



Manifesto for Sustainable Laminate Wood Flooring in Europe

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Introduction

The European laminate flooring sector, represented by the **European Producers of Laminate Flooring (EPLF)** association, is dedicated to a **greener and more sustainable future**. Our mission is to drive innovation and promote environmentally conscious practices. We seek to build a world where flooring is not only synonymous with **quality** and **aesthetic appeal** but also with **environmental responsibility** and **sustainability**.

Our goals are to:

- Drive forward sustainable and innovative production methods for laminate flooring
- Ensure laminate plays a key role in affordable and sustainable European housing
- Invest in research and development, with a focus on durability, design, and circular solutions
- Strengthen European manufacturing, secure jobs, and support local economies

Our call to co-create the future of EU housing

The EPLF invites policymakers and interested stakeholders to support our mission. Together, we can continue to champion laminate flooring as a European success story, and drive forward initiatives that promote sustainability, innovation, and economic growth such as the New European Bauhaus.

To continue succeeding in our mission, our sector has three key asks for the European Commission, the European Parliament and EU Member States:

- 1. The future of housing should be “Made in Europe”:** The expected pan-European investment platform for affordable and sustainable housing and the European Affordable Housing Initiative are welcoming news. The EPLF looks forward to contributing to the above initiatives as they present an excellent opportunity to ensure continued investment into the European production of all our homes’ foundation, and the affordability of laminate flooring makes it ideal in tackling the affordable housing crisis.
- 2. Clean EU Industrial Deal to guarantee a reliable supply of clean and affordable electricity:** A stable and affordable electricity supply is crucial for the sustainability and competitiveness of the laminate flooring sector.
- 3. Level the playing field by harmonising national regulations:** To safeguard the competitiveness of European laminate flooring manufacturers, it is essential to establish a level playing field and create a true EU single market for our products in the face of different national approaches (e.g., on the lifetime of our product). We also seek protection against unfair competition from other products and regions, particularly against flooring imports from Asia that may not meet the same environmental and ethical standards.

Laminate: A European circular product

Laminate is a durable and low maintenance product at the **forefront of the transition to a circular economy**. From design to sourcing, to packaging, to becoming waste to be re-used at its end-of-life, laminate is recyclable and it is very easy to dispose of.

Laminate flooring is made with wood and plays an important role in the **cascading use of wood**. Our products are made of by-products from the sawmill industry, thinning wood from sustainably managed forestry and crooked wood from road maintenance. As a sector committed to preserving EU forests, laminate flooring does not contribute to deforestation.

Laminate flooring is designed to be a durable and sustainable choice for buildings, and is known for its user-friendly **installation processes**, making it an integral part of Europe's affordable housing landscape. The click system makes it easy to install and uninstall, providing flexibility for users and reducing the need for extensive labour, resources, and waste at end-of-life. Our product is well positioned to contribute to circular economies, as **95% of laminates are loose-laid there is almost no contamination of glue at the end-of-life phase**.

With a **minimum reference service life of 25 years** and some companies in the sector offering **lifetime warranties**, laminate flooring is a dependable and environmentally responsible option. Its longevity reduces the need for frequent replacements, thereby minimising waste and contributing to long-lasting housing in Europe.

On average, the **sector also invests 5% of its annual budgets on research and development (R&D)** and has **filed over 1400 patents in the last 10 years**. This demonstrates our commitment to crafting products to the highest standards, ensuring durability, aesthetic appeal, and ease of maintenance.

We are an inherently local and European sector

Laminate flooring is a true EU success story, with European-made products renowned worldwide for their quality and sustainability. The EPLF is the largest laminate flooring association worldwide, with its members supplying approximately **55% of the global laminate flooring market** and commanding **over 80% of the market** within Europe.

The laminate producing companies play a vital role in creating **approximately 100,000 jobs** and at least the double in **indirect jobs** in the EU, particularly in rural European areas where employment opportunities can be limited. With **over 20 production facilities and operations** across Europe, we not only provide **stable employment** but also contribute to the **economic vitality of local communities**. We source **95% of our materials within the EU and often within a 250 km radius**. This reinforces our commitment to strengthening the economic fabric of European communities while reducing our carbon through minimised transportation emissions.

Our commitment to European communities is also reflected in our educational work on the benefits and proper installation of our products. We have developed **programmes on the installation of the laminate clic systems, and comprehensive health, safety, and**

environmental (HSE) trainings. By empowering our workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge, we ensure high standards of quality and safety while fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

We are powered by renewables and decarbonisation is in our DNA

Decarbonisation is at the core of our DNA, and the EPLF aims to be an active contributor in the fight against climate change.

As trees absorb carbon, and laminate flooring is made with wood, it is in essence a **carbon capture mechanism**, and on average, the sector **captures over 200k tonnes of CO₂ each year**. Laminate also has a **negative carbon footprint during production**, resulting in a net positive impact on the environment at this stage. This is because more CO₂ is absorbed than released during the wood extraction and production stages, where the natural properties of wood help sequester carbon. In fact, our sector keeps wood in the production cycle as a CO₂ storage mechanism for the longest possible time, while other sectors directly burn the material.

Our products are also produced **primarily with renewable energy sources**, as our manufacturing sites, on average, use **over 60% of their energy mix from renewables**. This approach not only reduces our dependence on fossil fuels but also aligns with our broader commitment to decarbonisation.

During the re-use, recovery and recycling, laminate has a **negative Water Scarcity Footprint¹** and thus supports a reduction in water scarcity. As clearly demonstrated by the increasingly severe episodes of droughts in parts of Europe, climate change is affecting water availability in our union. This unfortunate reality means all efforts contributing to alleviate the consequences of the climate crisis on this invaluable resource must be welcomed.

We are committed to excellence and transparency

Our dedication to sustainability has garnered global recognition, with our products achieving trusted eco-labels such as the **Blue Angel**, **Nordic Swan**, and the **EU Ecolabel**. Nearly all of our facilities hold certifications from the **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** and the **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)**. These certifications ensure that the wood we use comes from sustainably managed forests, supporting biodiversity, water conservation, and the well-being of forest-dependent communities.

The EPLF's commitment to transparency is exemplified through our published **Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)** which provide detailed third-party verified information on laminate floors, such as the lifecycle carbon footprint.

By adhering to stringent **ISO** and **CEN** norms, as well as ensuring our operations adhere to sustainability and ethical standards we make sure our products and processes meet the highest standards of quality, social values and environmental performance.



Our Pledge

The EPLF is dedicated to upholding the principles and objectives outlined in this manifesto, and will continue to advocate for harmonised standards that accurately reflect the sustainability and durability of laminate flooring.

By collaborating closely with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and consumers, we are steadfast in our mission to build a sustainable future for the laminate flooring sector and the broader European economy. **Together, we can build a greener, more sustainable, and circular Europe, one laminate floor at a time.**

