

## History

In 2007, a consortium of UK reinforcing steel manufacturers first approached BRE Global with a proposal to address issues of sustainability in the reinforcement supply chain. The consortium wanted to address the negative environmental and sustainable image associated with the manufacture of steel, developing best practice through continuous improvement. The vehicle in which to do this was to be a sustainability standard called Eco-Reinforcement. At the same time in response to the HM Government Strategy for Sustainable Construction, BRE were tasked with developing a standard for the responsible sourcing of construction products.

The Eco-Reinforcement consortium was active during the stakeholder engagement phase of the development of the standard that was to become known as BES 6001. Following the publication of BES 6001, the reinforcement producers in collaboration with key industry stakeholders including clients, contractors, engineers and associations, became the first industry to produce a sector specific standard compliant with the requirements of BES 6001 called Eco-Reinforcement. The standard coupled with a third-party certification scheme was published in May 2009.



## Drivers

### HM Government Strategy for Sustainable Construction

In June 2008, HM Government in association with the Strategic Forum for Construction published the Strategy for Sustainable Construction. The strategy endeavors to address sustainability issues within the UK construction industry, which includes responsible sourcing. The strategy states that by 2012, 25% of products used in construction projects are to be from schemes recognised for responsible sourcing.

### Industry CSR/Sustainable Development Strategies

The needs of clients, contractors and designers to address issues of sustainability through corporate social responsibility procurement schemes, meant that pressure was placed on construction material producers to act. The steel industry in particular is generally seen to be highly energy intensive, with little visible effort made to improve. There was a desire from companies within the reinforcing steel sector to pro-actively address this image through realisation of their obligation to address their sustainable impacts.

### CSH, BREEAM & CEEQUAL

The Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM and CEEQUAL all embrace responsible sourcing through the provision of additional points for materials sourced through recognised responsible sourcing schemes.

### EU and UK CO2 Reduction Targets

EU and UK requirements for reducing carbon emissions by 20% and 26% respectively by 2020 (compared with 1990 levels).

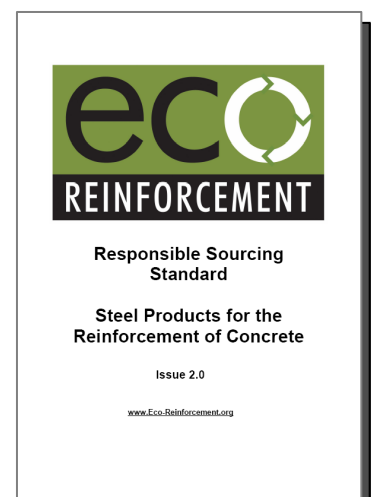
### Construction Industry Sustainability Targets

A key target for the Construction Products Association was to facilitate the development of responsible sourcing within the construction products industry.

## The Standard

The Eco-Reinforcement Standard assesses against a number of different organisational, supply chain, environmental and social criteria, covering the following issues:

- A policy commitment to Responsible Sourcing
- Ethics
- Legal Compliance
- Material Traceability/Chain of Custody
- Human Rights
- Supply Chain Management Systems
- Health and Safety
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Climate Change and Energy
- Environmental Stewardship
- Resource Use
- Waste Management
- Water Usage
- Lifecycle Assessment
- Transport Impacts
- Local Community Engagement
- Employment and Skills
- Complaints and Prosecutions
- Contribution to the Built Environment
- Continuous Improvement



# The Transparent Benefits

## Full Supply Chain Transparency

Eco-Reinforcement certified products provide complete assurance that each part of the supply chain has been assessed to ensure it addresses responsible sourcing principles through the implementation and maintenance of appropriate management systems such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001. Full material traceability including environmental stewardship through supply chain organisations responsible for the extraction, harvesting or recovery of raw material is assured. Additionally, fundamental principles and rights at work are guaranteed in line with International regulations.

## BREEAM & CSH Credits

Provides a route to obtaining credits within Responsible Sourcing of Materials sections in BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes – Eco-Reinforcement Very Good/Excellent ratings reach Tier Level 1 (3 credits) while Pass/Good certificates reach Tier Level 2 (2 credits in CSH, 2.5 for good, 2 for pass in BREEAM). As a sector scheme to BES 6001, Eco-Reinforcement is also recognised as an acceptable responsible sourcing sector scheme within CEEQUAL.

## Sustainability Standard Compatibility

Compliant with the requirements of BES 6001 (BRE Global's Framework Standard for the Responsible Sourcing of Construction Products) & BS 8902:2009 (Responsible Sourcing Sector Certification Schemes for Construction Products).

## Local Sourcing

The Eco-Reinforcement Standard encourages local sourcing by requiring companies to demonstrate their commitment to addressing the adverse social and environmental impacts of transporting both raw constituent materials from source, through to finished product to customers, supporting local employment and providing reduction targets for continuous improvement. Many companies claim to source locally, but the real proof is in complete supply chain certification.

## Construction Product Comparability

Rating system in accordance with BES 6001 provides cross-sector comparability with other construction products.

## National Structural Concrete Specification

Recognised as a third-party certification scheme for the supply of reinforcement within edition 4 of NSCS Guidance for sustainable construction.

## Recycled Content

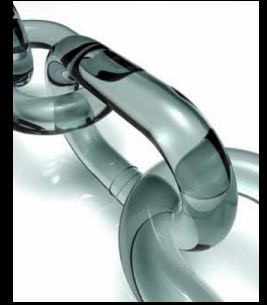
The management of resources is crucial to responsible sourcing. The recycling of materials is widely recognised to be one of the most sustainable approaches to the manufacturing of construction products. The Eco-Reinforcement Standard validates this through recognition of recycled content, providing additional credits as this figure increases. For example, reinforcing steel manufactured via the Electric Arc Furnace production route contains over 98% recycled content, and is 100% recyclable.

## Continuous Improvement

The standard rating system encourages continuous improvement, pushing manufacturers to aim for higher levels, increasing transparency by giving stakeholders the ability to review performance via public reporting mechanisms. This provides specifiers with the confidence that they are sourcing reinforcing steel from suppliers who are addressing the key criteria demanded by an ever increasingly, sustainability conscious construction market.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was critical in ensuring the Eco-Reinforcement Standard was developed fairly, fully encompassing the needs of the construction sector. An independent Scheme Council continues to address these needs through the management and development of the Standard to ensure continuous improvement of the Eco-Reinforcement supply chain. As part of the social requirements section within the standard, Eco-Reinforcement certified companies are required to actively engage with their local community.



## The Scheme Council

Following the launch of the Eco-Reinforcement Standard, Eco-Reinforcement Ltd was formed to own the standard and trademarks. Run by an independent Scheme Council consisting of the original stakeholders who developed the standard, as well as new relevant parties who have expressed an interest, it is the council's job to manage, maintain and further develop Eco-Reinforcement going forwards to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of industry.



## Certified Companies

For an up to date list of companies certified to supply Eco-Reinforcement (including ratings) please visit [www.eco-reinforcement.org/certifiedcompanies](http://www.eco-reinforcement.org/certifiedcompanies).

Certified companies can be otherwise clearly identified as they have the authorisation to use the Eco-Reinforcement logo for their own marketing purposes, as well as displaying the Eco-Reinforcement Certification Mark on their products:



[www.eco-reinforcement.org](http://www.eco-reinforcement.org)