



Environment and Spatial Planning
*Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and
the Environment*

Criteria for the sustainable procurement of **Green Spaces**

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These criteria for sustainable procurement were developed by NL Agency at the request of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM). The programme for sustainable operational management for public authorities (DBO) is a joint initiative of the Dutch Government, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), the Association of Provincial Authorities (IPO) and the Association of Water Boards (UvW).

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1 Introduction

The Dutch government wants to take concrete steps towards a sustainable society, and to set a good example. Each year, government organisations spend more than EUR 50 billion on the purchase of Supplies, Services and Public works. By purchasing sustainably, the government can significantly boost the market for sustainable products. Governmental authorities have set clear objectives to achieve this: the central government is aiming for 100% sustainable procurement in 2010, while the municipalities aspire towards 75% in 2010 and 100% in 2015. Provincial governments and water boards have set themselves the target of at least 50% in 2010. 100% sustainable procurement is understood to mean that all purchases meet the minimum requirements that have been set for the relevant product groups at the time of purchase. More information on this topic is available from the website Sustainable Procurement (www.agentschapnl.nl/sustainableprocurement).

NL Agency supports government authorities in various ways to help reach these objectives. These include developing criteria for Supplies, Services and Public works procured by these authorities. This document focuses on the criteria for the Green Spaces product group, the elaboration of the criteria in specification texts and a more detailed assessment of the criteria, as well as a number of points for attention in the pre- and post- procurement stages. Additional background information and considerations regarding the content of the criteria can be found in the criteria document on the website Sustainable Procurement (www.agentschapnl.nl/duurzaaminkopen/criteria), available in Dutch only.

1.1 Definition of the product group

The Green Spaces product group includes the design, installation and maintenance of the following types of green spaces (as these occur in both the urban and rural outdoor spaces).

Types of Green Spaces that fall within this product group.

Green Space	Description
Forest	Contiguous area (larger than 50 x 50 m) covered by trees
Trees	Trees that stand on their own, in rows, or in small groups, not as part of a forest or small cluster of trees and bushes.
Cluster of trees and bushes	Contiguous area covered by planted bushes (largely native species ¹) possibly with scattered trees
Hedges and shrubs	Bushes, on their own, in small groups or in rows, usually closely maintained by trimming or closing off
Plant patches	Patches of permanent and annual herbaceous (decorative) plants and bulbous plants
Lawns	Short grass that is frequently mowed
Rough grass and herbage	Grass and rough herbage that is mowed at most twice per year
Sports and playing fields (grass)	Grass fields primarily intended for sports and play activities
Banks and water	Open water and the areas where it borders dry land
Nature areas	Areas with vegetation with an important natural value that is primarily planted and/or managed for this purpose. E.g.

¹ Species which have not been introduced into the Netherlands by humans

moors, heather, natural forests, etc. Other green elements can also be part of nature areas.

Green spaces do not stand in isolation but constitute an integral part of the public space and the urban architecture. This means that among other things, pavement, furniture, engineering works and buildings are often inextricably connected with an area's green spaces. It is also the case that various machines, tools and (ancillary) materials (fuel, wood, zinc) are used in the installation and maintenance of green spaces. The aspects concerning the sustainable procurement of all these components are addressed in other product groups. The same applies for topics strongly related to green elements, such as litter, dog dirt, riverbank protection (civil and nature-based engineering) and dike bodies. Dikes/water defences fall outside of this product group. The same applies for sports fields with an artificial grass surface. During the revision, it will be considered how this category should be treated.

In drawing up the criteria, it clearly emerged that the maintenance phase of green spaces cannot be seen in isolation from the design and installation process that precedes it. All phases are addressed in this document therefore.

Design

These are the activities related to the idea formation on and design of green spaces. This kind of design is often not independent, but is part of an integrated spatial plan for a residential neighbourhood, business park or infrastructure work, for instance. Within this phase, procurement is limited to contracting the provision of design services, but the choices made largely determine how the sustainability aspects are fleshed out within the components installation and maintenance.

Installation

The design is translated into an implementation plan and specifications. The green space is installed on the basis of this. It applies here too that the installation of the green space is not an isolated event, but often part of a more encompassing work. Procurement within this product group component may therefore relate to the provision of planning services but the emphasis is on the procurement of materials and service provision to implement installation.

Maintenance

Activities in this phase concern the preparation of (long-term) maintenance plans for the green space installed and the execution of the actual maintenance activities. Just as for installation, it applies here that procurement can to some extent relate to planning services, but is mainly focused on the procurement of materials and the actual implementation services.

The categorisation into product group components given above will serve as a guideline for the points for consideration described below and the criteria in this criteria document.

CPV codes

For the benefit of the contracting authority, a number of CPV codes that might be of relevance to this product group have been included in this document. The selection is by no means exhaustive or complete. The contracting authority will remain responsible for compiling the correct set of CPV codes to match the relevant tender.

The following CPV codes apply to this product group:

Green Spaces product group	CPV code	CPV description
Design and advice on new works and renovation	45112700-2	Landscape architecture activities
	71420000-8	Landscape architecture services

Realisation of new works and renovation	77300000-3	Horticulture services
Design and consultancy on management and maintenance		
Implementation of management and maintenance	77310000-6	Planting and maintenance of green areas
	77320000-9	Maintenance of sports fields

2 Sustainability in the procurement process

The criteria in this document have been classified in the various steps of the procurement process. More information about these steps and how to combine them with sustainability can be found in the Sustainable Public Procurement Manual. This may be downloaded from the Sustainable Procurement website www.agentschapnl.nl/sustainableprocurement. It is recommended to study this Manual before you go to work with the criteria for this product group.

2.1 Preparatory stage (points for consideration)

Every purchase or call for tender starts with drawing up the inventory of the needs of the internal or external customer. Sustainability can be incorporated into this stage by considering whether the purchase is truly necessary and whether a more sustainable alternative might be available. Specific points for consideration regarding procurement for the Green Spaces product group are:

In general, vision and planning occupies an important place in all three separate components of the product group (design, installation and maintenance). Good coordination between the various components in the working process largely determines whether ambitions for sustainable procurement and sustainable development are realised.

2.2 Specification stage (criteria)

During the specification stage, the needs of the internal or external customer are translated into a tender document. This stage entails the formulation of:

- Criteria for supplier qualification. These could include grounds for exclusion, suitability requirements, i.e. requirements with regard to suppliers, and, in the case of restricted procedures, any selection criteria, i.e. wishes with regard to suppliers.
- A description of the minimum requirements pertaining to supply, service or task (the Schedule of Requirements).
- Award criteria, i.e. wishes regarding Supplies, Services and Public works. These are only applicable when the tendering process is based on the principle of the Most Economically Advantageous Offer (*Economisch Meest Voordelige Inschrijving - EMVI*).
- The contract stipulating the contract provisions.

More information on the various types of criteria and the various tender options can be found in the Sustainable Public Procurement Manual. Innovation is also included in the award criteria, where relevant. Innovation is oriented towards the development and introduction of new ideas and products.

The criteria in this document have been formulated to support the purchaser in the sustainable procurement of Green Spaces. The criteria have been subjected to legal review. However, every procurement and tender process is unique. For that reason, the drafting of a tender document remains the responsibility of the purchaser.

The table below contains an overview of all criteria and the phase of the working process in which they are applicable.

Criteria	Design	Installation	Maintenance
- acquiring nursery products (minimum requirement 1)		X	X
- using fertilisers (minimum requirement 2)		X	X
- controlling unwanted diseases and pests (minimum requirement 3)			X
- acquiring nursery products (award criterion 1)		X	X
- acquiring native plant material (award criterion 2)		X	X

2.2.1 Supplier qualification

No criteria have been formulated for this specific product group with regard to supplier qualification. More information on the possibilities of incorporating sustainability at this stage of the process can be found in the *Handleiding Duurzaam Inkopen* (Sustainable Procurement Manual).

2.2.2 Schedule of requirements

Minimum requirements

Installation and maintenance

Minimum requirement No. 1	<p>Acquiring nursery products</p> <p>At least 75 per cent (based on the purchase price) of the tree nursery products to be used must comply at least with the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In planting the area, only the plant protection products included in annex 1A (of the Dutch language document) may be used, and must be applied according to the instructions and maximum doses contained in this table. In addition, any biological product admitted by the Board for the Authorisation of Plant Protection Products and Biocides ('Ctgb') may be used (see annex 1B of the Dutch language document) as well as products listed in the <i>Regeling Uitzondering Gewasbeschermingsmiddelen</i> (Regulation for the Exception of Plant Protection Products). 2. The following usage standards are adhered to for fertiliser use in the cultivation of nursery products (these standards do not apply for container cultivation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Animal manure: maximum 170 kg N/ha - Phosphate: maximum 85 kg/ha in total from animal manure, artificial fertiliser and other fertilisers - Nitrogen: according to the following table (for sandy and clay soil): <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">Plant</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Maximum number of kg/ha</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Standard trees: rootstock</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">40</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Standard trees: closely spaced tree</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">90</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Plant	Maximum number of kg/ha	Standard trees: rootstock	40	Standard trees: closely spaced tree	90
Plant	Maximum number of kg/ha						
Standard trees: rootstock	40						
Standard trees: closely spaced tree	90						

	nursery crops ('spillen')	
	Standard trees: widely spaced tree nursery crops ('opzetters')	115
	Ornamental shrubs	75
	Conifers	80
	Roses (incl. seedlings, rootstock)	70
	Clusters of trees/bushes and hedges	95
	Perennials	175
	Fruit trees: rootstock	30
	Fruit trees: layers	110
	Fruit trees clay	135
	Fruit trees sand/loess and peat	105
	Forced and berrying shrubs	80
	Cut foliage	95
	Ericaceae	70
	Buxus	95
	<p>Nursery products are understood to include: tree and shrub clusters and hedges, standard trees and park trees, fruit trees and rootstock, rose bushes, ornamental conifers, ornamental shrubs and climbers and perennials.</p> <p><u>Means of proof :</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statement to be included with this tender by the tenderer that he complies with this minimum requirement. 2. A list included with the tender of the plant material to be used with a list of the plants that satisfy the requirements stipulated. For fertilisers (N and P₂O₅) and plant protection products, a detailed registration of the usage must be available as well as calculations that demonstrate that usage has remained within the standards stipulated here. 3. A list included with the tender of the plant material to be used with a report of the plants that satisfy the requirements stipulated, including a certificate or other document submitted with the tender that has been issued and signed by an independent third party (such as a certification institute, MPS (Environmental Programme for Horticulture) for instance, or an accountant), which demonstrates that the tenderer complies with this minimum requirement. Plant material with a certificate from the Milieukeur or EKO-keur eco-labels satisfy the requirements set in any event. 	
Notes for purchaser	<p>The level of the requirements for fertilisers and the list of plant protection products are updated annually in January.</p> <p>The purchaser may indicate whether the 75 per cent must be achieved on a project basis or an annual basis.</p>	

	<p>A certificate from the Milieukeur and EKO-keur eco-labels satisfies all parts of this requirement. MPS ABC certificates do not automatically satisfy the requirement. MPS issues a certificate to members who satisfy the standards of this minimum requirement. This may indeed serve as supporting document.</p> <p>The 2009 overview of plant protection products in annex 1A is a selection of the legally permitted plant protection products on the basis of environmental impact, feasible for the frontrunners in normal cultivation. The indications are supra-legal. The maximum doses are partly supra-legal and partly statutory. The list is revised annually. The need for certain products is re-examined and it is looked into whether there are new products on the market that are less harmful for the environment or that limit emissions. The aim is to make cultivation friendlier to the environment each year. This list is adopted by the SMK's Board of agro/food Experts ('CvD'). This board, a general board for the agro/food sector, is comprised of representatives from water boards, Fairfood, provinces, producers and sales organisations and the government. The annual revision process takes place under the supervision of the Dutch Accreditation Council RvA http://www.rva.nl/. New lists are published annually on www.smk.nl. Newly permitted products that become available during the course of the year are also published on this website.</p> <p>The 2010 overview of crop protection products is expected to be published on www.smk.nl early in 2010. Eco-label growers must comply with these requirements from that time. In the context of Sustainable Procurement, this list will be in force from 1 January 2011. This is in order to enable all growers to use the statutory registration data from the past year as supporting document that the criteria are satisfied.</p> <p>The list of permitted biological plant protection products is included in annex 1B and can be found at www.skal.nl.</p> <p>The list with products permitted according to the Regulation for the Exception of Pesticides can be found at wetten.overheid.nl.</p> <p><u>Verification of means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A list included with the tender of the plant material to be used with a report of the plants that satisfy the requirements stipulated. 2. A certificate or other document issued and signed by an independent third party (such as a certification institute, for example MPS, or an accountant) which demonstrates that the requirement is fulfilled. 3. Collection of further information from the certification institute or the third party that issued the document, for example via its website. This check must be carried out by assessing the initial and final inventory, purchase receipts, and residue samples (instead of residue samples, the purchaser may also opt to request and check a list of plant protection products used).
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Installation and maintenance

Minimum requirement No. 2	<p>Use of fertilisers</p> <p>In performing the work, no organic or artificial fertilisers must be used.</p>
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	<p><u>Means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Statement to be included in this tender by the tenderer to confirm compliance with this minimum requirement.
Notes for purchaser	<p>The necessity of using fertilisers is determined on the basis of soil surveys (preferably no more than 3 years old). If the data from the survey indicate that the use of fertilisers is nonetheless necessary, the purchaser can mitigate the minimum requirement by replacing it with:</p> <p><i>In performing the activities, no organic fertilisers based on peat must be used, and no uncoated artificial fertiliser must be applied.</i></p> <p>NB. Uncoated artificial fertiliser may only be used if a fertilisation recommendation explicitly prescribes the use thereof.</p> <p><u>Verification of means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> No further verification.

Maintenance

<p>Minimum requirement</p> <p>No. 3</p>	<p>Controlling unwanted weeds, diseases and pests</p> <p>No plant protection products must be used in the performance of the work, except in the following cases and after permission or instruction from the contracting authority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To control giant hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>) in or near intensively used green spaces (such as play areas); To control the perennial weed quackgrass (<i>Elytrigia repens</i>) in the event of an explosion of weeds whereby total soil replacement or long-term covering would be the only alternative weed control methods; To control American black cherry (<i>Prunus serotina</i>) and American oak (<i>Quercus rubra</i>) in the event of serious infestation; To treat stumps of elms infected with Dutch elm disease and English elm suckers; To control broad-leaved weeds on traditionally managed sports fields; To control oak processionaries (<i>Thaumetopoea processionea</i>) in the event of (expected) nuisance and risk to public health. <p><u>Means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Statement to be included in this tender by the tenderer to confirm compliance with this minimum requirement.
Notes for purchaser	<p>The provisions concerning this situation must be worked out in further detail in the contract.</p>

	<u>Verification of means of proof:</u> 1. No further verification.
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2.2.3 Award criteria

Installation and maintenance

Award criterion No. 1	<p>Acquiring nursery products</p> <p>As more nursery products to be used comply with the requirements included in minimum requirement no. 1 'Acquiring nursery products', <X> points will be awarded to this part of the tender for each percentage point (based on the purchase price) above the required 75 per cent.</p> <p><u>Means of proof:</u></p> <p><i>[The purchaser may in the invitation opt to include <u>one</u> of the following supporting documents with the tender.]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A summary/description to be included with this tender from the tenderer that indicates what percentage of the plant material to be used satisfies the requirements stipulated in minimum requirement no. 1 'Acquiring nursery products'. 2. A list to be included with the tender of the plant material to be used with a summary of the plants that satisfy the requirements stipulated. For fertilisers (N and P₂O₅) and plant protection products, a detailed registration of the usage must be available as well as calculations that demonstrate that usage has remained within the standards stipulated here. 3. A list to be included with the tender of the plant material to be used with a summary of the plants that satisfy the requirements stipulated, including a certificate or other document submitted with the tender that has been issued and signed by an independent third party (such as a certification institute, MPS (Environmental Programme for Horticulture) for instance, or an accountant), which demonstrates that the tenderer complies with this award criterion. Plant material with a certificate from the Milieukeur or EKO-keur eco-labels satisfy the requirements set in any event.
Notes for purchaser	<p>The purchaser may indicate whether the percentage must be achieved on a project basis or an annual basis. Further explanation is given under minimum requirement no. 1 'Acquiring nursery products'.</p> <p><u>Verification of means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request for a list of the plant material to be used with a report of the plants that satisfy the requirements stipulated. 2. Request for a certificate or other document issued and signed by an independent third party (such as an auditor or accountant) which demonstrates that the requirement is fulfilled.

	3. Collection of further information from the certification institute or the third party that issued the document.
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Installation and maintenance

<p>Award criterion No. 2</p>	<p>Acquiring native plant material</p> <p>With regard to the level of the percentage of native species in the woody species of plant material used (on the basis of the purchase price), <X> points are awarded for this section of the tender for every 10 percentage points of plant material that satisfies the native species requirement.</p> <p>The plant material that satisfies the requirement concerning native woody species is cited as such in annex 2 of the Dutch language document.</p> <p><u>Means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An overview included with the tender of the woody species to be used with a calculation (based on the budgeted purchase price) that indicates how large the percentage of plant material that consists of native woody species is.
<p>Notes for purchaser</p>	<p>The principal must indicate in advance in what situations this criterion is important because native species are not always the most suitable in all situations. More information about the varieties and suitability per situation can be found in the Tree Varieties List drawn up under the responsibility of the Board for Plant Varieties.</p> <p>The most recent varieties list is the 8th Tree Varieties List, published in 2007, Alterra WUR.</p> <p><u>Verification of means of proof:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No further verification <p>The purchaser can also choose the plant material itself.</p> <p>Depending on the project, the purchaser may also formulate a minimum requirement here:</p> <p>At least 50 percent of the woody plant material to be acquired must consist of native species. The plant material that satisfies the criteria concerning native species is cited as such in annex 3 of the Dutch language document.</p> <p><u>Means of proof:</u></p> <p>A calculation included in the tender showing that 50 percent of the contract price for plant material to be used satisfies the requirement stipulated.</p> <p><u>Verification:</u></p> <p>Request and check the list of the plant material used.</p>

2.2.4 Contract

No contract provisions have been formulated for this product group.

2.3 Utilisation stage (points for consideration)

After the procurement trajectory has been concluded and a product or service has been purchased, possibilities exist for using the product in a sustainable manner. Specific points for consideration for this product group are:

Professional and accurate maintenance

Within the components of the Green Spaces product group, the maintenance phase can be designated as the actual utilisation stage. The green space will be managed and maintained for decades after the installation is complete. In order to ensure that the green space develops into a fully functioning facility with the functions and objectives determined in the design phase, future maintenance must take place in a planned and professional manner.

An important point for consideration here is that the maintenance must be professional and accurate. Arrears and neglect have a major negative impact on the aforementioned activities that affect the environment, such as weed control activities and the release of green residue products. For example, if planted areas are neglected, unwanted weeds rapidly take root in open spaces when plants die off. These weeds are often difficult to get rid of; the situation could also result in a greater quantity of residual material released or in the use of plant protection products. Furthermore, if planted areas are not properly or adequately maintained, they cannot perform the desired functions, or only to a limited degree. From the perspective of sustainability, this is a negative effect in a broader context.

Dealing with the change in the use of a green space

An important point for consideration is changes to the use of the green space. Over the course of many years, important changes to the use of the space can occur. A new road may be constructed whereby the green space takes on the additional role of noise buffer and air filter. Or as a result of changes to the composition of the population, there may be less need for green areas in which to play and more demand for green areas with aesthetic value or to serve as meeting areas. In these situations, it is important to keep a close eye on whether the green space still serves a purpose in the event its function/use changes.

Design test

The 'design test' is also an important point for consideration. This instrument can help guarantee that the objectives (also with regard to environmental value) of the design continue to exist sustainably if the use, function or method of management changes. If a management plan is drawn up for the green space, its intended objective, functions and use are usually specifically laid down.

For all product group components it applies that the plans drawn up must be subjected to sound review, or the elaboration in the follow-up phases must be steered, supervised and monitored. For example, in translating the design into an implementation plan/specifications, it will have to be examined, among other things, whether the objectives of the design remain intact if the technical installation requirements are satisfied. Setting up an integrated working process and adhering to fixed procedures are important prerequisites for this. After the procurement trajectory has been concluded and a product or service has been purchased, possibilities exist for using the product in a sustainable manner.