed by an external party. A self-test of the criterion in the project implementation is thus redundant. However, when carrying out the project, it is recommended that a client enter into a discussion with the contractor about the steps that the contractor is taking to reduce CO₂ in the project. There may also be more far-reaching reduction options that a contractor alone cannot implement. This is discussed further in Chapter 4 in the Dialogue section.

2.2

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR TENDERING WITH THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER MEAT CRITERION

EUROPEAN PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVES AND DUTCH PROCUREMENT ACT

The legal frameworks for procurement with MEAT are the European Procurement Directives (Directive 2014/25/EU for the award of public contracts or Directive 2014/24/EU for the award of contracts for water, energy, transport and postal services of the European Parliament and the Council). These guidelines are included in the Dutch 2012 Procurement Act as last amended by law on 18 April 2019.

THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER AS AN AWARD CRITERION

Tender documents have different types of criteria and requirements. See also the **PIANOo website** [\[link\]](#). The CO₂ Performance Ladder tender tool is intended to be used as a MEAT award criterion in tenders (see box). The tool acts as a positive incentive by rewarding and encouraging CO₂ reduction with an award advantage. This is often more effective than punishing or forcing companies, employees and sectors to get moving. It is strongly recommended that the application described here not be deviated from.

THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER IS NOT APPROPRIATE AS A SUITABILITY REQUIREMENT OR SELECTION CRITERION

There are several reasons for this:

- The use of a certificate as a suitability criterion or selection criterion means that parties without the requested (level of the) certificate cannot participate or are less likely to be selected. This discriminates against foreign parties or small companies, for example. From a procurement law point of view, this is not permitted. This principle applies to all tenders: European, National, and private. Such a suitability requirement is just as discriminatory for small contracts. With contracts, no further selection takes place in any case.
- The implementation of the CO₂ Performance Ladder within an organisation takes time and effort. In most situations, it will be disproportionate to require an organisation to have the entire organisation certified prior to bidding for a specific project. Such a requirement is not reasonable for a project that will only form a (small) part of the turnover of the organisation. From the point of view of procurement law, there is therefore insufficient connection between the requirement and the subject of the contract. For that reason too, such a requirement as a suitability criterion or selection criterion is not permitted.

If a provider has the CO₂ Awareness Certificate, this not only says something about the operation management of an organisation, but also about the contracts that an organisation performs. In the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook, there are explicit requirements for projects that have been awarded to the organisation by means of a tender. The subject of the award thus becomes an *integral part* of the (maintenance of the) CO₂ Awareness Certificate and a certified company must set up the project in such a way that it meets the requirements. These requirements for projects are naturally also part of an audit that is performed annually at the organisation as part of the CO₂ Awareness Certificate.

Several MEAT criteria may be used concurrently in a tender. In addition to the use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion, other criteria aimed at sustainability may also be used. The Socially Responsible Procurement criteria (SPP criteria) and the Environmental Cost Indicator (ECI) are commonly used. This allows the contracting authority to set substantive performance requirements for the entire project or for specific parts of a tender.

2.3

HOW DOES THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER MEAT CRITERION WORK

In tendering based on the best price-quality ratio, the client defines a quality criterion that is valued separately and by which tenderers may distinguish themselves. Annex A contains the standard MEAT Criterion for the CO₂ Performance Ladder to be adopted in a tender. In this way, the client encourages the tenderer to adopt a structured approach to CO₂ reduction and takes this into account in the award decision.

The MEAT criterion has different implementation levels. These implementation levels are distinguished by the implementation in the project in terms of the actual CO₂ reduction, as well as by the maturity with which the project management system functions to ensure this. The contractor must concretise the chosen implementation level during the project implementation.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEAT IMPLEMENTATION LEVELS AND CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER LEVELS

In tenders with the CO₂ Performance Ladder, the contracting authority must make use of the MEAT criterion with sub-criteria at different implementation levels. These subcriteria and implementation levels correspond to the requirements and different levels of the CO₂ Performance Ladder (see Figure 1), which are described in the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook.

MEAT IMPLEMENTATION LEVELS		CO ₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER LEVELS
Implementation level 1	↔	CO ₂ Awareness Certificate level 1
Implementation level 2	↔	CO ₂ Awareness Certificate level 2
Implementation level 3	↔	CO ₂ Awareness Certificate level 3
Implementation level 4	↔	CO ₂ Awareness Certificate level 4
Implementation level 5	↔	CO ₂ Awareness Certificate level 5

Figure 1 Relationship between MEAT implementation levels and CO₂ Performance Ladder levels

When bidding on a tender, the provider selects the implementation level at which it wishes to bid and demonstrates that it meets the requirements of the selected implementation level during the project implementation.

The full MEAT criterion, including the implementation levels, can be found in **Annex A**.

THE AWARD ADVANTAGE

The contracting authority evaluates the implementation level as a qualitative part of the tender in the context of the best price-quality ratio (MEAT). It also determines the amount of the award advantage for the various implementation levels and describes this in the tender documents. When tendering, the provider selects an implementation level and the associated award advantage.

The contracting authority also determines the valuation scale (the amount of the award advantage per implementation level) and the way in which this is calculated. This must be included in the tender documents. With this, it becomes clear how this advantage relates to the valuation of other qualitative elements (MEAT criteria) of the tender.

It is advisable to link an award advantage to each proposed implementation level, expressed as a percentage of the tender price or as a fixed amount, which is (notionally) deducted from the tender sum (the principle of awarding on the basis of value).

The distribution of those monetary values does not need to always be linear; higher levels (for example 4 and 5) may possibly be given a comparatively greater award advantage because of the greater efforts that providers must exert in order to obtain a certificate at the higher levels. If the CO₂ Performance Ladder is still relatively unknown in a market, the contracting authority may choose to introduce the Ladder by giving levels 3, 4 and 5 the same award advantage in the initial tenders. Over a period of time, when market participants become familiar with the Ladder, levels 4 and 5 can then obtain a greater award advantage.

Example of a valuation table: Tender with an estimated value of 1 million euros

MEAT IMPLEMENTATION LEVELS	NOTIONAL DISCOUNT ON THE TENDER PRICE
Implementation level 1	€10.000 (1%)
Implementation level 2	€20.000 (2%)
Implementation level 3	€30.000 (3%)
Implementation level 4	€50.000 (5%)
Implementation level 5	€80.000 (8%)

The implementation level proposed during the tender (including the underlying levels) will explicitly become an integral part of the contract upon award.

MEETING THE AWARD CRITERION WITH PROJECT A STATEMENT OR A CO₂ AWARENESS CERTIFICATE

During the project implementation, the provider must meet the selected implementation level. This may be at the project-specific level by means of a project statement or by means of the CO₂ Awareness Certificate.

In a tender with the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion, obtaining a CO₂ Awareness Certificate is not a requirement, but one of the ways to demonstrate that the proposed implementation level is achieved.

2.4

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER ON PROJECTS?

The use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion helps to reduce CO₂ in projects and to reward organisations for their implementations when awarding a project.

If the CO₂ Performance Ladder is used as a tendering tool for a project, this means that the contractor must meet a number of requirements when implementing the project. It is *not* relevant here whether or not the award advantage was decisive in obtaining the contract.

The requirements for the project differ per implementation level of the Ladder, and relate to:

- Reduction objectives to be defined by the contractor itself;
- Associated measures;
- Creating insight into the CO₂ footprint;
- Communication about CO₂ reduction, internally and with the client.

The exact requirements for each implementation level are detailed in Annex A. At level 3; the requirements focus in particular on the use of equipment, transport and passenger transport. At level 4 or 5, the CO₂ impact of materials, subcontractors and other chain effects are also included.

3

HOW IS THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER APPLIED IN TENDERS?

THE MOST IMPORTANT STEPS FOR APPLYING THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER IN TENDERS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

POLICY

1 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

Draw up an implementation and policy framework aimed at CO₂ reduction.

2 CONSIDERATION OF THE USE OF THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

Consider for each tender whether the use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder makes sense for the specific project.

TENDER

3 PREPARATION OF THE TENDER

Prepare the tender using the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion; include the relevant texts in the tender documents and determine the amount of the award advantage. See also paragraph 2.3.2.

4 PUBLICATION OF THE TENDER

Publish the tender with the CO₂ Performance Ladder award criterion and indicate that CO₂ reduction is being managed and rewarded.

5 TENDER

Receive the tenders. In them, the tenderers state the implementation level that they will achieve in the project. At the time of tender, companies do not yet need to be in possession of a CO₂ Awareness Certificate or project statement.

6 AWARD

Assess the tenders and consider the award advantage. The stated implementation level corresponds to the amount of the award advantage. Award the project to the tenderer with the Best Price Quality Ratio.

7 CONTRACT CLOSING

Conclude the contract with the winning tenderer. The implementation level proposed by the tenderer is an integral part of the contract and must be achieved.

IMPLEMENTATION

8 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The contractor carries out the project. It organises the project so that it meets the requirements of the implementation level and keeps a project file for this purpose. If necessary, the client and contractor have a dialogue about CO₂ reduction in the project. The project file and the dialogue are explained in Chapter 4.

9 DEMONSTRATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

Receive the *project statement* or a *CO₂ Awareness Certificate* with which the contractor demonstrates that the agreed implementation level has been met. For long-term projects, the contractor must demonstrate within one year of awarding that the agreed implementation level has been achieved and subsequently maintained for the project duration. For projects with a duration of less than one year, the agreed implementation level must be met upon delivery. In both cases, the implementation level assessment is the responsibility of an external and independent party: a Certifying Institution.

10 PENALTY

If a company is unable to provide proof, impose the sanctions set out in the tender documents.

Step 1

POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY


Ideally, your organisation has 1) an aspiration to reduce CO₂ 2) a policy objective in which the aspiration is linked to concrete goals and 3) a strategy on how the organisation will achieve these goals. The CO₂ Performance Ladder may form a structural part of your SPP policy and strategy. This gives concrete form to the aspiration to reduce CO₂ and creates clarity both internally and for the market. Applying the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion requires effort and investment from the tendering companies. If the Ladder is used a single time and not another for certain purchasing categories, then it is unclear to tenderers whether they can earn back the investments.

It should then be considered in which tenders it makes sense to use the Ladder. It helps to have a global insight into the spending (expenditure) of the organisation and the climate impact per purchasing category. The following aspects, among others, play a role in this consideration:

- Purchasing volume in the relevant purchasing category;
- Size and CO₂ emissions of the sector and of the specific project;
- The abilities of tenderers to influence emissions during the project implementation;
- The familiarity of the market with the CO₂ Performance Ladder²;
- The frequency of (similar) tenders.

Based on this assessment framework, the organisation can determine for which type of tenders the MEAT criterion will be used and communicate this internally and externally. This gives market parties certainty about the way in which tenders are marketed.

Recommendation: Market parties need time to prepare for the use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion. If your organisation has made the choice to apply the MEAT criterion in certain tenders, it is advisable to communicate this well in advance with the potential suppliers.

² Are you interested in knowing which organisations are already certified? Check the page at <https://www.co2-prestatieladder.nl/nl/certificaathouders>  for an up-to-date status.

Step 2

CONSIDERATION OF THE USE OF THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

Make an assessment for each project about the application of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion on the basis of the policy framework and the associated assessment framework.

Step 3

PREPARATION OF THE TENDER

Record the following in the tender documents:

1. Include the full text of the MEAT criterion (see Annex A) as an Annex to the tender;
2. Describe the award advantage; including a valuation scale (see also paragraph 2.3.2) for the different implementation levels;
3. When explaining the MEAT criterion, lay down the following rules:
 - a. When tendering, the tenderer must make a choice between demonstrating fully at the project-specific level with a project statement, or fully demonstrating with the CO₂ Awareness Certificate. If a choice is made for a project-specific level demonstration at a certain level, that choice also applies to all underlying levels; mixed proof is not possible.
 - b. When tendering, the tenderer must indicate the implementation level at which the project will be performed when tendering.
 - c. This implementation level must be demonstrated within one year of award by means of a project statement or a CO₂ Awareness Certificate at the stated implementation level. With a longer term, the contractor must then annually demonstrate during the project term that the proposed implementation level and the underlying levels have been met during the project implementation. If a project has a duration of less than one year, the contractor must demonstrate upon delivery that the agreed implementation level of the MEAT criterion has been met.
 - d. Demonstrating the ambition level can be done in two ways:

OPTION 1 If a tenderer wants to demonstrate the level of ambition project-specific with a project statement, then the following applies:

- The burden of proof that the proposed implementation level of the MEAT criterion is met rests with the contractor; this burden of proof consists of a project file and a project statement from a certifying institution, stating that the proposed implementation level, including all underlying levels, of the MEAT criterion is met;
- The MEAT criterion must be ensured in the project management system used by the contractor;
- On the basis of the project file and assurance in the project management system, the contractor has a Certifying Institution (CI) check whether the MEAT criterion has been met;

- The contractor demonstrates that the CI is accredited for certification at the level of the Ladder certificate that corresponds to the proposed implementation level and that the person performing the testing on behalf of the CI has demonstrable experience with certifying companies at the level of the Ladder certificate that corresponds to the proposed implementation level;
- The testing by the CI takes place within one year of the contract award and then annually, during the project implementation; in the case of a project with a duration of less than one year, the testing by the CI must take place before the project completion;
- When bidding on the tender, the tenderer must indicate which CI will perform the testing;
- If the contractor has a CO₂ Awareness Certificate at a lower implementation level, the organisation may partly base the burden of proof on information from the management system associated with the CO₂ Awareness Certificate. However, the proof must be explicitly project-specific for the proposed implementation level, including all underlying levels; mixed proof is not possible;
- In the event that the contractor cannot demonstrate at the project-specific level that it meets the proposed implementation level (including all underlying levels), the contracting authority will impose a sanction that is greater than the award advantage enjoyed at the time of tender.

OPTION 2 If a tenderer wishes to demonstrate the level of ambition using the CO₂ Awareness Certificate, the following applies:

- Within one year and subsequently for the entire project duration, the contractor must demonstrably have a certificate at least at the contractually required level (see also paragraph 6.1.2 of the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1);
 - If a project has a duration of less than one year, the contractor must demonstrably have a certificate at least at the contractually required level upon delivery;
 - If an organisation intends to demonstrate its performance by means of a CO₂ Awareness Certificate, but fails to do so during the project implementation, then project-specific demonstration is only possible if the CI that will perform the testing has been named in advance when tendering;
 - If necessary, the contractor may use a certificate with a higher implementation level. In order to meet the requirements of the certificate, the project itself must therefore be carried out at the higher level (of the certificate). This is assessed by the CI in the Ladder assessment;
 - In the event that a combination of companies wishes to bid and make use of CO₂ Awareness Certificates, then – out of all of the organisations comprising the combination – the organisation with the lowest level on the CO₂ Performance Ladder determines the implementation level with which the combination may tender. If any of the parties cannot demonstrate with a CO₂ Awareness Certificate that it meets the proposed implementation level, or if the combination wishes to register at a higher level than the organisation with the lowest level allows, then no use can be made of CO₂ Awareness Certificates and the implementation level, including all underlying levels, must be demonstrated on a project-specific basis.
- e. If the proposed implementation level cannot be duly demonstrated, a sanction will be imposed; this sanction is described in the sanction paragraph of the

tender documents and must be included in the contract (see also paragraph 3.8).

- f. The client may include in the tender documents that the client have access to the project file (see also paragraph 4.1).
- g. The client may include in the tender documents that the client wishes to have an active dialogue with the contractor during the project implementation about further CO₂ reduction options (see also paragraph 4.2)

Steps 4, 5, 6

PUBLICATION OF THE TENDER, PROCEDURE AND AWARD

Go through the steps of the publication, tender and award. These steps are carried out in the same way as with other tenders. When tendering, the tenderer indicates at which level of the MEAT criterion it commits, for example via a separate form (see Annex B). For the assessment of the tenders, the proposed implementation level is taken into account in the award. At this time, the tenderer does not have to submit a project statement or CO₂ Awareness Certificate, as this substantive assessment takes place in step 9.

Step 7

CLOSING THE CONTRACT

When awarding the contract, include the implementation level proposed by the tenderer as a contract requirement in the contract. The following is hereby recorded:

- The way in which the implementation level may be demonstrated: with a project statement, or with a CO₂ Awareness Certificate of at least the indicated level, including the underlying levels.
- The period within which the tenderer must demonstrate the implementation level.
 - For a long-term project, the tenderer must demonstrate the implementation level within one year of the contract award, and subsequently submit a new project statement each year. The CO₂ Awareness Certificate must be valid for the entire project duration.
 - If the duration is less than one year, the tenderer must demonstrate the implementation level upon project completion.
- Describe in the sanctions paragraph that you will impose a sanction if the tenderer cannot duly demonstrate the proposed implementation level.

Step 8

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Now the implementation of the project starts. If the CO₂ Performance Ladder has played a role in the tender, the contractor must meet a number of requirements that it must fulfil at a project-specific level. The contractor substantiates these requirements with a project file and records their implementation administratively. As a client, you do not have to check the content of these requirements yourself. However, you may request the project file, so that you are aware of the measures that are being taken in the project.

You may also discuss with the contractor the steps it is taking to reduce CO₂ in the project. We call this the Dialogue. There may be more far-reaching reduction measures that you can⁹ achieve in collaboration with the contractor. Chapter 4 discusses the project file and the Dialogue in more detail.

Step 9

DEMONSTRATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL


Receive the *project statement* or a *CO₂ Awareness Certificate* with which the contractor demonstrates that the agreed implementation level has been met. The term as stated in the contract applies here.

The *project statement* is a statement issued by an independent Certifying Institution (CI) accredited as a LadderCI. This CI visits the project and assesses whether the requirements of the criterion associated with the proposed implementation level have been met during the project implementation and issues a statement about this.

The *CO₂ Awareness Certificate* is an organisation certificate based on the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook. If an organisation has a CO₂ Awareness Certificate at a certain level, then this constitutes sufficient proof that the organisation meets the requirements or the MEAT criterion when executing projects at the proposed implementation level. The provider thereby demonstrates that the entire organisation acts in a CO₂-aware manner, as well as in the projects that the organisation executes, where the levels the certificate and of the MEAT criterion are comparable.

FOCUS AREAS FOR STEP 9

- **SKAO tender website** If the CO₂ Awareness Certificate is used by a certified organisation in a project to demonstrate the implementation level, that organisation is obliged to register the project on the SKAO website. Registered projects are randomly selected as part of the annual Ladder audit by a LadderCI. The annual audit is necessary to maintain the CO₂ Awareness Certificate. Therefore, for the utilisation of the CO₂ Awareness Certificate, not every project is tested; however, every project can qualify for testing.

- **No mixed burden of proof** Demonstration of the award criterion is either at a project-specific level or by means of a CO₂ Awareness Certificate. Given the mutual consistency of the criteria or requirements (on the one hand within the MEAT criterion, on the other within the certification scheme), mixed proof does not provide sufficient certainty as to whether the contractual obligations are met and is therefore not possible.
- **Demand for CI** If an organisation intends to demonstrate its performance by means of a CO₂ Awareness Certificate, but fails to do so, then a demonstration at the project-specific level is only possible if the CI that will perform the testing has been named in advance. It is therefore recommended that all tendering organisations explicitly ask for the CI when tendering. A list of CIs accredited to perform audits under the CO₂ Performance Ladder can be found [here](#) .

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT

Until 2022, purchasers may encounter two versions of certificates as proof for tenders: a certificate based on Handbook version 3.0 or one based on Handbook version 3.1. Organisations may obtain a version 3.1 certificate as of 22 June 2020. A transition period of 6 months has been established. This means that, as of 23 December 2020, all organisations must obtain a certificate in accordance with the new standard. Because every organisation is audited annually, this means that (in theory) version 3.0 certificates may be in circulation until 22 December 2021. SKAO advises purchasers to consider the certificates based on Handbook 3.0 and 3.1 as equivalent during this period.

Step 10

PENALTY

In the tender documents you have laid down the consequences if the tenderer is unable to meet the contractual requirements. You must state the conditions, nature and scope of the sanction. It is recommended that a penalty be included that is greater than the award advantage enjoyed at the time of procedure. For the determination of the amount of the sanction, calculate the difference between the quality value assigned to the MEAT criterion in the tendering procedure and the final obtained quality value, multiplied by a factor (e.g. 1.5).

EXAMPLE

Implementation level 5 resulted in a quality value of €50,000 upon tender, but was not achieved by the contractor. It submits a level 3 CO₂ Awareness Certificate, to which a quality value of €30,000 is linked. The amount of the sanction will thus be $1.5 \times (\text{€}50,000 - \text{€}30,000) = \text{€}30,000$.

4

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS WITH AN AWARD ADVANTAGE

For a project in which the CO₂ Performance Ladder played a role in the tender, the contractor must meet a number of requirements, which must be completed at the project-specific level. The term “project file” has been introduced for this purpose. As a client, you do not have to check these requirements; however, you may request the project file, so that you are aware of the measures that are being taken in the project (see paragraph 4.1). You may also discuss with the contractor what steps it is taking to reduce CO₂ in the project. We call this the Dialogue (see paragraph 4.2). There may also be more far-reaching reduction options in a project that a contractor alone cannot implement.

4.1

THE PROJECT FILE

The contractor must always maintain a project file for projects for which a CO₂-related award advantage has been obtained. This therefore applies both in cases where the implementation level is demonstrated at the project-specific level with a project statement, and when the CO₂ Awareness Certificate is used for this purpose

PROJECT FILE WHEN USING A CO₂ AWARENESS CERTIFICATE

Within the Ladder certification system, each project that has been obtained with a CO₂-related award advantage has a separate status in the standard. This means that the contractor must substantiate a number of specific Ladder requirements with regard to the emission inventory, reduction measures and communication with documents at the project-specific level. In the project file, the contractor on the contract may compile documents that make the operation of the CO₂ Performance Ladder visible within the project. The project file is included in the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1 and is shown in the box below, with references to the requirements from the Handbook.

PROJECT FILE WHEN USING A PROJECT STATEMENT

Also, if the MEAT criterion is met using a project-specific statement, the contractor must still keep a project file. For this, all documents that are necessary to substantiate the agreed MEAT implementation level are compiled.

USE OF THE PROJECT FILE

The project file provides insight into the emissions of a project and into the measures that a contractor implements in the project with regard to CO₂ reduction. The client may request (parts of) the project file. Since the CO₂ implementation level is in principle subject to an external check, the submission of the project file to the client is not standard. If you desire access to the project file, it is recommended that this be stated in the tender documents.

PARTS OF THE PROJECT FILE (IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CO₂ AWARENESS CERTIFICATE³):

- Insight: energy flows and emission inventory of the project (requirement 1.A.1, 2.A.1, 2.A.3 and 3.A.1):
 - This may be a project-specific “excerpt” of the organisation’s current emissions inventory or an independent project emissions inventory;
 - Check whether the expected and most substantial project emissions deviate from those of the organisation as a whole.
- Reduction: overview of reduction measures (requirement 2.B.1, 2.B.2, 3.B and 4.B.2):
 - List of CO₂ reduction measures for the organisation and its projects; this may be a printout of the Measure List, possibly with additions;
 - The measures from this list that the organisation desires to apply in this specific project, including planning and a project-specific substantiation;
 - Other measures that only apply to this specific project;
 - Progress of implementation measures on the project.
- Transparency (requirement 2.C.2, 2.C.3 and 3.C):
 - Communication plan, persons responsible for the CO₂ reduction project;
 - External stakeholders;
 - Internal communication: project consultation;
 - External communication: consultation with the client.

The above documentation also serves as a substantiation for requirement 2.B.4 (the objectives and measures endorsed by senior management).

³ When using a project statement, the project file contains the same parts; however, the interpretation differs on details, since there is then no question of a CO₂ management system at the organisational level from which the emission inventory or reduction measures can be derived.

The project file may also be useful for accounting for specific agreements regarding the environmental performance in a project. For example, for the justification of the MKI value, if an award advantage has been given for this or for the use of specific equipment or fuels. Agreements about this must then be laid down in the contract.

VISION:

SKAO is working on a secure environment with specific project pages that have been awarded with a CO₂-related award advantage. These pages can be filled in by the contractor on the project with (parts of) the project file and may be made accessible to the CI as part of the Ladder audit. As a client, the contracting authority may also obtain access to this project page with the permission of the contractor. In this way, the client may gain insight into the CO₂ reduction measures and CO₂ footprint of the project.

4.2

DIALOGUE DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATIONS ON CO₂ REDUCTION

The application of the CO₂ Performance Ladder as a tendering tool is not limited to the tendering and awarding of a project. Active collaboration between client and contractor during the project implementation leads to more insight and allows for more far-reaching reduction measures. One way to get more impact from the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion is to conduct a dialogue during the implementation phase about CO₂ reduction and energy saving. The project file constitutes the starting point for this dialogue.

PLEASE NOTE that conducting a dialogue is voluntary and not a standard part of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion. More CO₂ reduction can be achieved by actively considering further reduction options together with the contractor.

With the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion, the principle of continuous improvement, aimed at CO₂ reduction, is introduced within the project. For contractors, this means that they will maintain a project file including an emission inventory of the project and an overview of reduction measures, among other things. A dialogue ensures that what happens in the context of the Ladder on the project becomes more visible to the client and that the client and contractor can work together to identify possible bottlenecks and further measures.

USING THE DIALOGUE

At the moment, most clients and contractors have little or no experience with conducting a dialogue about CO₂ implementation. It is recommended that every client first gain experience in a few pilot projects. These projects can then be used to properly organise the dialogue internally.

INITIATIVE FOR DIALOGUE

The initiative to conduct a dialogue may lie with either the client or the contractor. Organising or participating in a dialogue is not an obligation. If the client wants to conduct a dialogue about CO₂ implementation, it is advisable to announce this within the tender documents, especially for large, long-term projects. The client may indicate that it will request the information from the project file as a basis for the dialogue. A contractor may also take the initiative, for example if it sees opportunities in a project that may only be realised with the cooperation of the client.

WHICH PERSONS CONDUCT THE DIALOGUE?

When conducting a dialogue, the project leaders of both the client and the contractor must in any case be present. Without them, the dialogue is meaningless. Depending on the size and complexity of the project, they may be supported by project staff and/or sustainability specialists from the organisation.

SCOPE OF THE DIALOGUE

The dialogue is not intended to check whether a company in the project meets the MEAT criterion (project-specific) or the requirements of the CO₂ Performance Ladder. Indeed, this assessment is carried out by the CI. The dialogue is primarily intended to make measures visible and to jointly examine whether there are additional options for CO₂ reduction during the project implementation.

4.3

STEP-BY-STEP PLAN AND TIPS FOR A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE

This paragraph has six tips that may help in having a meaningful dialogue about CO₂ reduction during the project implementation.

1. MAKE THE ROLE OF THE CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER VISIBLE IN IMPLEMENTATION

The dialogue offers an opportunity for both the client and the contractor to exchange knowledge about CO₂ reduction. For example, agree that the dialogue will take place on the construction site, so that what is happening with the work becomes visible on the site.

2. USE THE PROJECT FILE THAT A CONTRACTOR MUST MAINTAIN

The basis for a meaningful dialogue is the project file, detailed in paragraph 4.1. In the dialogue, the client may assume that this administration is in good order with the contractor and may, for example, ask questions about the measures taken on the project and the achieved (or expected) reductions. In the case of large, long-term projects, it is advisable to include in the tender the wish to conduct a dialogue and to indicate that information from the project file will, for example, be requested

annually. Requesting this information is an extra incentive for the contractor to structure the information provision with regard to CO₂ reduction.

3. THINK ABOUT THE FORM AND FREQUENCY OF THE DIALOGUE

The form and frequency of a dialogue depends on the type, duration and scope of the project. For a small, short-term project, it may be a one-off meeting, following a regular project meeting. For large, long-term projects, it may be an annual meeting, in which the first dialogue (shortly after the award) determines at which moments in the project it will be useful to hold a dialogue. The definition of a small or large project differs per client. For this purpose, it is relevant to look not only at the financial size, but also at the size of the CO₂ emissions or energy consumption in a project. For these projects, the dialogue may be conducted as follows:

Projects based on specifications or maintenance projects

- small: one dialogue shortly after award, subsequently regular project consultation
- large: first dialogue shortly after award in a separate meeting; for a longer term, thereafter once a year, based on a fixed agenda

Projects based on a functional design

- small: one dialogue before the design is determined, subsequently regular project consultations
- large: first dialogue before the design is determined, in separate meeting; for a longer term, thereafter once a year, based on a fixed agenda

Project based on a Design, Build, Finance and Maintain-contract (DBFM)

- design and realisation phase: first dialogue before determining design, in separate meeting; for a longer term, thereafter once a year, based on a fixed agenda
- management phase: renew dialogue agenda shortly after starting on management phase, in separate meeting; thereafter once a year, based on a fixed agenda

4. PROVIDE ROOM FOR ADJUSTMENTS IN THE PROJECT

Conducting a dialogue only has added value if there is freedom to approach things differently or smarter during the project implementation. The client must be open to this. For this, there are two types of adjustments:

1. Adjustments that fall within the responsibility of the contractor. An ambitious contractor is always busy improving and optimising its own processes (use of machines, choice of fuel, choice of suppliers, etc.). Depending on the contract type, the design itself or the integration of other functions may also be the responsibility of the contractor. Such adjustments do not require the consent of a client. In the context of the dialogue, the contractor may wish to make these efforts visible. It may also be necessary for a specific measure that the client assists in the realisation.
2. Adjustments that are only possible if the client agrees:
 - Changes within the scope of a project. A contractor may propose improvements that lead to reductions, for example in the design, planning or through coordination with other projects.
 - Changes that fall outside the direct scope of a contract. In maintenance projects, for example, reduction opportunities arise through the early replacement of installations, and realisation projects may offer opportunities for the generation of sustainable energy. Such measures usually do not fall within the scope of a contract, but may result in significant reductions.

Before tendering, it makes sense to already think about the scope for changes and about the possible financing of measures that will result in additional CO₂ reduction. This may be done, for example, by asking for an opportunity file in the tender (and the contract) or by including a clause about the submission of improvement and investment proposals. In an initial dialogue shortly after the award, both parties will discuss how they would like to implement this further.

Due to preconditions or impediments in the project, it is likely that not all opportunities or improvement proposals may be implemented. It is important for the client and contractor to know which preconditions and obstacles these are and to learn lessons from them. This can be taken into account in future projects.

5. SET UP AN AGENDA FOR THE DIALOGUE

The information from the project file forms the basis for the dialogue. In addition, it is useful, especially in larger projects, to look at possibilities to (help) realise broader sustainability objectives. This may involve, for example, (mutual) reduction strategies in the context of the CO₂ Performance Ladder or sector objectives. For long-term projects, the parties may explore this in an initial consultation and establish an agenda with priorities for the subsequent dialogue discussions. A dialogue agenda might look like the following:

All projects (large and small)

- discussion of the project file drawn up in the context of the CO₂ Performance Ladder;
- discussion of possible opportunities and obstacles for further reduction measures and energy savings, both in the design, through sustainable use of materials,

through the use of alternative fuels, through the generation of sustainable energy and through smart construction logistics.

Expansion of the agenda for large projects

Other possible topics:

- priorities for emission reduction, innovative possibilities, chain or sector initiatives, contribution to climate-neutral transition paths and sustainable procurement;
- specific agreements on the environmental performance within the project, if this has been determined in the tender.

Agenda for follow-up meetings

- discussion of progress, based on the project file and initial meeting;
- relevant new developments.

The knowledge that the client gains in a dialogue provides valuable input for subsequent projects. It may also be a reason to enter into discussions with companies about obstacles that play a role in several projects.

6. IF A DIALOGUE IS DISAPPOINTING

A dialogue can be disappointing. For example, due to the fact that it appears that a contractor takes few measures in the specific project or because the client believes that the transposition of the Ladder requirements to the project has not sufficiently taken place. If the dialogue gives the impression that the contractor performance is disappointing or that the contractor is not keeping its affairs order, the client may naturally take this into account internally in a performance assessment. The client may also report this to the contractor's project manager and, if this turns out to be the case for several projects, at company level as well (for example, in a regular consultation with the management).

LINKS TO RELEVANT INFORMATION

Handbook 3.1 [↗](#)

FAQ [↗](#) on tendering with the Ladder

List [↗](#) of accredited LadderCIs

List [↗](#) of certified organisations

PIANOo information [↗](#) on suitability requirements and selection criteria

Information [↗](#) about certification on the Ladder by governments

Members [↗](#) of the Procurement Advisory Board

SKAO CONTACT

Zuilenstraat 7a
3512 NA Utrecht
The Netherlands
+31 (0)30 711 68 00
info@skao.nl

COLOPHON

This Procurement Guide has been drawn up by SKAO and coordinated with the Procurement Advisory Council.


DISCLAIMER

Clients are responsible themselves for the way in which they set up tenders and make use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion. In doing this, they must take into account the applicable laws and regulations regarding tenders.

Tender procedures may be complex and often represent major financial interests, both from clients and the tendering parties. If there is a lack of clarity in tender documents, all parties involved run financial and legal risks. What works in one situation may cause problems in another. We recommend that you check whether you have the latest version of this document. We also advise you to obtain (legal) advice about the integration of the MEAT criterion in specific tenders. SKAO is not liable for problems that may arise from the application of the MEAT criterion in tenders.

VERSION MANAGEMENT

This document “Procurement Guide Version 3.1” replaces the Public Procurement Guide Version 3.0. and the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion 3.1. The content of the MEAT criterion has not changed compared to the previously published document CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion 3.1.

Always check whether you have the latest version of this document. For more information, visit the SKAO website (www.skao.nl ).

A

MEAT CRITERION TEXT

The tables below show the standard CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion. The terms used in this MEAT criterion are explained in the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1.

The **CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1** [↗](#) is decisive for the explanation of the CO₂ Performance Ladder MEAT criterion. For the application of the MEAT criterion, the Handbook is determinative with regard to the explanation of the terms and standards used in the tables below.

An organisation that wants to be certified at a certain level must naturally meet all the requirements of the Handbook. However, an organisation that only wants to demonstrate for a specific project that it has met a certain level in the project implementation only needs the Handbook for the explanation of the concepts and standards used in the tables below. This has already been taken into account in the formulations of the standard MEAT criterion, since these formulations are based on a project and not on an entire organisation.

For inclusion of the MEAT criterion in a tender, the tables in this annex must be reproduced in full in the tender documents, including reference to the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook 3.1.

IMPLEMENTATION LEVELS

In the context of a tender based on MEAT criteria, the following five levels are identified:

CO ₂ IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL 1					
	Aspect	Subcriteria	Aspect	Subcriteria	
1A	Energy consumption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification and analysis of expected and actual energy flows of the project has taken place. 2. All expected and actual project energy flows have been demonstrably mapped out. 3. This list is regularly monitored and kept up-to-date throughout the project duration. 	1B	Energy reduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contractor demonstrably investigates the possibilities of reducing the project energy consumption. 2. The contractor prepares an independent internal audit report for the project.
1C	Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contractor demonstrably communicates internally on an ad hoc basis about the energy reduction policy of the project. 2. The contractor demonstrably communicates externally on an ad hoc basis about the energy reduction policy of the project. 	1D	CO ₂ reduction initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contractor demonstrates that it is aware of sector and/or chain initiatives in the field of CO₂ reduction that are relevant to the project. 2. The contractor knows the sector and chain initiatives and their relevance to the project and discusses these in the management meeting.

CO₂ IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL 2

	Aspect	Subcriteria		Aspect	Subcriteria
2A	Energy consumption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All expected and actual project energy flows are quantitatively mapped out. 2. This list is complete and is demonstrably regularly monitored and kept up to date throughout the project duration. 3. The contractor conducts an energy assessment for the project. 	2B	Energy reduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contractor formulates a qualitatively defined objective to reduce energy and has proposed measures for the project. 2. The contractor formulates a defined objective for the use of alternative fuels and/or the use of green energy on the project. 3. The energy and reduction objective and the associated measures are documented, implemented and communicated to all employees of the contractor insofar as they are involved in the project.
2C	Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contractor internally communicates structurally about the energy policy of the project. The communication includes at least the energy policy and reduction objectives of the project. 2. With regard to CO₂ reduction, the contractor implements an effective control cycle with assigned project responsibilities. 3. The contractor identifies the external project stakeholders. 	2D	CO ₂ reduction initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contractor demonstrably investigates the possibilities of implementing project-specific measures arising from relevant initiatives in the project.

CO₂ IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL 3

	Aspect	Subcriteria		Aspect	Subcriteria
3A	CO ₂ emission	<p>1. The contractor compiles a report on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the expected scope 1 & 2 of CO₂ emissions⁴ and CO₂ emissions from business travel for the entire project, and b. the detailed current emission inventory for the actual scope 1 & 2 CO₂ emissions and CO₂ emissions from business travel for the project, in accordance with ISO 14064-1. <p>2. The emission inventory from 3.A.1b of the project is verified by a Certifying Institution with at least a limited degree of certainty.</p>	3B	CO ₂ reduction	<p>1. The contractor formulates a quantitative reduction objective for scope 1 & 2 CO₂ emissions and CO₂ emissions from business travel for the project, expressed in absolute numbers or percentages in relation to one or more relevant reference(s) and within a certain period of time and has drawn up an associated plan of action, including the measures to be taken.</p> <p>2. In the project, the contractor uses an energy management action plan/ system (in accordance with NEN-ISO 50001 or equivalent).</p>
3C	Communication	<p>1. The contractor communicates structurally internally and externally about the CO₂ footprint (scope 1 & 2 and business travel), the quantitative reduction objective(s) and the measures in the project.</p> <p>The communication includes at least the energy policy and the reduction objectives of the project, a description of the reference(s) used, options for individual contribution, information regarding current energy consumption and trends within the project.</p> <p>2. The contractor draws up a documented internal and external communication plan with defined tasks, responsibilities and methods of communication.</p>	3D	CO ₂ reduction initiatives	<p>1. The contractor demonstrates that specific measures derived from a (sector or chain) initiative in the field of CO₂ reduction are implemented in the project.</p>

⁴ Handbook 3.1 is the latest version of the CO₂ Performance Ladder standard in which reporting of greenhouse gases other than CO₂ is not yet mandatory. Organisations are explicitly encouraged to work on reporting these other greenhouse gases and expressing them in CO₂ equivalents.

CO₂ IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL 4

	Aspect	Subcriteria		Aspect	Subcriteria
4A	CO ₂ emission	<p>1. The contractor demonstrates that it has insight into the most substantial emissions to be expected from scope 3 for the project, and demonstrates the CO₂ emissions per unit for one of the most substantial (chains of) activities of the project.</p> <p>2. The contractor prepares a quality management plan for the project inventory.</p>	4B	CO ₂ reduction	<p>1. Based on the insight into the expected most substantial emissions from scope 3 of the project, the contractor formulates a CO₂ reduction objective and has drawn up an associated plan of approach, including the measures to be taken. The objective is expressed in an absolute number or percentage in relation to one (or more) relevant reference(s) and within a defined period.</p> <p>2. The contractor periodically reports (internally and externally) the progress in relation to the objectives for the project.</p>
4C	Communication ⁵	<p>1. The contractor demonstrates that it maintains a regular (at least 2x per year) dialogue with stakeholders within, with others, government and NGOs (minimum 2) regarding its CO₂ reduction objective and measures in the project.</p> <p>2. The contractor demonstrates that the concerns about the project formulated by the government and/or NGO have been identified and addressed.</p>	4D	CO ₂ reduction initiatives	<p>1. The contractor demonstrates that it is the initiator of the application in the project of innovative measures that aim at CO₂ reduction and that also facilitate the sector to achieve CO₂ reduction, by linking the name of the organisation to the initiative in the project, through publications and through confirmation from stakeholders.</p>

⁵ 4C (communication) sub-criteria 1. and 2. apply to extensive multi-year projects.

⁶ The role of the NGO can also be fulfilled by an independent expert.

CO₂ IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL 5

	Aspect	Subcriteria		Aspect	Subcriteria
5A	CO ₂ emission	<p>1. The contractor demonstrates that it has up-to-date insight into the substantial scope 3 emissions of the project and the most relevant parties in the chain that are involved.</p> <p>2.1. For the project, the contractor has a substantiated and up-to-date analysis of possible autonomous actions that the contractor may implement to influence the substantial scope 3 emissions (upstream and downstream) of the project.</p> <p>2.2. The contractor demonstrates that it has insight into possible strategies to reduce these scope 3 emissions from the project (both upstream and downstream).</p> <p>3. The contractor must have current, specific emission data, from direct (and potential) chain partners, that are relevant for the implementation of the scope 3 strategy for the project (see 5.B.1).</p>	5B	CO ₂ reduction	<p>1. Based on the analyses in 5.A.2, the contractor has formulated a reduction strategy and CO₂ reduction objectives for the material scope 3 emissions of the project. An associated plan of approach has been drawn up, including the autonomous actions to be taken. Objectives are expressed in absolute numbers or percentages in relation to one (or more) relevant reference(s).</p> <p>2. The contractor provides the client with its emission inventory scope 1, 2 & 3 related CO₂ emissions (internal and external) of the project at least twice a year, as well as progress in reduction objectives and measures taken.</p> <p>3. The contractor succeeds in achieving the reduction objectives.</p>
5C	Communication ⁵	<p>1. The contractor structurally communicates externally about the way in which the project functions as an open testing ground for innovations or innovative measures and about the way in which it has actively involved other organisations in the sector or chain.</p> <p>2. The contractor communicates structurally (at least 2x per year) internally and externally about the CO₂ footprint (scope 1, 2 & 3) and the quantitative reduction objectives of the project. The communication includes at least the energy policy and the reduction objectives of the project, a description of the reference(s) used, options for individual contribution, information regarding current energy consumption and trends within the project.</p>	5D	CO ₂ reduction initiatives	<p>1. The contractor uses the project as an open testing ground to implement innovations or innovative measures and actively involves other organisations in the sector or chain. The contractor will provide the client with a description of the intended CO₂ emission reduction as a result of the measure within the project.</p> <p>2. The innovations or innovative measures are professionally commented on by an independent knowledge institute recognised as competent and independent.</p>

B

EXAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL TENDER FORM

TENDER

CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

The undersigned declares that the proposed (implementation) level for the CO₂ Performance Ladder

is level 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 *.

**strike out what does not apply*

Thus faithfully agreed upon

On _____ (date)

at _____ (place)

by _____ (name and initials)

as director of _____ (company name)

whereby _____ (company name)

is legally and duly represented with regard to this tender or offer.

(signature)



CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

COLOFON

Authors: Vincent Swinkels, Maud Vastbinder
and Gijs Termeer

Graphic design: Autobahn

Thanks to the Procurement Advisory Board and
Sara Rademaker

CONTACT

Zuilenstraat 7a
3512 NA Utrecht
The Netherlands
+31 (0)30 711 68 00
info@skao.nl