



# IPC Green Inventory

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### ►► Introduction

As has been widely recognized, long-term sustainable economic growth can only be achieved at the global level through the development, diffusion, and deployment of green or environmentally sound technologies (ESTs).

Though the process of developing, diffusing, and deploying technologies is complex and many-faceted, one thing is clear: A key first step in the process is determining which green technologies exist and who the major players in this field are. Armed with this knowledge, scientists and engineers as well as decision-makers in government and industry can more effectively plan research and development activities, forge strategic partnerships, and carry out technology transfer, as necessary.

Much of the information currently available about new technologies can be found in patent documents. In the words of Dr. Francis Gurry, Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), "Patent information is the gold mine of human knowledge." Each year nearly one million new inventions are disclosed in patent documents, adding to an existing body of far more than 50 million patent documents. Many of these inventions are not disclosed anywhere else, including in scientific and technical publications.

As the owner of the global patent database PATENTSCOPE, WIPO launched in 2010 a powerful online tool: the IPC Green Inventory. This tool is designed for searching and retrieving patent documents related to green technology from around the world in order to contribute to the accessibility of patent information about green technologies. With a few simple clicks, the IPC Green Inventory can give direct access to the latest patent information about technologies in a number of fields including alternative energy production, energy conservation, transportation, waste management, and agriculture and forestry.



## ▶▶ Understanding the IPC Green Inventory

To assist in the retrieval of information relevant to specific fields of technology, including green technologies, patent information is organized according classification schemes such as the International Patent Classification (IPC) developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and used by over 100 patent offices worldwide.

The IPC system divides all fields of technology into hierarchical sets of sections, classes, subclasses and groups. It is an indispensable tool for industrial offices, in conducting searches to establish the novelty of an invention, or to determine the state of the art in a particular area of technology. The IPC is also used by industry to search patents and to find technological and business-related information to aid research and development and find potential partners.

Based on a set of essential green technologies identified by the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), WIPO Member States have launched an initiative to create the IPC Green Inventory which leverages the general purpose classification scheme provided by the IPC system to create a specialized scheme aimed at facilitating the retrieval of patent information on green technologies. Through its integration with WIPO's PATENTSCOPE search service, the IPC Green Inventory permits direct access to patent documents as well as statistics, graphs, and charts describing the state of the art in green technologies around the world.

Thus, the IPC Green Inventory will help businesses, universities, and research institutions avoid duplicating R&D efforts, identify potential partners, and uncover technologies to be licensed and exploited.

The IPC Green Inventory is currently available in both English and French and can be accessed online at:

[www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/en/est/index.html](http://www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/en/est/index.html)


[www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/fr/est/index.html](http://www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/fr/est/index.html).

## ►► Using the IPC Green Inventory

The IPC Green Inventory contains some 200 topics that are directly relevant to green technologies, organized into seven major subject areas. Each topic is linked with the most relevant IPC symbols, chosen by experts from all WIPO Member States.

To display the topics under each subject heading, click on the plus (+) sign, which will open a list of topics under that particular heading. Similarly, subtopics under each topic can be accessed by clicking the plus (+) sign next to the relevant topic. The lists can be collapsed again by clicking on the minus (-) sign.

To access more information about the IPC symbols associated with a particular green technology, select the links next to the relevant item under the “IPC” column. It should be noted that each EST and its corresponding IPC place(s) usually do not coincide and that the EST is a subset of the corresponding IPC.

To automatically retrieve and analyze patent documents related to a particular green technology, select the links next to the relevant item under the “PATENTSCOPE” column. The patent documents include patent applications filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) system as well as patents and patent applications from various countries and regions around the world. Please note that in case of intervals, the search result is relevant to the first symbol of that interval. If searching additional symbols falling in the interval is needed, this search might be done either manually in PATENTSCOPE or through the IPC by using the “bridge” function (“magnifying lens ” button).

For more information contact WIPO at [www.wipo.int](http://www.wipo.int)

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