The US Green Building Council's Leed scheme offers four levels of certification (Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum) for sustainable buildings.

Leed points can be attained in the following categories:

- **Sustainable sites**: based on the size, location and other impacts of the building on its surroundings;
- **Water efficiency**: rewards economical water consumption, indoors and outdoors;
- **Energy and atmosphere**: the most detailed part includes the installation, checking and monitoring of heating and cooling systems, lighting and other equipment as well as the use of renewable energies; and
- **Materials and resources**: outlines environment-friendly strategies for the use of local renewable and reclaimed materials, in order to reduce consumption and promote recycling.

Indoor environmental quality: concentrates on the reduction of potentially harmful gases in the building and integrates daylight and fresh air.

Innovation in design: can be awarded for exemplary performance in the category or efficient new technology.

For further information see: www.usgbc.org

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**FIGURE 2: LEED**

- Set up in co-operation with the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMVBS).
- Aims to plan and assess sustainable buildings.
- Covers all the relevant areas of construction, approximately 60 criteria from the following fields:
  - Ecology;
  - Economics;
  - Socio-cultural and functional aspects;
  - Technology;
  - Processes; and
  - Site.
- Certificates in Bronze, Silver and Gold.
- Holistic study of the building's life cycle:
  - Sustainability targets can already be defined at the planning stage; and
  - On the basis of these targets, state-of-the-art, sustainable buildings are constructed.

For further information see: www.dgnb.de

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**FIGURE 3: DGNB**

- A platform for building and sustainable development.
- The objectives are:
  - to encourage rethinking in terms of ecology; and
  - to initiate optimisation processes.
- Method covers three phases: commissioning, design and implementation.
- Two aspects are central: ecological management and sustainable building design.
- Assessment criteria:
  - Integration of the building in its surroundings;
  - Integrated choice of construction method and materials;
  - Absence of harmful substances;
  - Energy management;
  - Water efficiency;
  - Waste management;
  - Maintenance and operation management;
  - Living comfort;
  - Hygiene of sanitary and kitchen facilities; and
  - Air and water quality.
- For further information see: www.assohqe.org/hqe

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**FIGURE 4: HQE**

- Widely used certification method for buildings.
- Assesses the following aspects:
  - Management;
  - Energy;
  - Water;
  - Land use and ecology;
  - Health and well-being;
  - Transport;
  - Materials; and
  - Pollution.
- Tool for reducing the operating costs and improving the working and living climate.
- Uses points system for assessment.
- Impact on the design, construction and management of buildings.
- Quality assurance and certification used to define and ensure compliance with proven technical standards.
- For further information see: www.breeam.org

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**FIGURE 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment criteria</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Germany</th>
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<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Economy</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and well-being</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor environmental quality</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land use</td>
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<tr>
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<td>?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>


? = Data for DGNB and HQE is not exhaustive and additional criteria may be included in the assessment.