

Ecodesign method for office furniture with emphasis on information gathering for product environmental improvement

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Abstract: This study presents the results of a research that gathers Ecodesign concepts and tools such as product environmental parameters, environmental impact assessment and Ecodesign strategies, bearing in mind the elaboration of an Ecodesign method applicable to office furniture. A case study research involving a medium-sized Brazilian office furniture manufacturer was carried out and its productive processes, design practices, and representative products were analyzed. These features were confronted with environmental parameters presented in the literature in search of instruments for the Ecodesign method elaboration. The environmental impact assessment of a workstation system, manufactured by the researched manufacturer, was also done. Specific Ecodesign strategies for furniture, among which some for office furniture were found, were also researched; these strategies were classified according to the environmental parameters. The presented method has five steps: Identify environmental critical aspects of the product; Set Ecodesign objectives; Generate Ecodesign information; Generate Ecodesign ideas, and Apply the Ecodesign ideas.

Keywords: ecodesign, office furniture, product design, design for environment, environmental impact assessment.

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