

Eco Labelling Criteria for Tea Products



National Cleaner Production Centre, Sri Lanka
Year 2021



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Certification Scheme for Eco Labelling of Products/Services of the National Cleaner Production Centre, Sri Lanka (NCPCSL) is based on the requirements laid down in the *ISO 14024:2018* Environmental labels and declarations - Type 1 environmental labeling – Principles and procedures
- 1.2 This document sets out specific managerial and technical criteria for tea growing, harvesting and transporting, tea production, dispatch tea products for sale or production of tea products following the terminologies and aspects related to the concepts of sustainability management, during the processes involved. The aspects related to the sustainability management described in this document can be environmental impacts, energy and water security or socio-economic development, or any combination thereof.
- 1.3 The certification of Eco Labelling of Tea Products is implemented on a set programme operated over a specified period as agreed with relevant parties. The NCPCSL functions as the scheme owner of this certification scheme. This document includes environmental criteria, function characteristics, and legal requirements related to tea products.
- 1.4 This specific product environmental criteria document has been prepared by the Expert Committee on Eco Labelling appointed by the NCPCSL and authorized for adoption by the Board of Directors of NCPCSL. The Tea products manufacturers who are seeking eco-labeling certification are required to meet the following requirements.
- i) The product and processing conditions shall comply with the requirements given in the below NCPCSL guideline;
and
 - ii) The product and processing shall comply with relevant regulations mentioned in this document and enforced in the country, as applicable;
and
 - iii) The product should conform to the relevant national, regional, international recognized standards
- 1.5 This document supplements the below guideline and provides guidance for the certification of tea products for both Assessors, and Producers who are preparing for certification. Each criterion mentioned herein is categorized depending on the significance of its impact on the product environmental criterion or product function characteristic being discussed, e.g. energy, water, environment, or socio development, as follows.
- i) Mandatory requirements (M) – Related to the legal requirements and product functional characteristics
 - ii) Critical requirements (C) – Significant to product environmental criteria
 - iii) Non-critical requirements (NC) – Not so significant to product environmental criteria when compared to critical requirements
- 1.6 This document should also be read in conjunction with the Rules and Procedures of NCPCSL as applicable to the Eco Labelling Certification scheme.
- 1.7 This document will be periodically reviewed and updated based on the experience gained and the developments that have taken place in technology and the use of energy, water, material and the environment. The term 'shall' is used in this document to indicate those provisions which are mandatory. The term 'must' is used to indicate the guidance which, although not mandatory, is provided by NCPCSL as a recognized means of meeting the requirements of the standard. The term 'should' is used to indicate recommendations for implementation.
- 1.8 The Client should submit the relevant pieces of evidence for conformity verification for the last calendar year.



1. References

In the preparation of this criteria document, the following documents were referred.

- 2.1 ISO 14020 – Environmental labels and declarations - General principles
- 2.2 ISO 14024 – Environmental labels and declarations- Type 1 environmental labeling– Principles and procedures
- 2.3 Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information, UN Environment Programme, 2017
- 2.4 Reference: Sri Lanka Standard 1551: 2016, Principal Criteria And Indicator For Sustainably Produced Fuelwood

3 Terms and definitions

For the purpose of this document, the terms and definitions given in the referred standards and the following shall apply.

3.1 Conformity: fulfillment of a requirement

Note: Conformance and compliance are synonymously used for conformity but deprecated.

3.2 Verification: confirmation through the provision of objective evidence that specified requirements have been fulfilled.

3.3 Organization: The Applicant organization hereinafter referred to as an organization.

Certification Criteria Requirements	Weighting Factor
4) Phase: Raw Material Extraction	
Area: Soil Conservation and Management	
(a) Appropriate practices (such as ground covers, mulches, re-vegetation of steep areas, terracing, filter strips) must be implemented to reduce water and wind erosion in the plantation <i>Conformity verification</i> Site inspection for best practices implemented to reduce water and wind erosion	C
(b) Appropriate practices (such as planting of nitrogen-fixing crops- Gliricidia, or application of compost fertilizer or mulch) must be implemented to enrich and maintain soil health and nutrition <i>Conformity verification</i> Site inspection for best practices implemented to maintain/enrich soil health and nutrition	C
(c) Organic fertilizers must be used as per the national guidelines and nutrient (Nitrogen, Potassium, Phosphorus) management practices should be implemented based on the assessment of crop needs, regular monitoring of soil fertility and crop nutrient status based on the recommendations from local agronomic experts, as per the national guidelines. <i>Conformity verification</i> Records on Fertilizer application based on crop need assessment reports and reports on testing soil fertility and crop nutrient, Agronomic experts advisory reports	C
(d) Good agricultural practices (such as timely establishment of ground covers, high/low shades, forking and draining) must be implemented in tea cultivation areas. <i>Conformity verification</i> Site inspection for best practices implemented, account records, budget monthly work programme, monthly progress report	C



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Area: Water Conservation and Water quality	
(a) Plantation shall comply with applicable law of withdrawal of surface or groundwater for agricultural, domestic, or processing purposes. <i>Conformity verification</i> Compilation of the legal requirements	M
(b) Natural water sources must be protected and maintained with adequate reservation <i>Conformity verification</i> Site Inspections	M
(c) Existing/New irrigation and water distribution systems should be managed and maintained to optimize crop productivity and minimize water waste and erosion. <i>Conformity verification</i> Site inspection for implementation of Water conservation practices	NC
(d) Appropriate measures must be taken to avoid contamination of water resources from chemical applications and other farming activities <i>Conformity verification</i> Water quality test report of existing water sources of the tea plantation (Groundwater and surface water resources)	C
Area: Pest Management	
(a) Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan must be prepared and implemented covering the tea plantation/ states. <i>Conformity verification</i> Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan, records on pest management, pesticide, biological and physical application and pest monitoring records, site visits	C
(b) Pesticide consumption (Herbicide, Fungicide, weedicide) per unit of cultivation area must be maintained as per the national guidelines <i>Conformity verification</i> Pesticide consumption records are maintained	C
(c) The results achieved from the IPM programmes (Eg: chemical consumption reduction, product quality improvement, enhance biodiversity in the eco system, etc) must be documented and communicated to the top management <i>Conformity verification</i> Records on results achieved from the IPM programmes are maintained	C
(d) A list of allowable pesticides under applicable laws and regulations must be maintained <i>Conformity verification</i> Records on types and consumption of Pesticide	C



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(e) All pesticides must be stored in a safely locked storage under sound chemicals management practices Conformity verification Site Inspection for chemical storages	C
(f) Appropriate measures (such as Plastic containers must be triple-rinsed with water and followed by punching to avoid such container in any other uses, Never pour leftover pesticides/chemicals down the drain. Never pour pesticides into storm drains, make agreement with suppliers to collecting the empty containers) must be taken to dispose empty chemical containers in an environmentally friendly manner Conformity verification Site verification, agreement with suppliers, records on chemical disposal	C
(g) Plantation must select the optimum pesticide application equipment and techniques for the crop and pesticide type to reduce spray drift. Conformity verification Site verification	C
Area: Waste Management	
(a) The plantation must develop and implement a waste management plan including: a) Documentation of the origin, approximate volume, and current means of disposal for all waste streams; and b) Source segregation of different waste types and directing to facilitate reuse, recycling or composting <i>Conformity verification</i> Records relevant to the waste management practices, Site inspection on the implementation of the waste management plan	C
Energy Management	
(a) Appropriate measures should be taken to minimize oil/fuel consumption and air emissions during plantation management activities Conformity verification Oil/Fuel consumption records are maintained	NC
4.1 Tea leaves Transport to the factory	
(a) Appropriate measures should be taken to minimize oil/fuel consumption and air emissions during tea leaves transportation. <i>Conformity verification</i> The records on oil/fuel consumption for transportation are maintained (<i>based on indicator -fuel consumption for transportation of 100kg of tea leaves</i>) Emission test reports of the vehicles	NC
(b) The industry must use reusable/recyclable tea leaves carrying packs/sacks <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Records on tea carrying packages/sacks are maintained and onsite inspection</i>	C



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5) Phase: Processing/ Manufacturing	
5.1 General Requirement	
(a) Environmental Management System/s should be implemented in the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Valid ISO 14001 EMS certificate</i> <i>Valid RA Certificate, etc</i>	NC
(b) Documented Environmental Management Roadmap must be developed to address the potential environmental problems of the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> Environment management roadmap of the organization	C
5.2 Water resource consumption and conservation	
a) Infrastructure must be maintained to quantify the water usage for cleaning and other domestic purposes in the factory. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Water supply metering and/or submetering facilities established in the organization</i> <i>Water consumption records are maintained on a daily/monthly basis</i>	C
b) Water conservation techniques and technologies must be implemented so that water efficiency is maintained <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Site inspection regarding the implementation of Water conservation techniques and technologies, records on water consumption</i>	C
c) The best practices (such as Seepage/soil soak pit system) for used water discharge should be implemented. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Site inspection</i>	C
d) Organizational/product water footprint should be calculated, recorded, and maintained. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>The transparent and verifiable calculation method is available</i>	NC
5.3 Energy resource consumption and conservation	
a) Infrastructure must be maintained to quantify the energy usage for industrial processes and other purposes in the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Electricity sub-metering facilities established in the organization</i> <i>Electricity/Fuel consumption records are maintained on a daily/monthly basis</i>	C
b) Electricity consumption per unit of production output should be below the 0.78 kWh/Kg of made tea (if the Electricity consumption is higher than the benchmark, electricity consumption per unit of production output must reduce by a minimum of 1% from last year has to be reported)	NC



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<p><i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Electricity consumption records and production records are maintained</i></p>	
<p>c) Firewood consumption per unit of production output should be maintained below the benchmark value of 1.9 Kg of firewood/Kg of made tea (if the firewood consumption is higher than the benchmark, firewood consumption per unit of production output must reduce by a minimum of 1% from last year has to be reported)</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Fuel/Firewood consumption records and production records are maintained</i></p>	NC
<p>d) Sustainable firewood sources Such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Trees used in agriculture systems such as intercropping, alley cropping and support trees○ Rubber plantations (includes intercropping systems)○ Timber plantations○ Agro energy plantations like Gliricidia○ Dedicated fuelwood plantations○ Uprooted tea and shade trees or their branches○ Invasive species removed through sanitation programs○ Woody agricultural by-products such as cinnamon sticks○ Coconut plantations with fuelwood intercrops. Includes husks and other coconut by-products that can be used as fuel.○ Home gardens <p>must be used to fulfill the firewood requirement of the factory</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i> Valid certificate If the certificate/certification process is not available, through the observation during the site visit in the firewood storages. (Reference: Sri Lanka Standard 1551: 2016, Principal Criteria And Indicator For Sustainably Produced Fuelwood)</p>	C
<p>e) Documented Roadmap/plan should be developed to address the fulfilment firewood requirement of the organization through Sustainable firewood sources</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i> Documented roadmap/plan for sustainable firewood sourcing in the organization</p>	C
<p>f) Effective energy management system (EnMS) or policies, procedures, and energy management programmes must be implemented by the organization</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i> Valid EnMS Certificate Records on Energy management Policy, procedures, and energy management programmes are maintained</p>	C
<p>g) Appropriate measures (Eg: Variable Frequency Drives(VFDs), Fuel switching, waste heat recovery applications, etc) must be implemented to improve energy efficiency in the organization</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i> Site inspection relevant to the energy efficiency measures implemented Records on energy savings done through such implementation (refer annex 1 for energy efficiency measures)</p>	C
<p>h) The organization should substitute nonrenewable energy sources with renewable energy (Eg: biomass, solar power, hydro power, waste to energy)</p>	NC



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<i>Conformity verification</i> <i>The energy requirement is supplied from the Biomass boiler</i> <i>Electricity Generation from the Solar power systems, Hydro Power, etc</i>	
i) Organizational/product carbon footprint (assertion of GHG emissions and removals) should be calculated, recorded, and maintained. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>A transparent and verifiable calculation method is available.</i>	NC
5.4 Raw material consumption	
a) Tea leaves and other Input material usage must be quantified <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Material consumption records are maintained on a daily/monthly basis</i>	C
b) Best available techniques (such as containers for tea leaves transportation) should be implemented to maintain the material efficiency in the tea production <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Site inspection in the tea processing plant/Factory and records maintained</i>	NC
c) Refused tea percentage must be below 12% from the total quantity of the input tea leaves <i>Conformity Verification</i> <i>Records on input tea leaves quantities, production output and refused tea quantities are maintained</i>	C
5.5 Solid Waste Management	
a) Effective waste management policies and programmes must be implemented. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>The records on waste management are maintained, Site inspection on the implementation of the waste management programmes/plan</i>	C
6) Product Quality, Packing and Labelling Requirements	
a) A traceability system must be maintained to trace the finished product back to the invoice <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>maintain traceability records indicating products back to the invoice</i>	C
b) The organization must maintain the Maximum Residue Levels (MRL) allowed as per the national standards/guidelines <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Sample test reports</i>	C
7) Phase: Distribution	
a) Efficient transport modes/plan should be used for finished product distribution <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Transport management plan/Product distribution plan is maintained</i>	NC
8) Occupational Health and Safety	
a) Fire safety management plan must be implemented. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>An evacuation plan is available and the fire extinguishers, fire alarm, fire hydrant, etc have established</i>	C
b) Occupational Health and Safety practice guidelines must be developed and communicated to the relevant	C



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workers <i>Conformity verification</i> Occupational Health and Safety practice guidelines are available Interview relevant workers during the site inspection	
9) Legal Requirements	
a) The Environmental Protection License (EPL) shall be obtained and implemented all its requirements <i>Conformity verification</i> Valid Environmental Protection License is available	M
b) All production activities and products shall comply with the requirements of the relevant national legislation in Sri Lanka <i>Conformity verification</i> Compilation of all the applicable Environmental and other Regulations are maintained	M
10) Specific Requirements	
a) The applicant should implement a HACCP or ISO 22000 Food Safety Management System (FSMS) programme. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>A valid certificate is available</i>	NC
b) The monetary values gained through the resource efficiency improvements (water, energy, material) and waste management must be calculated, reported and communicated to the top management <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>records are maintained</i>	C

11) Phase: Tea Blending/ Value Addition Centers	
11.1 General Requirement	
a) Environmental Management System/s should be implemented in the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Valid ISO 14001 EMS certificate</i> <i>Valid RA Certificate</i>	NC
(c) Documented Environmental Management Roadmap should be developed to address the potential environmental problems of the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> Environment management roadmap of the organization	C
11.2 Water resource consumption and conservation	
e) Infrastructure must be maintained to quantify the water usage for cleaning and other domestic purposes in the factory. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Water supply metering and/or submetering facilities established in the organization</i> <i>Water consumption records are maintained on a daily/monthly basis</i>	C
f) Water conservation techniques and technologies must be implemented so that water efficiency is	C



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maintained <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Site inspection regarding the implementation of Water conservation techniques and technologies</i>	
g) Organizational/product water footprint should be calculated, recorded, and maintained. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>The transparent and verifiable calculation method is available</i>	NC
11.3 Energy resource consumption and conservation	
a) Infrastructure must be maintained to quantify the energy usage for industrial processes and other purposes in the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Electricity sub-metering facilities established in the organization</i> <i>Electricity/Fuel consumption records are maintained on a daily/monthly basis</i>	C
j) Electricity consumption per unit of production output should below 0.65 kWh/kg of made tea ((if the Electricity consumption is higher than the benchmark, electricity consumption per unit of production output must reduce by a minimum of 1% from last year has to be reported) <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Electricity consumption records and production records are maintained</i>	NC
b) Effective energy management System (EnMS) or Energy Management policies, procedures, and energy management programmes must be implemented by the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Valid EnMS Certificate</i> <i>Records on Energy management Policy, procedures, and energy management programmes are maintained</i>	C
c) Appropriate measures (annex 1) must be implemented to improve energy efficiency in the organization <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Site inspection relevant to the energy efficiency measures implemented</i> <i>Records on energy savings done through such implementation</i>	C
d) The organization should substitute non renewable energy sources with renewable energy (Example: biomass, solar power, hydro power) to substitute nonrenewable energy sources with renewable energy <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>The energy requirement is supplied from the Biomass</i> <i>Electricity Generation from the Solar power systems, Hydro Power, etc</i>	NC
e) Organizational/product carbon footprint (assertion of GHG emissions and removals) should be calculated, recorded, and maintained. <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>A transparent and verifiable calculation method is available.</i>	NC
11.4 Tea and other Material consumption	
a) Purchased tea from auction shall be stored in a covered, clean, and dry location to reduce the risk of contamination of the environment <i>Conformity verification</i> <i>Site Inspection</i>	C
b) Tea moisture content shall be controlled under the national guilines on tea quality control	C



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<p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Tea moisture content test reports</i></p>	
<p>c) Purchased tea from auctions and other Input material usage must be quantified</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Material consumption records are maintained on a daily/monthly basis</i></p>	C
<p>d) Best available technologies and techniques must be implemented in the organization to maintain the material efficiency in tea blending process</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Site inspection in the tea processing plant/Factory and records maintained</i></p>	C
11.5 Chemicals Consumption	
<p>a) Sound chemicals management practices including storage, using, the disposal must be implemented and maintained</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Site inspection regarding the implementation of chemicals safety best practices</i></p>	C
<p>b) Chemicals safety best practice guidelines must be communicated to the relevant workers</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Chemicals safety best practice guidelines are available</i></p> <p><i>Interview relevant workers during the site inspection</i></p>	C
<p>c) Chemicals accidents preparedness plan and fire safety management plan must be implemented.</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Chemicals accidents preparedness plan is available.</i></p> <p><i>An evacuation plan is available and the fire extinguishers, fire alarm, fire hydrant, etc have established</i></p>	C
<p>d) Natural additives/flavoured shall be used and the proper controlling additive procedures shall be implemented</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>Tea testing reports</i></p>	C
11.6 Solid waste management	
<p>b) Effective waste management policies and programmes must be implemented.</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>The records on waste management are maintained</i></p>	C
12 Product Quality Control	
<p>a) Quality control procedures (such as moisture control, sterilization) must be maintained throughout the blending and value addition process</p> <p><i>Conformity verification</i></p> <p><i>The records on laboratory test reports</i></p> <p><i>Valid QMS certificate or Specific Product quality control procedures</i></p>	C
13 Packing and Labelling Requirements	
<p>a) Quality of the packaging shall be maintained (Such as usage of food grade quality material, Controlling methods adopted for reducing wastage of tea when packaging)</p>	C



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<i>Conformity verification</i> Onsite verification and records on types of packaging materials used are maintained	
b) Recyclable Packaging materials should be used for packaging purposes <i>Conformity verification</i> Records on types and quantities of packaging materials used are maintained	NC
c) Food grade packaging materials must be used for packaging purposes <i>Conformity verification</i> Records on types and quantities of packaging materials used are maintained	C
d) A traceability system must be maintained to trace the finished product back to the production batch <i>Conformity verification</i> maintain traceability records indicating products back to the production batch	C
14) Phase: Distribution	
a) Efficient transport modes/plan should be used for finished product distribution <i>Conformity verification</i> Transport management plan/Product distribution plan is maintained	C
15) Health and Safety	
a) Occupational Health and Safety practice guidelines must be developed and communicated to the workers <i>Conformity verification</i> Occupational Health and Safety practice guidelines are available Interview relevant workers during the site inspection	C
b) Fire safety management plan must be implemented. <i>Conformity verification</i> An evacuation plan is available and the fire extinguishers, fire alarm, fire hydrant, etc have established	C
16) Legal Requirements	
a) The Environmental Protection License (EPL) shall be obtained and implemented all its requirements <i>Conformity verification</i> Valid Environmental Protection License is available	M
b) All production activities and products shall comply with the requirements of the relevant national legislation in Sri Lanka <i>Conformity verification</i> Compilation of all the applicable Environmental and other Regulations are maintained	M
c) Specific Requirements	
The applicant should implement a HACCP or ISO 22000 Food Safety Management System (FSMS) programme. <i>Conformity verification</i> A valid certificate is available	C
The monetary values gained through the resource efficiency improvements (water, energy, material) and waste management must be calculated, reported and communicated to the top management <i>Conformity verification</i> A valid certificate is available	C



INSTRUCTIONS FOR USERS

Note 1:

If the applicant organization is sourcing tea leaves from the external plantations/small holders/etc other than their own plantations and seeking the Eco labelling for covering those products in the certification scope, the applicant should provide adequate information (i.e the supplier should comply with the given eco labelling criteria) for confirmity verification of the supply chain/the raw material extraction phase as nessecesary.

Acccrodingly the applicant should prepared and communicated the best practice guideline relevant to the eco labelling criteria for the external plantations/small holders/etc to be comply.

Note 2:

If the Applicant organization (Private tea factories,) does not maintain their own tea plantations, but sourcing tea leaves from the external plantations/small holders/etc and seeking the Eco labelling certification for their tea products, the company should provide adequate information (i.e the supplier should comply with the given eco labelling criteria) for confirmity verification of the supply chain/Raw Material extraction as nessecesary.

Acccrodingly the applicant should prepared and communicated the best practice guideline relevant to the eco labelling criteria for the external plantations/small holders/etc to be comply.

Note 3:

Applicant organizations (Such as Tea Exporters, Tea Brokers, Tea Importers, Tea Warehouses, Tea Packers) who are seeking the Eco labelling for their tea products, the applicant should provide adequate information (i.e the supply chain should comply with the given eco labelling criteria) for confirmity verification of the supply chain as nessecesary.

This criteria document contains 79 requirements; 06 Mandatory requirements, 55 critical requirements, and 18 non-critical requirements. marks are allocated for each criterion except Mandatory criteria. At least 70% of the total marks allocation for the criteria shall be scored from the applicant for being successful in the Eco Labelling certification process.

Mandatory Requirements

When the adequacy audit of the organization's application is conducted, there shall be no non-compliance related to the mandatory requirements, and if any nonconformity is reported during the adequacy audit stage, a major nonconformity will be raised, and that shall be corrected.

Critical Requirements

If any violation of critical requirements is found during the verification visit, a minor nonconformity will be raised, and for which suitable corrective action shall be taken within two months.

Non-critical Requirements

If any non compliance of non-critical requirements is found during the verification visit, it will be considered as an observation for the improvment. The suitable corrective action taken will be vefiried at the surveillance verification audits



Annex 1

Energy Efficiency Technologies for Tea Sector

Mitigation Option (MO)	Abatement cost in USD/tonne CO₂e	Abatement potential, in '000 tonnes CO₂e
VFDs for tea factories - 5-8 kW	-222.0	9.6
LED replacing CFL	-218.8	45.0
LED replacing incandescent lights	-171.4	10.7
Biomass replacing diesel/oil - industry	-108.3	550.5
Efficient air conditioning - domestic	-78.5	100.9
Efficient ballasts (T8 to T5)	-28.0	353.9
Efficient air compressors - New	-6.4	12.9
Roof solar PV – 5-10 kW	76.5	116.2
Biodigester - 8 -20 cubic meters	131.3	311.5
Efficient air compressors - Retrofit	201.6	12.2
HEM in tea factories - 5-8 kW	458.1	0.5
HEM in tea factories - 8-20 kW	462.6	0.9