



BIG ROOM

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**Green goods or greenwash?
Ecolabelling.org looks behind 285 ecolabels**

VANCOUVER, British Columbia – Canadian start up Big Room Inc. today launched the world's biggest independent directory of ecolabels. Available through an easy to use online database at ecolabelling.org, Big Room provides information for consumers, producers and procurers, on 285 global ecolabels for everything from organic food (Soil Association) to wood products (FSC) to carbon offsets (EcoLogo).

Ecolabels have been available to consumers since the 1970s but in recent years, interest in labels on consumer products has increased substantially. Company founders Jacob Malthouse, Trevor Bowden and Anastasia O'Rourke, came up with the idea while conducting research into how consumers make decisions about green products and services.

"We realized that it's hard to find out who's deciding what's 'green', so we set out to make it easier for everyone to look behind the label. Knowing who's behind it and what it means can help people to separate the green from the greenwash," says Malthouse.

The trio, who met while working for international environmental organisations in Europe, has identified nearly 500,000 products with a green label or certification. They have found ecolabels for products and services in almost every sector. The majority of existing ecolabels are in food and other consumer retail goods, and they tend to be concentrated in Western Europe and North America.

"Interestingly enough, Big Room didn't find any ecolabels for the emerging clean-tech sector including technologies around alternative energy," says O'Rourke. "Right now, clean-tech has a green halo, but as it grows, we expect more questions to be raised around its green credentials and hence more certification schemes. We will be tracking new schemes on ecolabelling.org as they come online."

Ecolabelling.org also expects to add more schemes and new analytic tools over the coming months.

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Ecolabelling.org is first in a series of platforms built by Vancouver-based Big Room, a company committed to helping consumers, producers and procurers to make green choices.

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