

# GCC EPD Certification Checklist

This checklist guides manufacturers, suppliers, and contractors through every step of EPD certification across the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and Kuwait. Use it to track progress, prepare data, and stay audit-ready.

| Symbol     | Meaning                        |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Checkbox | Action item to complete        |
| ★ Priority | Critical / high-impact step    |
| → Note     | Tip or country-specific detail |

## PHASE 0 — Before You Start (All Countries)

### Internal Readiness

- Identify all products that need EPD certification  
Concrete, steel, aluminum, glass, insulation, HVAC—list each SKU
- Decide: Industry-Wide EPD or Product-Specific EPD  
Industry-wide = cheaper, faster. Product-specific = stronger tender advantage
- Decide: Cradle-to-Gate or Cradle-to-Grave scope  
Cradle-to-gate is common for GCC; cradle-to-grave needed for LEED / Estidama
- Assign an internal EPD project owner  
One person responsible for data collection and consultant liaison
- Set a target completion date aligned to tender deadlines

### Data Collection — Gather Before LCA Starts

- Collect 12 months of production energy bills (electricity, gas, diesel)  
kWh / MJ per tonne of product—key LCA input
- List all raw materials with quantities per unit of product  
Include supplier names and country of origin
- Document transport distances: raw material to factory, factory to site  
km by truck / rail / ship—use actual distances, not estimates
- Record water consumption data for the production process
- List all waste streams and disposal methods  
Landfill %, recycled %, incinerated % — ask your waste contractor

Confirm product functional unit (e.g., 1 tonne, 1 m<sup>2</sup>, 1 m<sup>3</sup>)  
Must match the Product Category Rules (PCR) for your product type

Gather any existing Environmental Management System (EMS) data  
ISO 14001 certification data is useful background

★ Priority tip: Clean, organized data is the single biggest factor in cutting your timeline and cost. Firms with complete records finish 4–6 weeks faster and pay 20–30% less for LCA work.

## PHASE 1 — Choose Your Program Operator

### Operator Selection

Check tender documents for preferred or required program operator  
Some NEOM and Lusail tenders name a specific operator

Confirm operator is accepted for LEED v4.1 (ISO 14025 compliant)  
USGBC accepts: EPD International, IBU, UL Environment, SCS Global, EPD Australasia

Confirm operator is accepted for Estidama Pearl Rating (Abu Dhabi projects)  
EPD International and IBU are both Estidama-recognized

Confirm operator is accepted for GSAS (Qatar projects)  
Check Qatar Green Building Council tender requirements

Confirm operator is accepted for Mostadam (Saudi projects)  
Saudi Green Building Forum maintains the accepted list

Register with chosen operator and obtain Product Category Rules (PCR)  
PCR defines exactly how to build your EPD for your product type

Confirm the PCR version — use the latest published version  
Outdated PCR versions may be rejected during verification

| Operator          | HQ      | LEED | Estidama | Cost   |
|-------------------|---------|------|----------|--------|
| EPD International | Sweden  | ✓    | ✓        | \$\$   |
| IBU               | Germany | ✓    | ✓        | \$\$\$ |
| UL Environment    | USA     | ✓    | ✓        | \$\$\$ |
| EPD Australasia   | AUS/NZ  | ✓    | ✓        | \$\$   |
| SCS Global        | USA     | ✓    | ✓        | \$\$\$ |

## PHASE 2 — Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)

### LCA Study Setup

- Appoint a qualified LCA consultant (ISO 14040 / ISO 14044 competent)  
Ask for GCC project references and SimaPro / OpenLCA experience
- Agree on LCA software: SimaPro or OpenLCA recommended  
Both use ecoinvent database — the industry standard for background data
- Confirm use of ecoinvent database for background inventory data  
Version 3.8+ preferred for current GCC projects
- Define system boundary matching your chosen scope (gate/grave)  
Must align with the PCR requirements for your product category
- Submit all collected data to consultant (energy, materials, transport, waste)  
Use the data from Phase 0 checklist — organized Excel format preferred
- Review draft LCA report — check functional unit and system boundaries first  
Any error here invalidates the EPD during verification
- Approve final LCA study and sign off data accuracy  
You are legally responsible for the accuracy of input data

→ LCA timeline: 2–3 months typical. Firms with complete data have finished in 5–6 weeks. Reference the ILCD Handbook for consistent, audit-ready LCA methodology.

## PHASE 3 — Third-Party Verification

### Verification Steps

- Appoint an accredited independent verifier approved by your program operator  
Do not use your LCA consultant as verifier — must be independent
- Submit LCA report and draft EPD document to verifier  
Include all background data files and ecoinvent references
- Respond to all verifier queries — typically 1–3 rounds of questions  
Keep a log of all changes made during verification
- Receive verification statement confirming compliance with ISO 14025 / EN 15804  
This statement must be included in the final published EPD
- Confirm EPD document includes all mandatory EN 15804 data fields  
GWP, ODP, AP, EP, POCP, ADPE, ADPF — all must be present
- Confirm EPD includes declared unit, system boundary, and validity period  
Valid for 5 years from publication date

★ Key rule: Your EPD verifier must be independent of your LCA consultant. Using the same firm for both is a common mistake that delays or invalidates the process.

## PHASE 4 — Registration & Publication

- Submit final verified EPD to program operator for registration  
Include verification statement, LCA report summary, and all required annexes
- Pay annual registration / listing fee to program operator  
\$500–\$2,000 per year depending on operator and product count
- Confirm EPD is listed on the operator's public database  
Check Environdec.com or IBU-epd.com — must be publicly searchable
- Download the official EPD PDF and registration number  
You will need the registration number for every tender submission
- Create a product-specific EPD summary sheet for tender packs  
1-page summary: product name, EPD number, operator, GWP value, validity date
- Share EPD with procurement, sales, and project teams  
Everyone submitting tenders needs the EPD file and registration number

## COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY REQUIREMENTS

### ■ UAE — Abu Dhabi & Dubai

- Check if project requires Estidama Pearl Rating — EPD earns Pearl credits  
Higher Pearl ratings (3+) increasingly require product-specific EPDs
- Verify project is under Dubai Municipality green building regulations  
Dubai code favors verified products — EPD strengthens tender position
- Confirm EPD operator meets UAE Green Building Regulations requirements  
ISO 14025 + ISO 21930 compliance is the key test
- For concrete / steel / aluminum: check if product-specific EPD is required  
Industry-wide EPD accepted for Estidama — product-specific scores higher
- EPD for concrete blocks UAE — most requested certification: confirm PCR  
Use PCR for concrete products from EPD International or IBU

### ■ Saudi Arabia

- Check Mostadam rating level required — each level has specific EPD requirements  
Mostadam Silver/Gold/Platinum increasingly demand product-specific EPDs
- For NEOM / The Line / Qiddiya tenders: confirm product-specific EPD is mandatory  
Giga-project tenders almost always require product-specific EPDs

- Check Saudi Green Building Forum accepted operator list  
EPD manufacturer Saudi Arabia — EPD International is most widely accepted
- Confirm EPD data aligns with Saudi Vision 2030 low-carbon reporting  
GWP (Global Warming Potential) values are most scrutinized metric
- Budget for higher costs: EPD cost Saudi Arabia 2025 is at upper GCC range  
Expect \$8,000–\$15,000 for complex products in Saudi market

■ ■ Qatar

- Check if project uses GSAS (Global Sustainability Assessment System)  
GSAS EPD Qatar — GSAS is Qatar's mandatory green building framework
- Confirm GSAS credit requirements for your product category  
Structural materials and facades are highest priority in Qatar tenders
- Check Qatar Green Building Council for latest EPD operator acceptances  
Post-World Cup: green mandates are rising — verify current requirements
- For large developments: product-specific EPD strongly preferred over industry-wide  
Lusail City and similar developments set high documentation standards

■ ■ Oman

- Industry-wide EPD is a viable and cost-effective starting point in Oman  
Small manufacturers: industry-wide EPD accepted for most Oman projects
- Check Oman's sustainable development building code references for your product  
References to EPD data are growing — verify latest code edition
- For export clients: confirm client's home country EPD requirements  
Many Oman export clients require EPDs to meet their own local rules
- Work with a regional EPD consultant familiar with GCC operators  
Reduces translation and interpretation errors in LCA data

■ ■ Bahrain

- Check Bahrain green procurement policy for current EPD requirements  
Policy is evolving — confirm with project owner before starting
- Most Bahrain EPD certifications are driven by export client requirements  
If exporting to UAE or Saudi: meet their requirements, not just Bahrain's
- Use a regional EPD consultant with GCC-wide operator relationships  
Bahrain has limited local EPD infrastructure — regional consultants are key
- Confirm program operator acceptance with the specific project or client  
No national-level mandate yet — requirements vary project by project

■ ■ Kuwait

- Review Kuwait Vision 2035 sustainability targets relevant to your sector  
EPD demand is early-stage but rising quickly in 2024–2025
- Multinationals and export suppliers: lead adoption — certify proactively  
Being EPD-certified before it is mandatory gives first-mover advantage
- Check with project owner / developer on accepted EPD operators  
No single national system yet — requirements set project by project
- Industry-wide EPD is the most cost-effective entry point for Kuwait market  
Start here, upgrade to product-specific as demand grows

→ Mandatory timelines: No GCC country has made EPDs fully mandatory by law yet. Most experts expect mandatory rules within 2–3 years. Act now to avoid a rushed certification.

**LEED v4.1 — MR CREDIT CHECKLIST**

- Confirm project is pursuing LEED v4.1 (not older LEED v4 or v2009)  
EPD credit rules differ between LEED versions — confirm version first
- Identify which products on the project can contribute EPDs to MR credit  
Target: 20+ products with EPDs to meet the credit threshold
- Ensure product-specific EPDs are used where possible  
Product-specific = 1 full product count. Industry-wide = partial value
- Confirm all EPD operators used are recognized by USGBC (ISO 14025)  
Check USGBC LEED Materials credits page for current accepted operators
- Compile EPD register: product name, EPD number, operator, GWP, validity date  
LEED documentation requires a product-by-product EPD schedule
- Check if project also pursues Estidama or BREEAM — one EPD serves all  
A single verified EPD typically counts across LEED, Estidama, and BREEAM

**PHASE 5 — Renewal & Ongoing Maintenance**

- Diarize EPD expiry date (5 years from publication) — set 12-month advance reminder  
Some mega-projects require EPDs under 3 years old — check tender requirements
- Track any changes to raw materials, energy mix, or production process  
Material / process changes may require early renewal
- Update LCA data file annually — even if EPD is still valid  
Current data makes renewal faster and cheaper

- Pay annual program operator listing fee on time to keep EPD active  
\$500–\$1,000 per year — lapsed EPD is not tender-valid
- At renewal: update LCA, re-verify, re-register (costs 30–50% of first time)  
Renewal is simpler if no major changes occurred in production
- Check for updated PCR version at renewal — you may need to reformat  
PCR versions update every 5 years — old format may not be accepted
- After renewal, redistribute updated EPD PDF to all tender and sales teams  
Old EPD versions circulating in tender packs cause confusion and rejections

### COMMON MISTAKES — AVOID THESE

| # | Mistake   | How to Avoid                          |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | EPD expires mid-project or mid-tender                       | Set 12-month advance renewal reminder |
| 2 | Wrong program operator for the project                      | Check tender docs before starting LCA |
| 3 | Incomplete cut-off data in LCA                              | Follow PCR cut-off rules exactly      |
| 4 | LCA consultant also acts as verifier                        | Verifier must be independent          |
| 5 | Outdated PCR version used                                   | Always use the latest PCR at start    |
| 6 | Poor data records delay LCA start                           | Collect data before hiring consultant |
| 7 | Industry-wide EPD submitted where product-specific required | Read the tender spec carefully        |
| 8 | EPD not distributed to sales/tender team                    | Share immediately after publication   |

### COST & TIMELINE QUICK REFERENCE

| Item                             | Cost Range (USD)          | Timeline      |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| LCA Study                        | \$2,000 – \$8,000         | 3 months      |
| Third-Party Verification         | \$2,000 – \$5,000         | 2 months      |
| Program Registration             | \$500 – \$2,000/yr        | 2 weeks       |
| <b>Total First Certification</b> | <b>\$3,000 – \$15,000</b> | <b>months</b> |
| Renewal (every 5 years)          | \$1,500 – \$7,000         | months        |
| Annual Listing Fee               | \$500 – \$1,000/yr        | Ongoing       |

### Ready to Start Your EPD Certification?

Envirolink guides GCC manufacturers and contractors through every step — LCA, verification, registration, and renewal across all 6 GCC countries.

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