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We Can't Cut What We Can't Count: How EPDs Help Track Emissions from Construction Materials

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When it comes to reducing carbon emissions, we can't cut what we can't count, and some of the biggest opportunities to cut carbon are getting lost in the shuffle. With the right tools, we can fix this problem.

Common construction materials used to build our homes, offices, roads, and bridges are a significant source of greenhouse gases, with concrete, steel, and aluminum alone accounting for 18% of global emissions.¹ In order to encourage the use of materials with lower embodied carbon, we need a reliable way to compare products. Fortunately, a disclosure tool called an environmental product declaration (EPD) has emerged in recent years to help measure the climate impact of products and enable consumers to buy cleaner.

In this video, we explain how EPDs work and why they're so important for decarbonizing the production processes of industrial materials and helping domestic manufacturers remain competitive in a global marketplace that will increasingly demand cleaner products.

ENDNOTES

1. Mori Rothman. "Can Concrete, a Major CO₂ Emitter, Be Made Greener?" PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, 8 Aug 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/can-concrete-a-major-co2-emitter-be-made-greener>; Christian Hoffmann et al. "Decarbonization challenge for steel." McKinsey, 3 Jun 2020, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/metals-and-mining/our-insights/decarbonization-challenge-for-steel>; Renee Van Heusden et al. "Why addressing the aluminum industry's carbon footprint is key to climate action." GreenBiz, 16 Dec 2020, <https://www.greenbiz.com/article/why-addressing-aluminum-industrys-carbon-footprint-key-climate-action>.