



Outdoor Industry Association Eco Working Group Packaging Guidelines for the Eco Index™

Approved by Eco Working Group Vote - 09/29/09

Approved by EOG Sustainability Working Group – 1/26/10

Scope and Purpose

The Eco Index™ is an outdoor industry environmental assessment tool intended to be used by companies to incorporate environmental considerations into product design and to manage their supply chains in a way that supports their environmental goals. The Eco Index contains guidelines, indicators and metrics.

This document encompasses guidelines for packaging and is a component of the larger index.

These Packaging Guidelines are qualitative principles and management practices, intended to be used as an educational tool, promoting continuous environmental improvement for companies and suppliers. They are intended to be more general in nature and provoke thought, further research, and questions. It is each company's responsibility to apply these Guidelines in a way that is meaningful to their products and business.

Packaging Guidelines

Reduce

- Assess if the packaging or the packaging material is needed
- Minimize material usage or eliminate packaging completely
- Use single materials and avoid laminates or multiple materials
- Minimize size of packaging (reduce shipping space)
- Examine the package-to-product ratio

Reuse

- Create packaging that can be reused within and between retail stores, distribution centers, and/or through the supply chain.
- Consider consumer packaging that can be reused or has alternative use
- When creating reusable packaging consider whether:
 - Customers will actually reuse the packaging versus throwing it away
 - The reusable packaging will result in the use of more material and resources than non-reusable packaging
 - The reusable packaging will be compatible throughout the supply chain (i.e. transportation, distribution centers, retail store, etc)

Recycle

- Create packaging compatible with recycling systems (can a person in the average city recycle this at home or in retail stores?)
- Maximize use of packaging with single materials (multiple materials reduces recyclability of packaging)
- Multiple substrates should be separable without the use of tools
- Avoid laminates, films, wax, or wet strength additives and coatings

- Avoid pressure sensitive adhesives, closures, foil stamps, aluminum tags, etc.
- Avoid adhesives and coating (they contaminate the recycling process)
- Avoid metallic, UV-cured or fluorescent inks (they contaminate the recycle process)
- When creating recyclable packaging:
 - Provide consumer education via graphics and labeling
 - Actively support recycling as the end-of-use option for packaging material
 - Provide and/or support infrastructure for collection of packaging material for reuse or recycling

Sustainable Materials

- Maximize use of post consumer recycled content, agricultural waste or textile scrap
- Maximize use of sustainable materials
- Use materials with high recycle rates
- Track the type and quantity of packaging materials through the supply chain and your company

Paper or Paperboard

- Maximize use of packaging material which contains:
 - Post-consumer recycled content, agricultural waste, textile scrap, etc.
 - Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper and wood products (this ensures no old growth or clear cut forests)
 - Unbleached, totally chlorine free or process chlorine free paper
 - Acid free paper
 - Water based and/or soy based inks
- Avoid use of packaging material which contains:
 - Wax and other wet-strength additives and coatings
 - Plastic film laminations, extruded coatings or foil stamping
 - Inks with solvents
 - UV-cured printing inks, metallic inks or fluorescent inks
 - Pressure-sensitive adhesives
 - Film applied over a cut-out "windowing"
 - Wax coatings, e-beam inks or UV inks on corrugated cardboard

Plastic

- Maximize use of post-consumer recycled content
- Avoid use of PVC
- Do not mix resins or incompatible attachments
- Biopolymers: be cautious about additives such as coupling agents, plasticizers, fillers, dyes, and pigments