

**From:** Spotlight Creative Media [mailto:spotlightmedia@clear.net.nz]  
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**Subject:** Wind powered carpet

From Environmental Choice New Zealand - a thought starter!

Wind-powered carpet "conquers Everest"

Products marketed in New Zealand and made by the world's largest privately-owned carpet company have now passed one of the highest-rated environmental assessments in the world – product certification by Environmental Choice New Zealand. The Kiwi eco-label has been classed as one of the world's most robust in terms of its processes for proving products environmentally preferable, and Irvine International's Nexterra carpet tiles have just received certification after an 11-month period of assessment. "We feel as though we've reached the top of Mt Everest," says Trace Church, marketing manager of Irvine International.

The intensive scrutiny of Environmental Choice New Zealand scientists and assessors did not stop with the product, says Trace Church. "Irvine International's offices and warehousing and distribution operations all had to meet ECNZ's stringent standards of sustainability and environmental performance."

It is a "hands-on" approach to environmentally-sensitive practices which substantiates that the company's walk actually matches their talk, says Trace Church. "For example we offer a nationwide Take Back Service. This means that, where Irvine International product has been chosen to replace existing carpet or carpet tiles, we will co-ordinate the uplift of those which still have some life left in them and offer them free to Community Groups to re-use where a change of floor covering is needed.

"We deliberately choose to work with manufacturing partners that share the same commitment to determined action that directly reduces the impact on the environment, rather than what we consider the soft option of appeasing one's environmental conscience by offsetting with carbon credits. The Nexterra tiles are made for us by major American company Beaulieu Commercial in a factory that is powered by 100% wind energy – the only factory in our industry that can claim this."

Irvine International's Nexterra Carpet Tiles considerably exceed the criteria of even the ECNZ specification. Not only is the synthetic fibre extruded on the manufacturer's premises (vertical integration), but it contains a minimum of 25 percent post-industrial recycled content – more than double the requirement. The criteria for the backing is a minimum of 25 percent recycled content and the tiles contain 85 percent **post-consumer** recycled content by backing weight. (Unlike post-industrial, which is waste produced during manufacturing, post-consumer recycled content has been rescued from ever reaching landfill).

The general manager of Environmental Choice, Robin Taylor, says it is becoming increasingly easy to base design, building and refurbishment in New Zealand on the selection of certified products. "We now list around a thousand products, from household cleaners to office equipment. From bathroom to boardroom, from floor to ceiling, an environmentally better purchase is as simple as logging on to [environmentalchoice.org.nz](http://environmentalchoice.org.nz). Consumers and businesses now expect suppliers to have sound sustainability credentials, and ECNZ, which is owned and backed by the government, is an acknowledged global leader in ecolabelling."

Irvine International has staff bases in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, and Trace Church says they are noting an increasing environmentally-educated purchasing and specifier community in government and business. With the recent announcement by European governments of Environmental Choice as a world-leading standard, Trace Church says the flooring company is unequivocal in its pride at the mountain-top achievement. "The robust process undertaken to reach ECNZ certification is the reason this is fast becoming recognised by flooring manufacturers around the world as the most coveted environmental and sustainability benchmark for their products.

"In the assessment process, which has taken us 11 months' work, we have gained a huge amount of knowledge. We see this certification as local endorsement of the direction in which Irvine International

and our manufacturing partners have been heading for many years. Our goal now is to pursue Environmental Choice certification for all our product ranges.”

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Further information from Trace Church, DDI 09 371 7777.

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Also Michael Hooper, advisor to Environmental Choice New Zealand, is a useful source for genuine environmental stories: DDI 09 403 7675. Mobile 021 940 893. Email: [spotlightmedia@clear.net.nz](mailto:spotlightmedia@clear.net.nz).

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