Background
In August 2018, the UC adopted an updated Sustainable Procurement Policy and associated Guidelines document. For the first time, this Policy sets a system-wide goal of putting 25% of all spend for goods in select categories, towards products that meet “UC Green Preferred” criteria. In addition, there are now minimum mandatory sustainability criteria certain products must meet.

We know that shopping for products with stated positive social and environmental benefits is not always easy or straightforward. We have numerous hosted and punch-out catalogs, each with their own functionality, making it difficult to navigate different companies’ product specification, environmental attributes, and third party certifications.

In order to make it easier for both buyers and our contracted suppliers, UC Santa Barbara is piloting a new platform that enables purchasers to find products that comply with the new UC Sustainable Procurement Guidelines. We encourage Gateway users to try out this new search tool, and send your feedback to heather.perry@ucsb.edu.

Step-by-Step User Guide

Step 1. Access Platform
Copy and paste the following link into your web browser, or click to it from the Gateway homepage under Sustainability:

https://uc.ecomedes.com/
Step 2. Shop by Product Category, Brand, or Ecolabel

Start by selecting the Product Category you’re shopping for from the Product Category List on the left panel. You can then drill down using the Product Subcategory, Product Type, and Brand lists. For example, if you’re looking for Office Furniture, click on the “Building Furnishings” category heading. Then click on the “Furniture” Subcategory, and then on the Product Type and Brand, if you know. Alternatively, you can type the name of the product you’re looking for in the main Search bar at the top of the page.
Step 3. Compare Products

If you want to see a side by side comparison of products and their sustainability certifications, you can click on “add to” and then select “Comparison” from the dropdown. Once you’ve selected all products you want to compare, click on the View Comparison button at top.
Step 4. Verify Compliance

Finally, if you want to verify the product’s compliance with the UC Sustainable Procurement Guidelines Green Spend Criteria, click on the Product Name, then on the Document Contributions Button, then scroll to the University of California Rating System, and then click Document. This allows you to see the list of all third party certifications held by the product (with external links to the actual certificate by the certifying body), along with a statement of Compliance at the bottom of the page.
Step 5. Purchase!
Once you’ve selected the product you want to buy, you still have to go through the normal process of creating a cart in Gateway. Depending on how much demand there is for this type of solution, there may be options in the future to integrate the Ecomedes site with Gateway or a supplier’s punch-out catalog.

Thank you for using this site to purchase more sustainable! Please provide any feedback to heather.perry@ucsb.edu.