greenstar

The Responsible Products Calculator Guide

Green Building Council Australia

Building a sustainable future

Document Information

This guide is to assist Green Star Project Teams with the use of the Responsible Products Calculator. The Responsible Products Credits include Responsible Structure, Responsible Envelope, Responsible Systems, and Responsible Finishes.

Version control

Version	Date	Description
1	18/08/2023	Initial release for Green Star Buildings v1.
2	05/10/2023	Updates: - Using the “Submission Form” to access the calculator - Guidance on use of the excel calculator - *Green Star - Design & As Built* to Green Star Buildings credit substitution
3	17/07/2024	Updates: - Added note re information not saving to credit if the credit has not been targeted. - Added reference to the Guidance on Responsible Products Credits - Green Star Buildings_v1 document.

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Responsible Products Calculator

What is the Responsible Products Calculator?

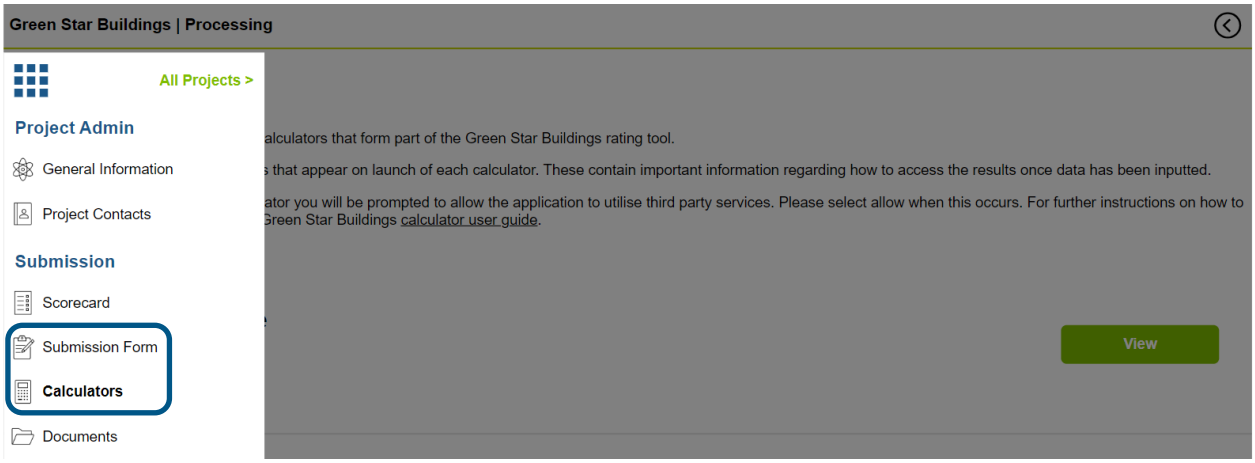
The Responsible Products Calculator is an online tool for project teams to determine compliance with the Responsible Products credits in the Green Star ratings tools. Currently, the Responsible Products Calculator can only be used by project teams under GS Buildings v1. The Responsible Products Calculator will later be built to accommodate to the following Green Star rating tools:

- Green Star – Fitouts v1 (previously Interiors)
- Green Star – Communities v2

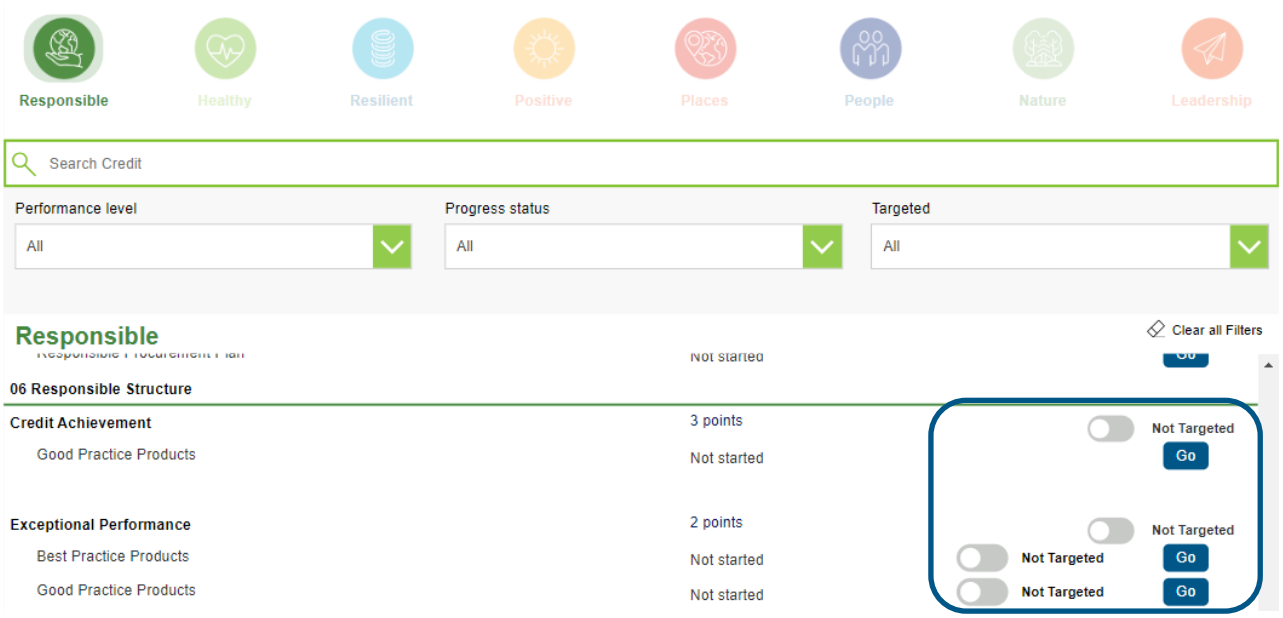
The calculator allows project teams to compile a list of products that are being used in their project that have a Responsible Product Value, to understand if they meet the requirements of the Responsible Products credits.

The Responsible Products Calculator can be accessed in a few ways:

- Via the “Calculators” page.



- Via the “Submissions Form” page.



There are currently four Responsible Products credits in GS Buildings v1. The Responsible Products credits are: Responsible Structure, Responsible Envelope, Responsible Systems and Responsible Finishes.

The credits can be found under the Green Star Buildings submission guidelines via the Resources Portal.

This calculator will replace the *06 – 09 Responsible Products Calculator* (excel) that is available in the Resources Portal. The excel calculator will continue to be available to existing project teams that register before the final release of the online calculator, however the list of recognised initiatives in the calculator will not be reflective of the Initiative Score Checker. Therefore, project teams using the excel calculator will not be able to receive recognition for the use of products recognised by initiatives outside of the excel.

The current online calculator is a Beta version. Once the calculator has been released from Beta to its final version, all new Buildings registrations must use the online calculator. Communications will be made available to existing project teams to let them know if they will be required to transition.

How the Calculator fits within the Responsible Products program

The Responsible Products Calculator is part of the GBCA's Responsible Products program. The program aims to influence the supply chain by providing guidance that describes the qualities that products should aspire to achieve. The program includes:

- **The Responsible Products Guidelines for Initiatives** – A document relevant to initiatives seeking recognition by the GBCA. The document includes the detailed criteria that the initiative will be assessed against. The document also outlines the assessment process.
- **The Responsible Products Calculator** – An online platform that allows project teams seeking Green Star certification to select and input products and demonstrate compliance against the Responsible Products credits.
- **The Responsible Products Directory** – A list of products compliant with Product Certification Initiatives. Products in this directory have been awarded a Responsible Products Value (RPV) based on the initiatives they hold. Products in this directory are considered compliant.

What is a Responsible Product Value (RPV)?

A Responsible Product Value (RPV) is a value calculated for a product based on the type and the number of third-party certifications that the product holds. Third-party certification initiatives recognised by the Responsible Products Guidelines for Initiatives can be found on the Initiative Score Checker. A GBCA login is required to access this application.

How is a RPV Calculated?

A RPV for a product is dependent on the number of certification initiatives the product is recognised by. A product can be recognised by more than one initiative which could potentially help the product achieve a higher RPV. However, if the product holds similar initiatives that cover the same criteria e.g. VOCs, the product's RPV is adjusted to discount the duplication.

For example, the below product holds two third-party certificates which meet different criteria. The "Corporate Commitment on Climate" and "Environmental Management" criteria has been recognised by both initiatives, so they are only counted once. Therefore, a total RPV of 9 is assigned to the product.

Criteria Achieved: Initiative A	
Corporate Commitment on Climate	1
Environmental Management	1
Carbon Emissions Disclosure	0
Socially Responsible Extraction of Resources	0
Transparent Chain of Custody	0
Environmental Impacts of Disclosure	2
Ingredients Disclosure	0

+

Criteria Achieved: Initiative B	
Corporate Commitment on Climate	1
Environmental Management	1
Carbon Emissions Disclosure	0
Socially Responsible Extraction of Resources	2
Transparent Chain of Custody	2
Environmental Impacts of Disclosure	0
Ingredients Disclosure	1

=

Criteria Achieved: Combined	
Corporate Commitment on Climate	1
Environmental Management	1
Carbon Emissions Disclosure	0
Socially Responsible Extraction of Resources	2
Transparent Chain of Custody	2
Environmental Impacts of Disclosure	2
Ingredients Disclosure	1
Total RPV	**9**

Good practice and best practice products differ depending on the building layer. The thresholds that sit within Green Star Buildings are as follows:

Credit	No Achievement	Credit Achievement (Good Practice)	Exceptional Performance (Best Practice)	
		% Products Min Score	Option 1: % Products Min Score	Option 2: % Products Min Score
Structure	≤ 9	50% - 10	10% - 15	80% - 10
Envelope	≤ 9	30% - 10	10% - 15	60% - 10
Systems	≤ 5	20% - 6	5% - 11	35% - 6
Finishes	≤ 6	40% - 7	10% - 12	60% - 7

Example: With an RPV of 8, the initiative will score the following against the building layers:

- **Structure** – No achievement. Does not meet minimum score of 10.
- **Envelope** – No achievement. Does not meet minimum score of 10.
- **Systems** – Credit achievement. Meets minimum score of 6.
- **Finishes** – Credit achievement. Meets minimum score of 7.

Therefore, any RPV greater than 15 is considered best practice for any product in any layer. Project teams will not be advantaged for using products that exceed this value.

How does the calculator link to the Green Star?

The calculator is integrated within Green Star Online for Green Star rating tools. As of October 2023, this is just available for GS Buildings v1. Once the project team has populated the calculator with products, the results will feed into the project submission form.

Evidence to support the third-party certifications claims made in the calculator should be provided in the submission. Evidence should include:

- Valid receipts attached to products, including whether the receipt is used against multiple products or building layers.
- Valid certificates attached to products, including legitimacy and expiration. If the certificate is valid at the time of procurement, it is valid at submission.

The Responsible Products Database

The Responsible Products Database surfaces to Green Star project teams products that are compliant with the requirements of the Responsible Products credits. The Database is maintained by the Green Building Council of Australia and includes RPVs for products certified through GBCA recognised initiatives. It is important to note:

- GBCA does not assess products and will not add products to the database upon request by manufacturers.
- For products to be added to the database, product information will need to be provided by one of GBCA's recognised initiatives.
- GBCA are not responsible for the quality of the data in the database. The data that has been provided by the initiatives is what is uploaded into the database so duplicates, and other errors may be found. GBCA cannot update the information on behalf of the manufacturer. The manufacturer will have to provide the updated information to the initiative, before the initiative passes that information onto the GBCA.
- Product manufacturers seeking to have their products listed in the database should engage with the relevant initiatives to have their products provided to GBCA.

The Responsible Products Database can only be accessed by using the Responsible Products Calculator. GBCA are working on making this information publicly available, to assist with procurement decisions.

Calculating a RPV for products that are not in the Database

Products may be awarded a third-party certification but not appear in the Responsible Products database. This is either because the initiative has not provided the product information to GBCA, or the product was certified after the last data upload. In such cases, the calculator allows project teams to manually add products. These will not be added to the wider database for public consumption.

When needed, project teams can enter project-specific products that hold compliant certificates into the calculator. The calculator will save these project-specific products to their project and will make up part of their Green Star submission.

The example below provides 4 products under different scenarios:

- Line Item 1 (Default Product Line – Bluescope Steel Limited – Colorbond Steel): Project team has selected a product from the database which has a certificate attached. In addition, the project team has added another certificate to the product that the GBCA does not have in the database. Under this circumstance, the project team has received recognition for the product that is in the Responsible Product database and could potentially receive recognition if the additional certificate is deemed compliant by the GS Assessment Panel.
- Line Item 2 (Default Product Line – Bluescope Steel Limited – Welded beams and columns steel products): Project team has selected a product from the database which has a certificate already attached. No additional certificates have been added.
- Line Item 3 (Product 1 – Cable – Default Product Line – 4cabling Pty Ltd): Project team has added a product that isn't in the database, nor has a certificate been attached. Under this circumstance, the product will not be recognised by GBCA.
- Line Item 4 (Product 2 – Cable – Default Product Line – 4cabling Pty Ltd): Project team has added a product that is not in the database but has a certificate that is recognised by the GBCA. Under this circumstance, the certificate will be checked for compliance by the GS Assessment Panel.

Products

	Products Used		Cost*	Receipt*	Certificate	Performance Level	GBCA Approved (Potential Additional Points)*	
1	Default Product Line - BlueScope Steel Limited - COLORBONDÂ® steel	Input Asset Name or Product U	Input ($)			Best	10 (14)	×
2	Default Product Line - BlueScope Steel Limited - Welded beams and columns steel products	Input Asset Name or Product U	Input ($)			Good	10 (0)	×
3	Product 1 - Cable - Default Product Line - 4cabling Pty Ltd	Input Asset Name or Product U	Input ($)			Not Met	0 (0)	×
4	Product 2 - Cable - Default Product Line - 4cabling Pty Ltd	Input Asset Name or Product U	Input ($)			Best	0 (21)	×

*GBCA Approved - This product has been selected from our product database and has been confirmed as valid.
*Potential Additional Points - This product has been manually added, with a product certification initiative that the GBCA has recognised but needs to be confirmed by the assessor as valid. These points are in addition to GBCA Approved points.

In circumstances where a project team uses a product that has a certificate that hasn't been recognised by the GBCA, it will go into a bank of potential initiatives to be recognised. There is no guarantee that GBCA will recognise the initiative, so we encourage project teams to speak to the products team prior to procurement. The products team can be contacted at productsteam@gbca.org.au.

The scores are calculated based on the information provided at the time of inputting the products into the calculator. Project teams are encouraged to engage with their suppliers to ensure they are up to date with requirements for maintaining the relevant initiatives.

Once a project team has inputted their final submission, the RPV will be honoured by the GBCA for the life of that project submission. This will be the case for GS Buildings v1 tool, but there will be additional requirements for more extensive projects in the GS Communities v2 tool for example.

Using the Responsible Products Calculator

The calculator is split into the following building layers: Structure, Envelope, Systems and Finishes. There are two parts to each of the above credits:

- The proportion of products that are compliant, as a percentage of total cost of the relevant layer.
- The RPV that such proportion must comply with.

For example, as noted in the GS Buildings submission guidelines, if a project team wants to receive Credit Achievement (Good Practice) under Responsible Structure, 50% of their structural products by cost must have a RPV of at least 10. Additionally, if a project team wants to receive Exceptional Performance (Best Practice) under Responsible Envelope, 10% of their envelope products by cost must have a RPV of at least 15, or 60% of their products by cost must have a RPV of at least 10.

In this example below, the project team has entered that the total cost of all structural components as $7000. They have also entered a single product at a cost of $7000, with that product having an attached certification that has a total RPV of 10.

Results

Cost of recognised products contributing to good practice $	7000
% of products contributing to good practice	70.0%
Cost of recognised products contributing to best practice $	0
% of products contributing to best practice	0.0%
Credit Achievement	3
Exceptional Performance	0

Total costs

Total cost of all structure components	10000
Calculated costs include labour	

Add new | Search | Save

Products

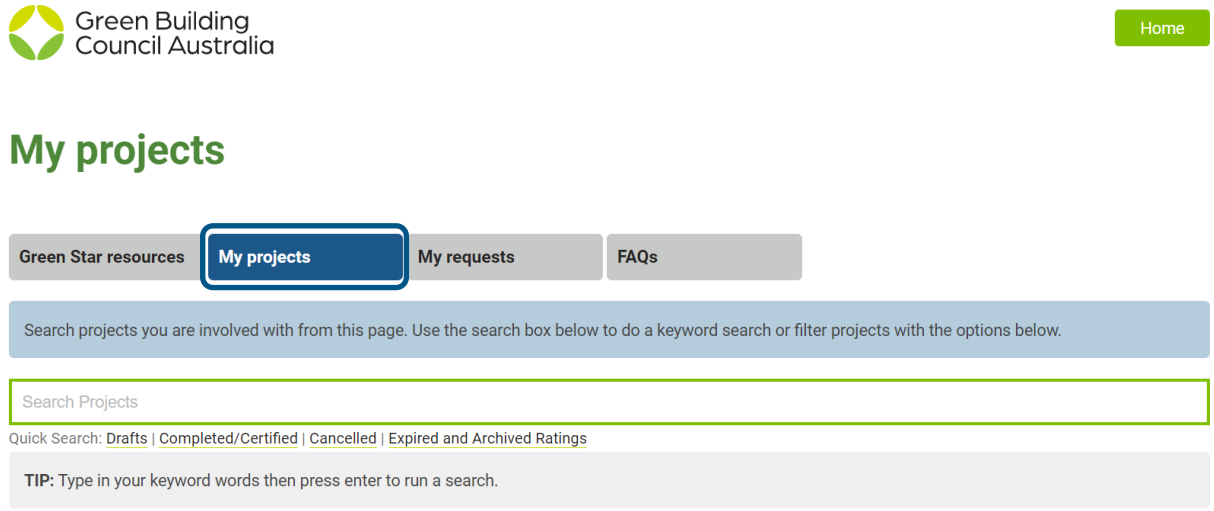
Products Used		Cost*	Receipt*	Certificate	Performance Level	GBCA Approved (Potential Additional Points)*	
Default Product Line - BlueScope Steel Limited - COLORBONDÂ® steel	Input Asset Name or Product U	7000			Good	10 (0)	×

*GBCA Approved - This product has been selected from our product database and has been confirmed as valid.
*Potential Additional Points - This product has been manually added, with a product certification initiative that the GBCA has recognised but needs to be confirmed by the assessor as valid. These points are in addition to GBCA Approved points.

Therefore, the project team meets both the criteria under Credit Achievement and Exceptional Performance criteria.

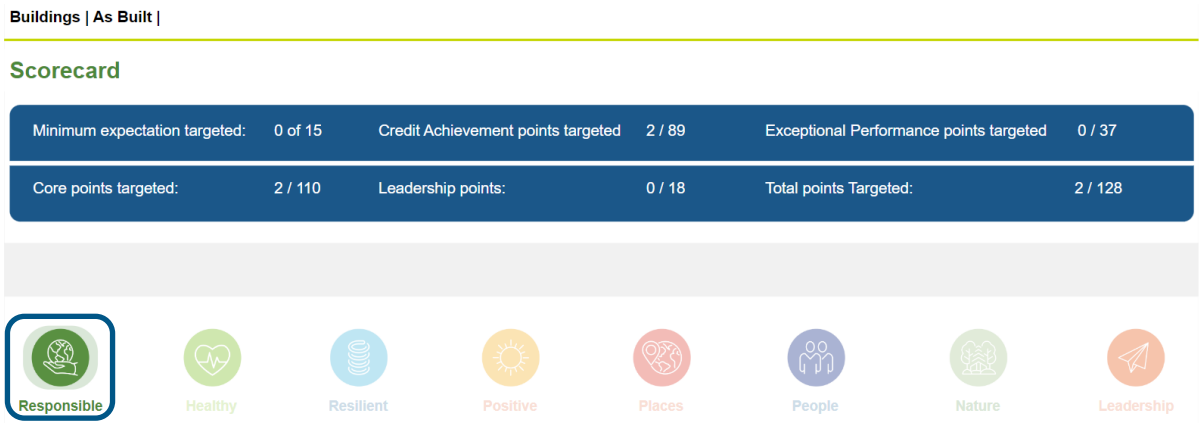
The Responsible Products Calculator User Instructions

1. Open “My Projects” in Green Star Manager



2. Click “Submission” to open Scorecard.

3. Under the “Responsible” tab, find the Responsible Credits. These are Responsible Systems, Envelope, Systems and Finishes.

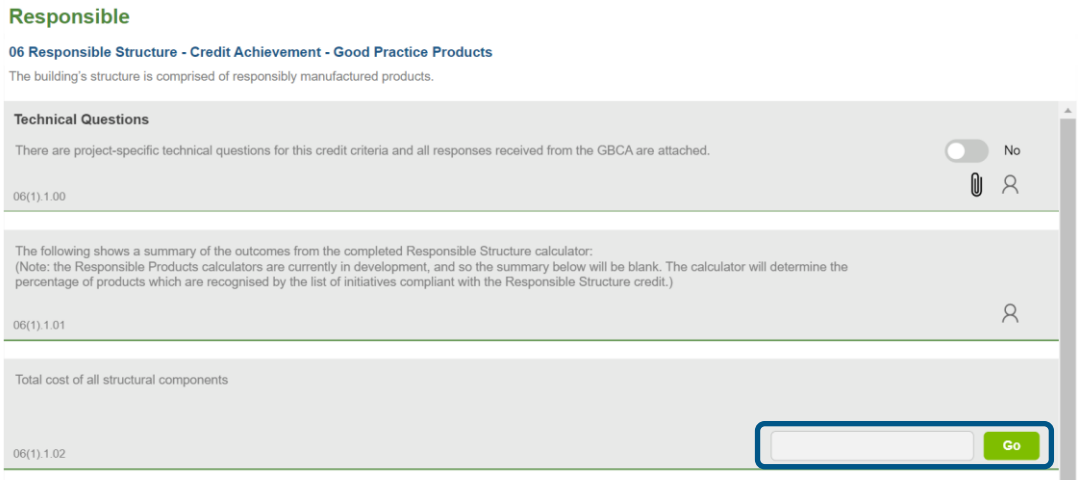


4. Toggle “Not Targeted” to “Targeted” and select “Go”.

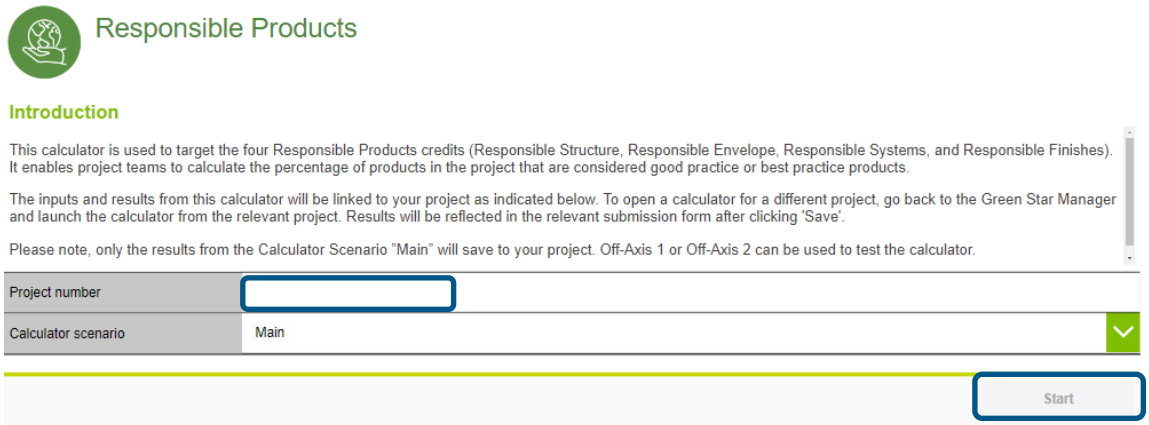
Please note, data entered by the project team will not be saved to the calculator unless the credit has been targeted.

e.g. If the project team enters information into the “Responsible Structure” section of the calculator when the credit has not been targeted, product information will be lost.

5. To input figures into the fields, and open the Responsible Products Calculator, select “Go”. Please note, the calculator can be open up using any of the four Responsible Products credits.

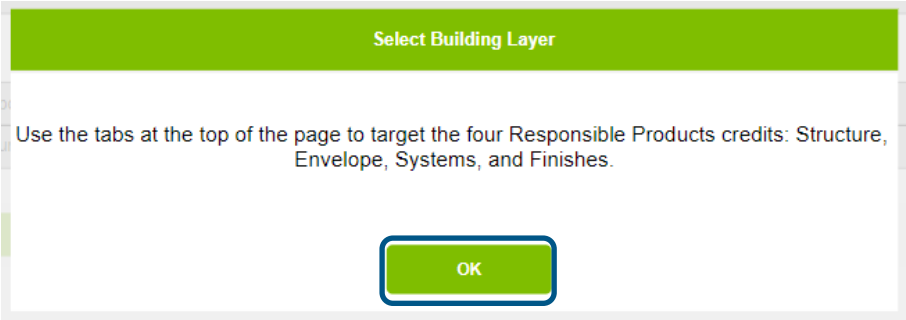


6. The Project Number will automatically populate. For Project Submissions, the calculator scenario must be “Main”. If a project team would like to play around with the functionality of the calculator, select “Off-Axis 1” or “Off-Axis 2”. Please note, products added to “Off-Axis 1” or “Off-Axis 2” will not be saved. Select “Start”.

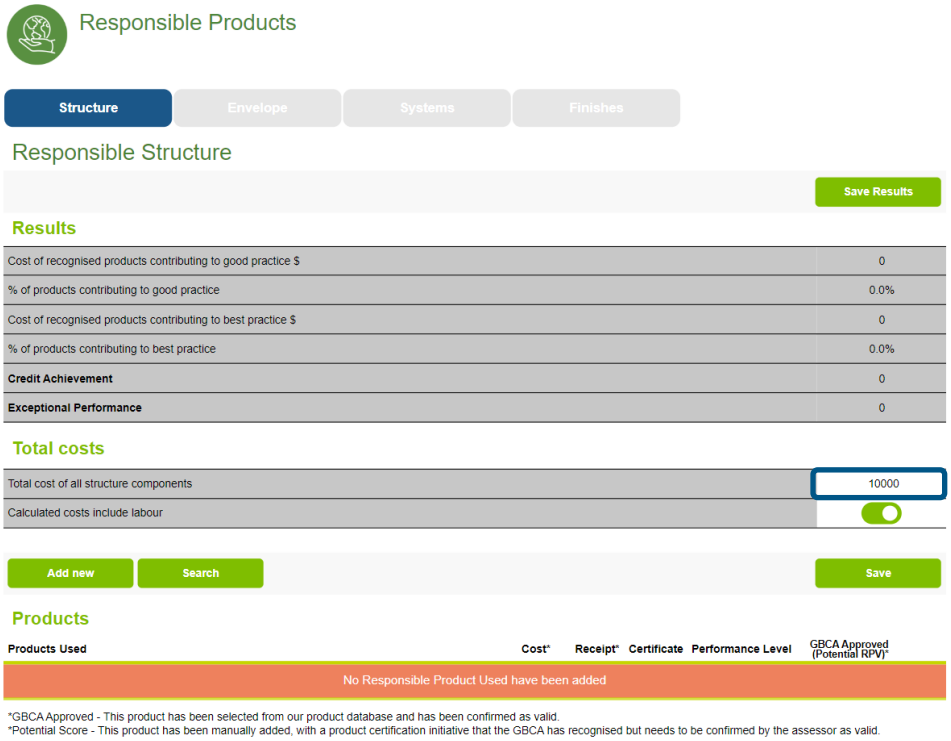


Please note: When the calculator first opens, it appears small on the webpage. Please wait for the calculator to finish loading before zooming in on the calculator, otherwise the calculator won’t change size.

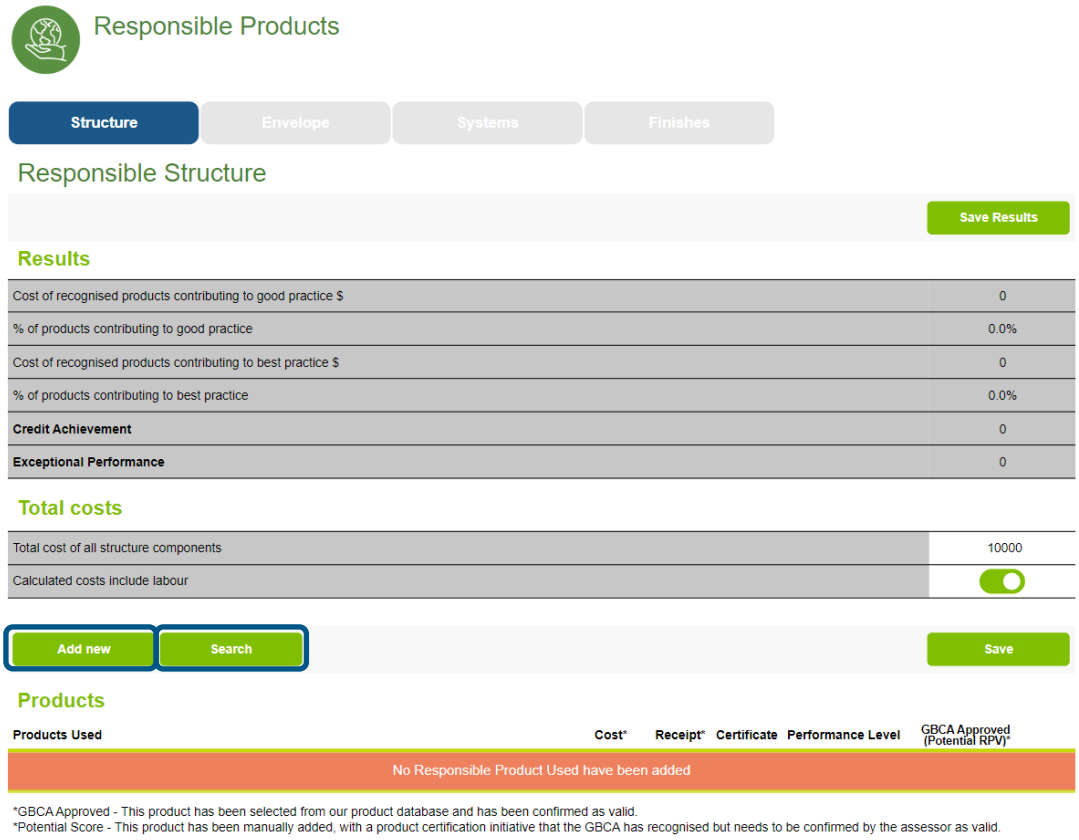
7. Pop up will appear, notifying the user that there are four tables that are representative of the four building layers. Select “OK”



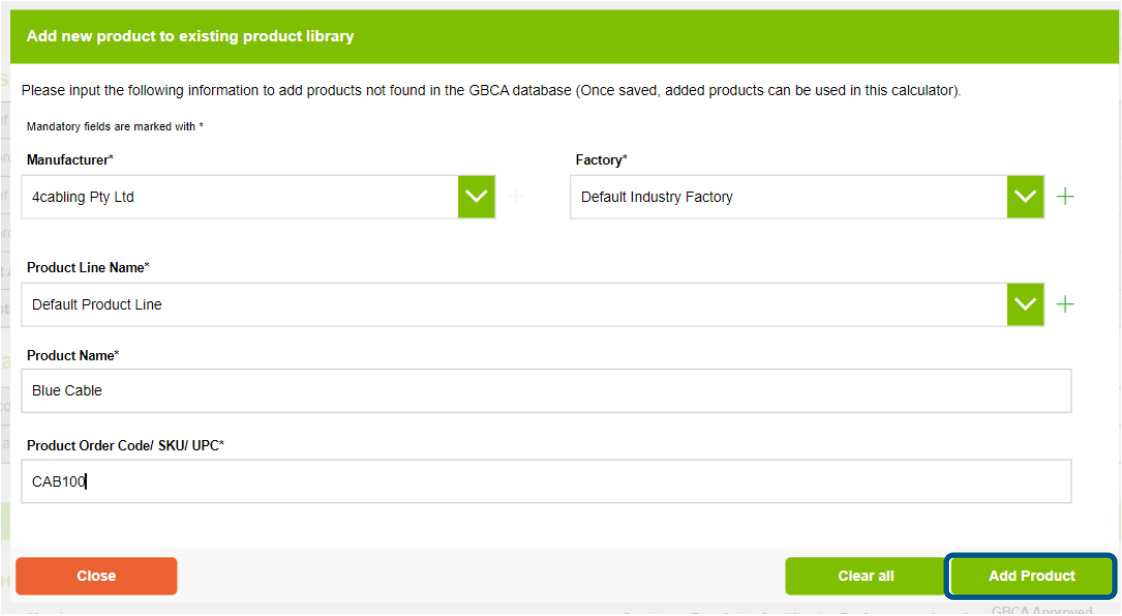
8. Project Team types in “Total Cost of all Structural Components” (or equivalent building layer). The Project Team will need to have evidence of this figure in the Green Star Rating Tool. Project Teams can also use the toggle to determine if the calculated costs include labour.



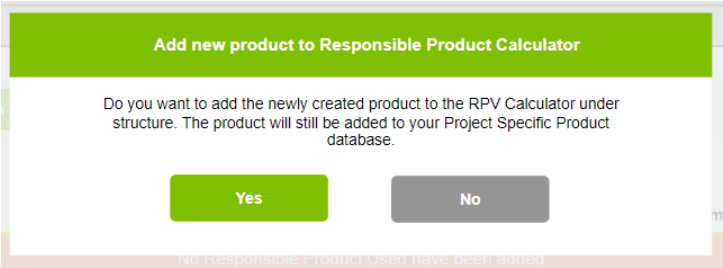
9. Project Team can either add a new product or select products from the GBCA database.



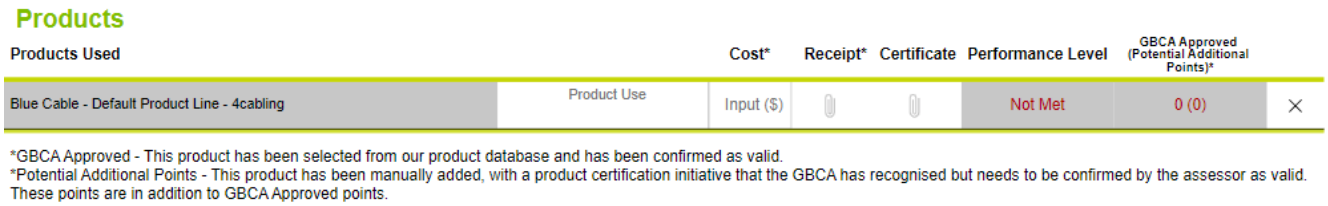
10. If adding a new product, the Project Team will populate the fields and select “Add Product”.



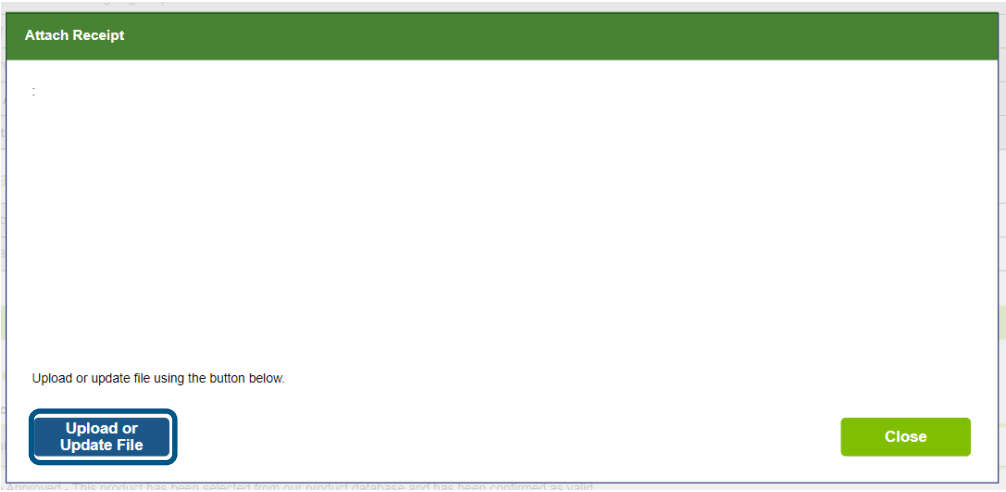
11. A pop up will appear, asking if the Project Team wants to add the product to that building layer. “No” will add it to the product specific database, but not to the building layer. “Yes” will add it to that building layer and the project specific database. A product can be added against multiple building layers, so the total cost of the material will need to equal the total cost assigned to each building layer. The Project Team will need to add the product separately to each layer.



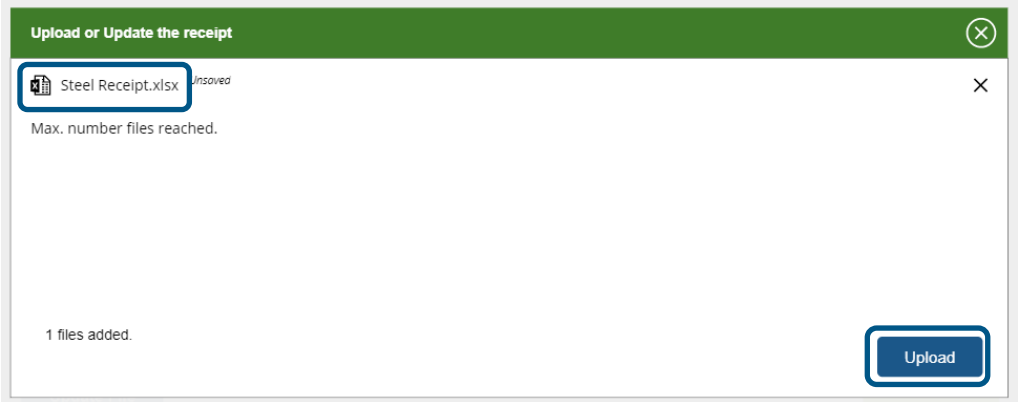
12. The product line item will now be visible in the database. The Project Team will then assign a name to that product to distinguish the use of that product in other areas of the building e.g. North Façade, South Façade. The Project Team will also need to attach the receipt and a certificate if one is available. Note: If a receipt or certificate isn't attached, the product will not be included in the calculation.



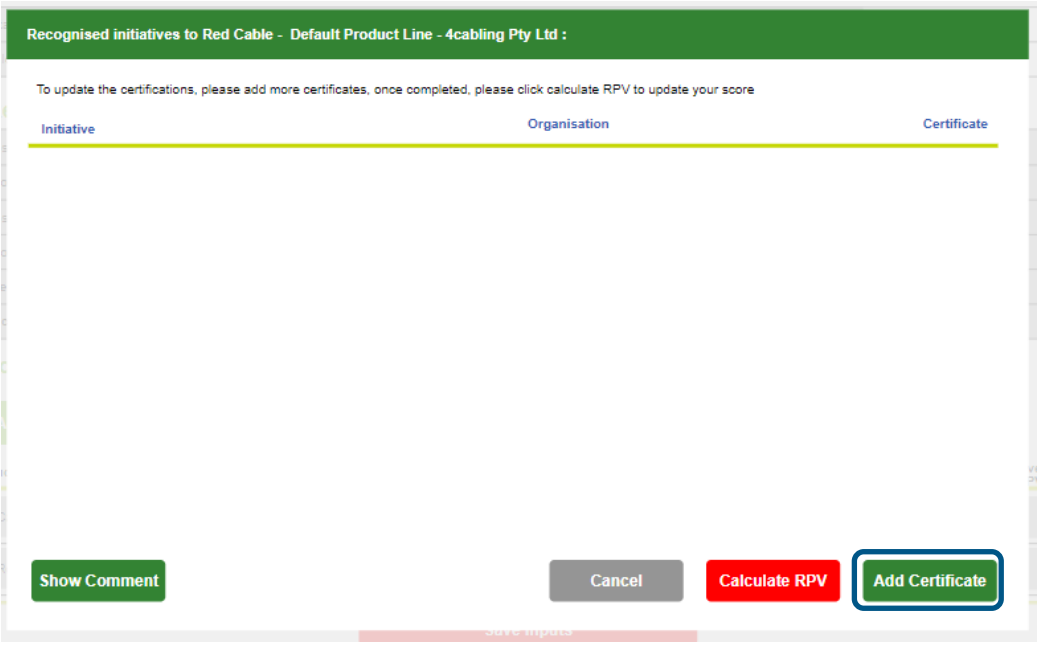
13. The receipt can be attached by clicking the paper clip, which will initiate a pop-up, asking the Project Team to either upload or update their file.



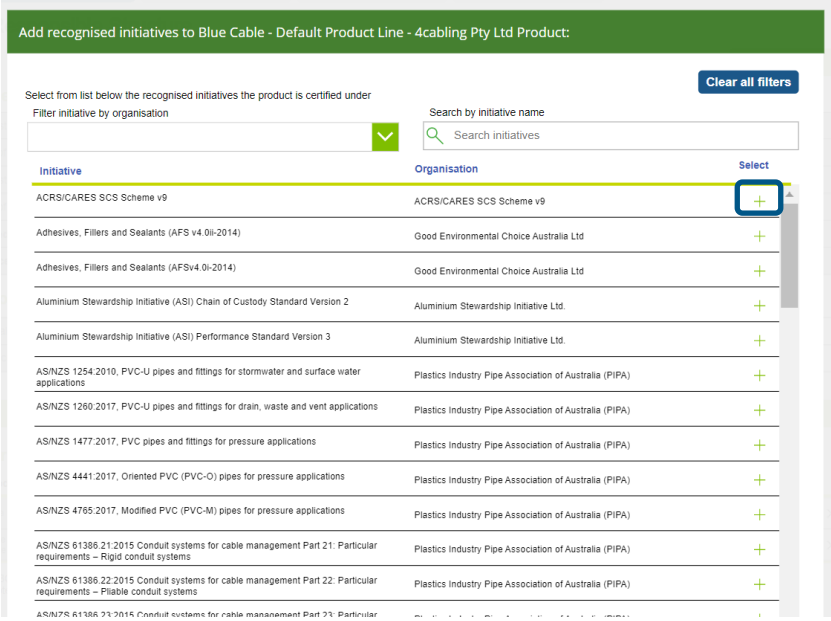
Note – If the project team is using a "Reused Product" as part of their submission, please refer to Guidance on Responsible Products Credits - Green Star Buildings available on the Resources Portal on documentation that will need to be included.

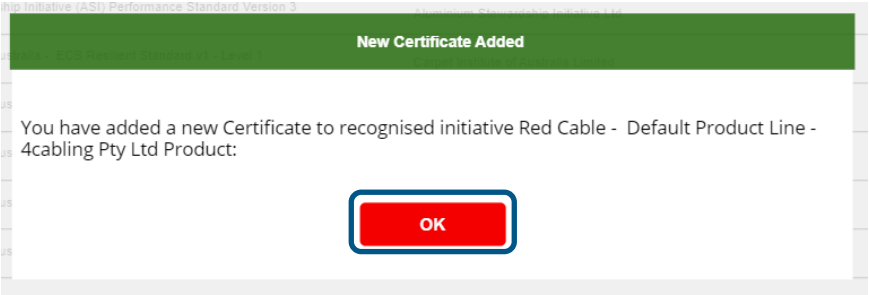


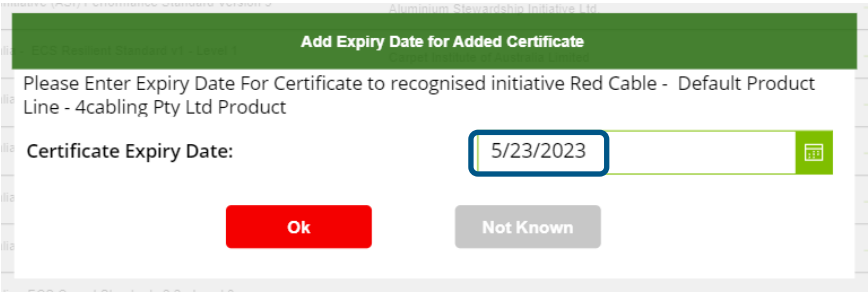
14. The certificate can be attached by clicking the paper clip, which will take them to a pop-up, asking the Project Team to “Add Certificate”.



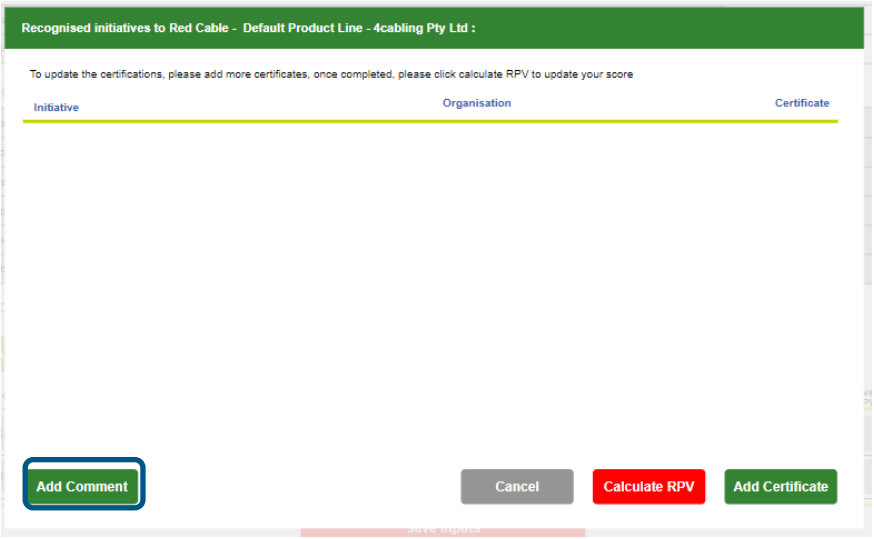
15. A list of initiatives that GBCA has recognised will appear. The project team can either filter by organisation, search by initiative name, or scroll through the list. Once found, select “+”. The Project Team will be prompted to confirm adding the certificate and add a “Certificate Expiry Date”.

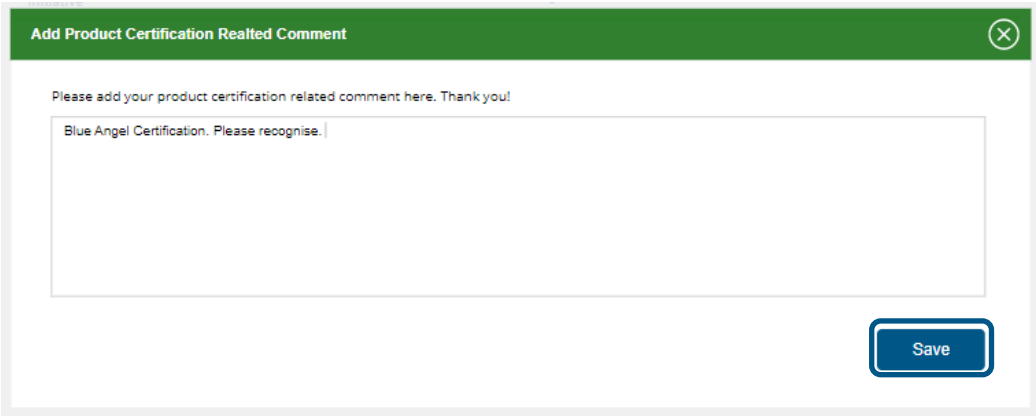




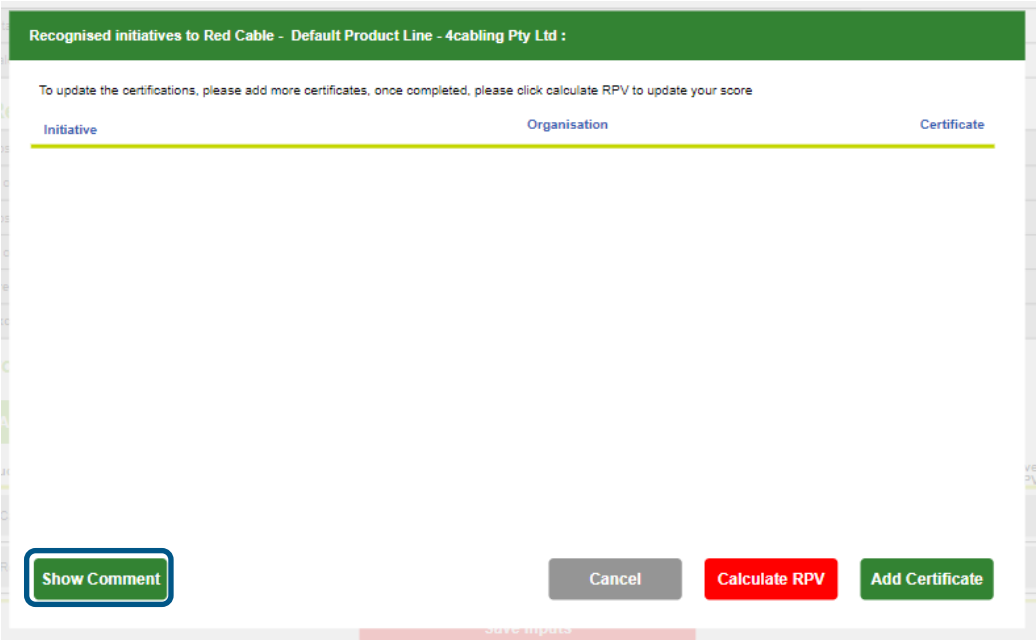


16. Alternatively, the Project Team can select “Add Comment” to inform the assessor that they have a certificate that is not currently on the list of recognised initiatives.

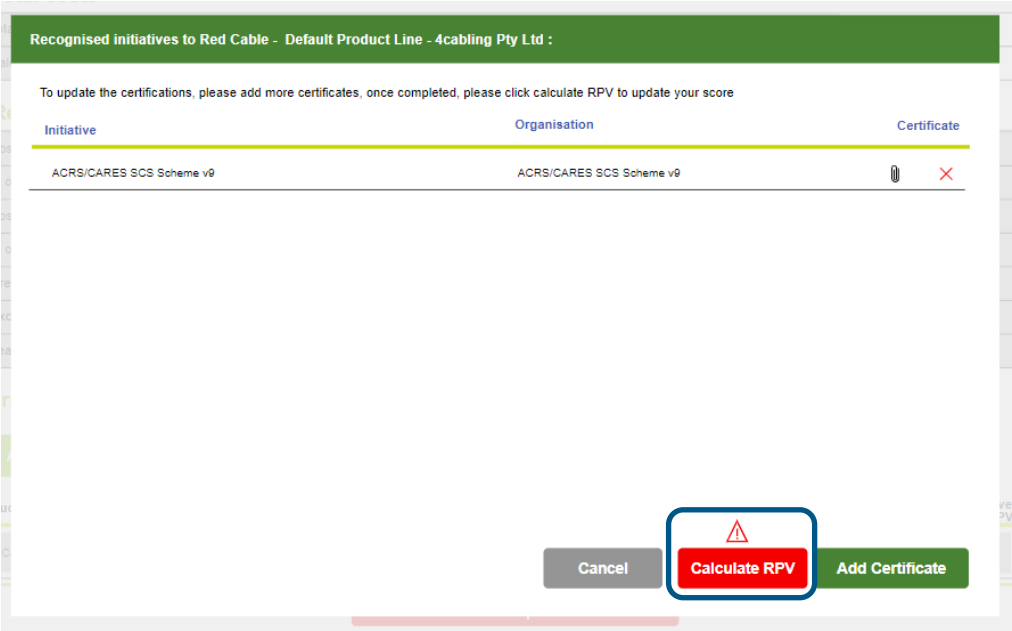




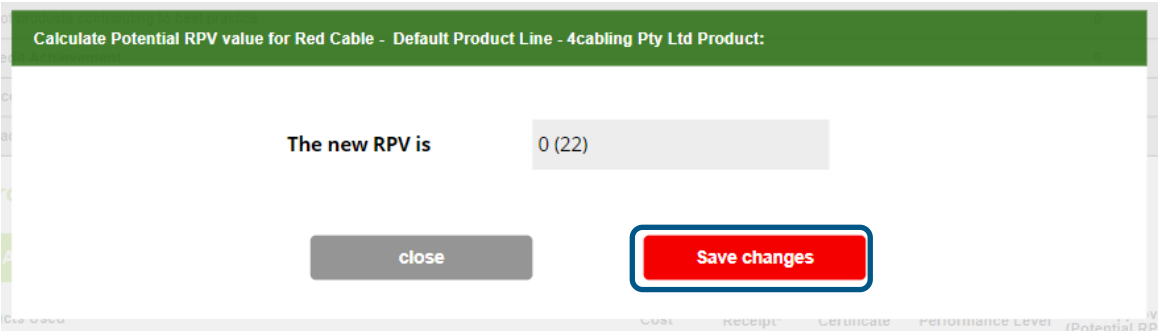
17. Users can view their comment by clicking “Show Comment”.



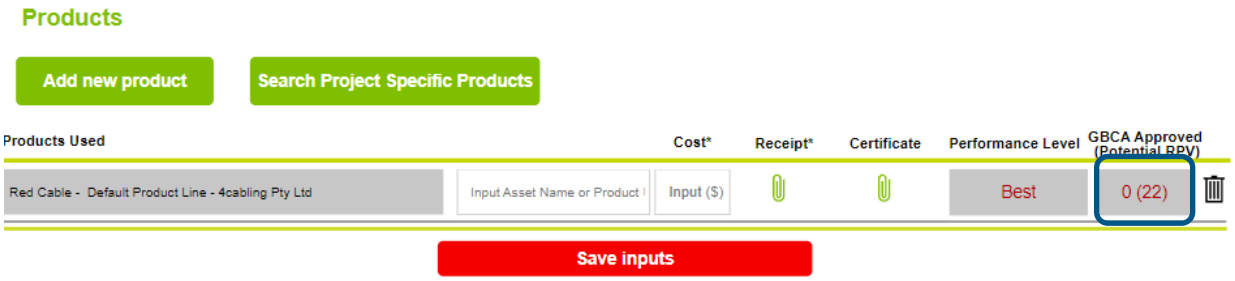
18. Once attached, the Project Team will be prompted to “Calculate RPV”.



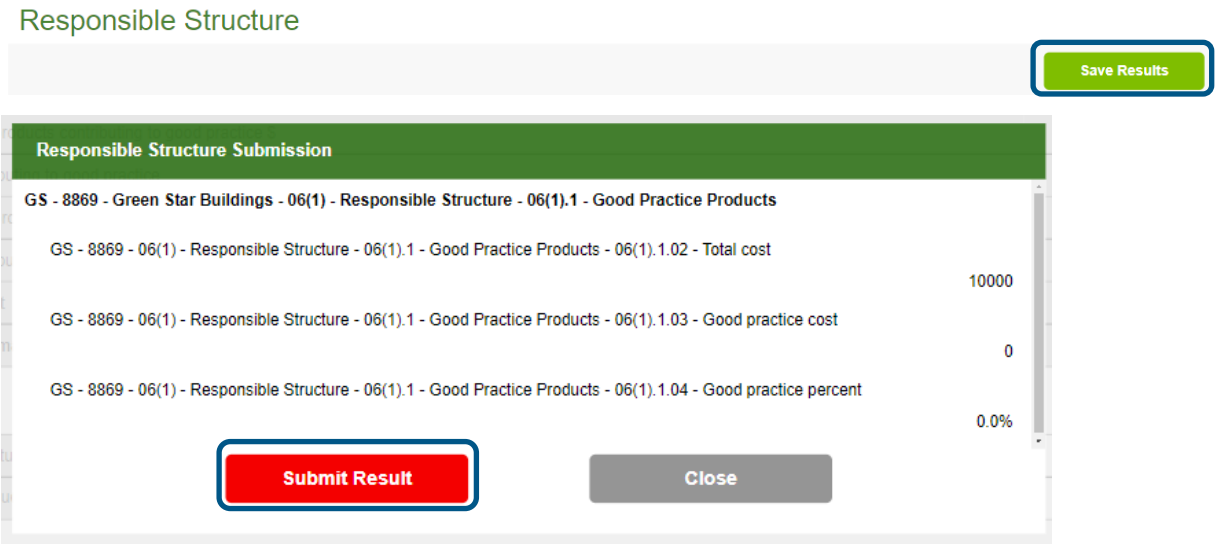
19. The RPV will be displayed and the Project Team must select “Save Changes”.



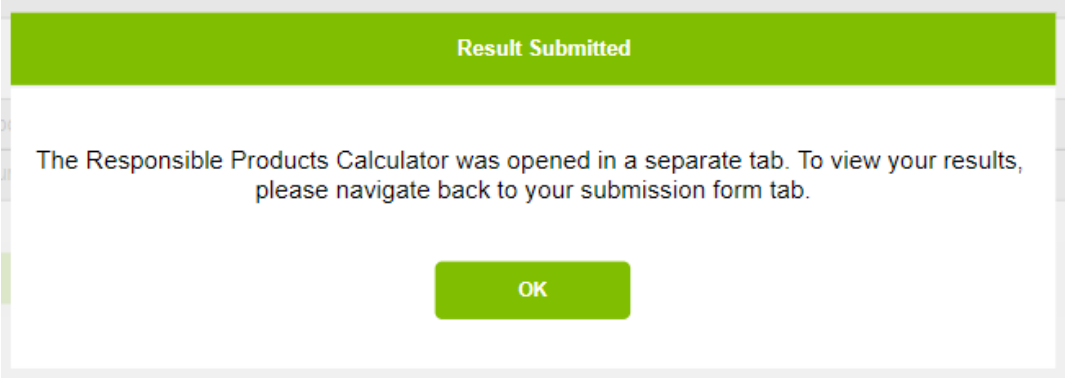
20. The Product Line will now appear with a Responsible Product Value.



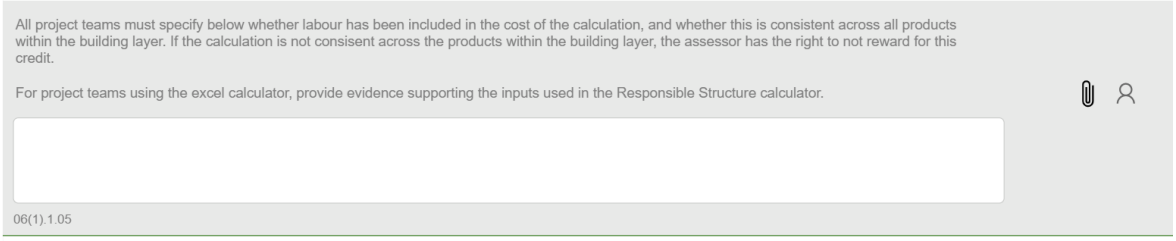
21. Once all products have been added to all building layers including Responsible Structure, Envelope, Systems and Finishes, select “Save Results”, the “Submit Results”.



22. The following pop up will appearing, requesting the project team to return to the Green Star Manager page.



23. Inputs will have fed back into the projects Submission Portal. Project Teams are required to confirm whether labour has been included in the cost of the calculation and whether this is consistent across all products within the building layer.



This requirement can be found in the Buildings submission guidelines:

Calculating compliance

The percentage of cost that has a compliant score is used to determine compliance with the credit.

Cost can be calculated either as total cost (materials + labour) or materials only. However, the cost used must be consistent for the whole calculation (consistency in the numerator and denominator). For example, if the total cost is used to calculate the compliant structural components, the total cost must be used to calculate the full structural component cost. Project teams may use different approaches between Responsible products credits but must be consistent in their approach within the credit.

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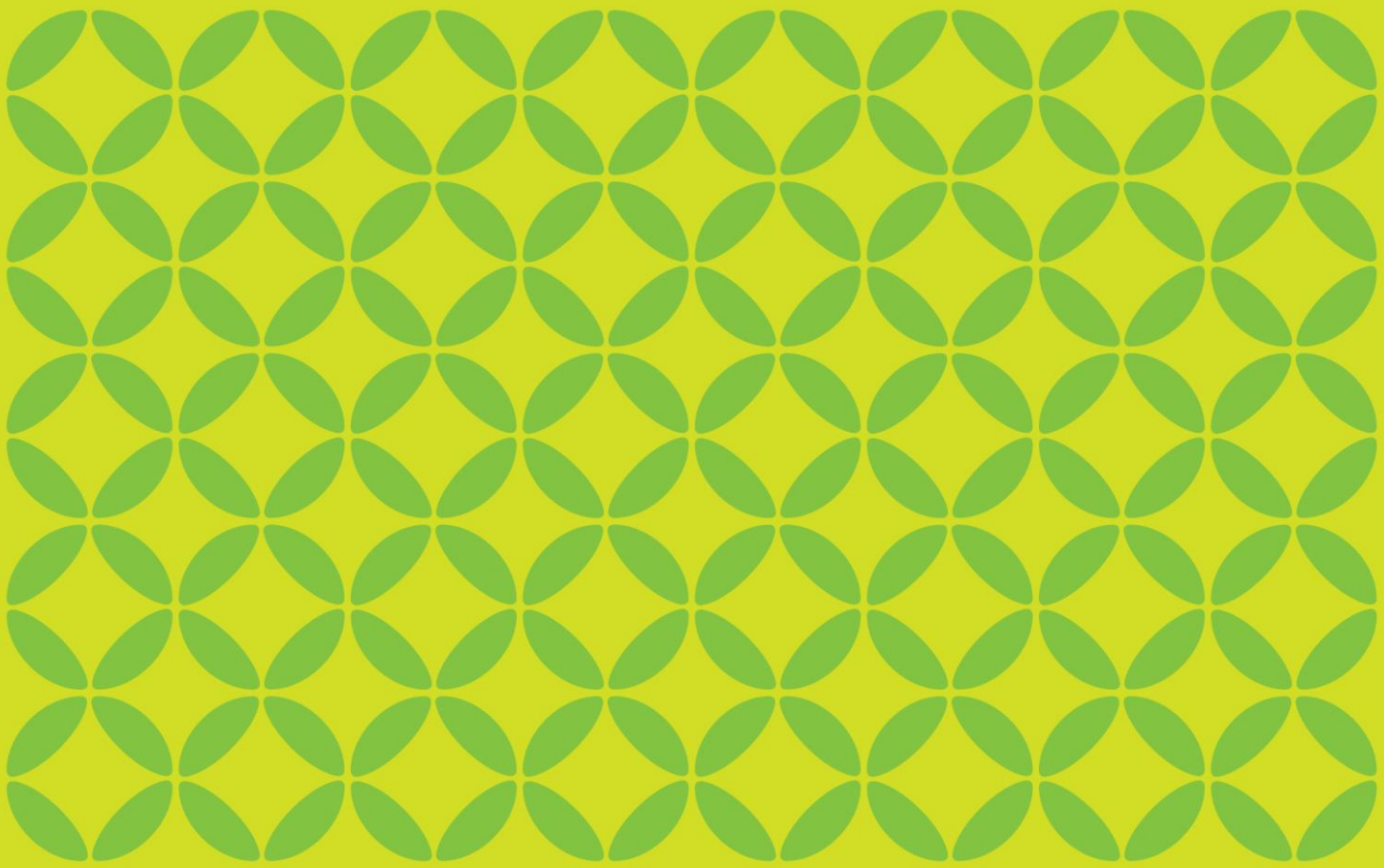

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