

## Certified Sustainable Building – LEED

Developed initially in 2000 by the U.S. Green Building Institute, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, commonly known as LEED, provides a building design system and certification process which is intended to “transform the built environment for sustainability”. The LEED system is Designed for multiple applications including design and construction, building operation and maintenance, neighbors and cities and communities. LEED certification is delivered through the Green Building Certification Institute.

LEED has developed a point rating system which includes several different elements related to sustainability: site development, energy and material usage, water consumption, waste and indoor air quality. 40 points are required for basic certification, with additional levels (silver, gold, platinum) for greater point totals (50, 60, 70 points, respectively).

It should be noted that, as with most point rating systems, the relative importance of the elements are weighted with the scores added together so that certification does not necessarily indicate a high achievement in all aspects. Thus consumers and users will probably also want to pay attention to the individual category scores to ascertain that the design features meet expectations based upon their own concerns for a particular building project.

As evidence of its ongoing popularity, LEED certification participation has spread beyond 120 countries.