



MEDIA CONTACT

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Green Building Initiative Cites Improvements in Rating Systems as Benefit of an Open and Competitive Marketplace

Building owners benefit from open markets that foster competition between green building rating system developers.

Portland, OR –April 6, 2015 – Spokespersons for the Green Building Initiative (GBI) issued the following statement regarding the announcement that the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has debuted an opportunity for users of the LEED® rating system to earn credit for use of wood products certified under multiple recognized forest certification standards.

“Recognizing all major forest certification standards promotes responsible forestry,” stated GBI board member Dr. Charles Kibert, professor at University of Florida and director of its Powell Center for Construction and the Environment. “This decision is consistent with the results of multiple ANSI-approved consensus standards. Opening the door to multiple forest certification standards is a positive move by the USGBC.”

Dr. Kibert is a noted expert on sustainable construction who has lent time and expertise to both USGBC and GBI over the last decade. Kibert currently chairs GBI’s materials subcommittee that is reviewing public comments and proposed revisions to GBI’s ANSI Standard. ANSI-GBI 01-2010 is under revision and will become the basis of the next version of Green Globes® for New Construction & Major Renovations to be piloted in 2016. GBI’s ANSI Standard and Green Globes rating system reward users through a 1000 point-based rating system for incorporating green building best practices into buildings.

In addition to ANSI-GBI 01-2010: An Assessment Protocol for Green Commercial Buildings, examples of standards that already reference multiple forest certification standards are ANSI-ICC 700: National Green Building Standard and ICC’s International Green Construction Code.

Vicki Worden, Executive Director of GBI, acknowledges that some building stakeholders attribute positive changes in the USGBC's rating system to GBI's introduction of Green Globes® into the U.S. market. "GBI has been a leader on many issues, including recognizing multiple forest certification standards since 2004 and being the first to introduce life cycle assessment into a commercial building rating system," stated Worden. "Having multiple approaches to assessing and certifying buildings fosters competition, and that means that rating system developers can learn from each other and grow along with the evolving built environment."

Worden cites several examples of innovations GBI has introduced in the market that result in value-added experiences for building owners and those dedicated to continuous improvement of green building practices. Examples include:

- GBI became an ANSI-accredited Standard Development Organization in 2005 and completed its first American National Standard in 2010.
- Green Globes provides an interactive on-line platform that provides teams with a decision-making roadmap to learn about and incorporate green building best practices.
- Green Globes includes a separate assessment area for project management that rewards teams for leading integrated design processes, setting performance goals early in the concept stages, and planning for and executing commissioning on building systems.
- Multiple energy pathways provide flexibility for multiple building types in the pursuit of energy performance goals.
- Non-applicable options allow users of GBI's assessment tools to designate items that won't apply to their project based on conflicts with local codes, building function, or regional issues, which helps avoid point chasing.
- GBI developed and launched a unique Excel-based Guiding Principles Compliance tool that walks teams through compliance-related decision making for federal building projects.

- GBI offers high-touch customer service for users of its assessment tools and assessors engage with teams prior to and during site visits before a building is awarded GBI's Green Globes or Guiding Principles Compliance certification.

Worden concluded GBI's statement on USGBC's recent changes to the LEED rating system noting, "In this case we were a leader. Sometimes we'll be a follower. And that's the beauty of fostering an open and competitive marketplace – everyone benefits, particularly building owners."

About the Green Building Initiative®

The GBI is a nonprofit organization and American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards Developer dedicated to accelerating the adoption of green building practices. Founded in 2004, the organization is the sole U.S. provider of the Green Globes® and federal Guiding Principles Compliance building certification programs. To learn more about opportunities to become involved in the GBI, visit the GBI website, www.thegbi.org.