

# OptimEco kit

PACKAGING AND PRINTED MATTER  
OPTIMIZATION AND ECODSIGN



## RETHINK YOUR PACKAGING AND PRINTED MATTER CHOICES

Because best practices in packaging design are increasingly accessible and can generate many benefits.

Éco Entreprises Québec wants to encourage companies to take into account the environmental impact of their packaging by focusing on the potential economic and reputational value added of integrating such considerations.

OptimEco's kit is intended for managers and decision-makers interested in applying an ecodesign approach to their containers and printed matter and in reaping its significant benefits. The kit complements the OptimEco.ca portal on packaging and printed matter ecodesign.

### OptimEco's kit contains essential tools:



**Solid arguments** to mobilize your teams and partners as well as **practical tips** for getting everyone on board, right from the start.



**A simple and complete process**, tools for decision-making and complementary content to help you better understand potential avenues for improvement.



In short, everything you need to **integrate ecodesign in your business strategy!**

The production of the OptimEco kit was made possible thanks to the contribution of the following partners:



**LES ÉVADES**

Financial partner:





## What is ecodesign?

By adopting eco-responsible practices right at the design stage, you can optimize your packaging and generate positive benefits while meeting business objectives.

Ecodesign constitutes real strategic leverage for applying production best practices and creating value!

### OPTIMIZATION IN A NUTSHELL

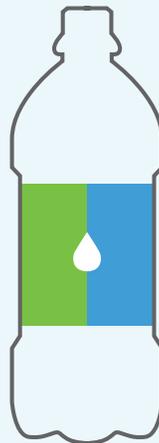
There are many ways to optimize the development of your packaging and printed matter. From reducing packaging weight and volume to the choice of materials as well as end-of-life management: improving processes and leveraging their associated opportunities are now a must to integrate to your business tactics!

### ECODESIGN IN A NUTSHELL

Ecodesign is an improvement initiative aimed at reducing a packaging environmental footprint throughout its entire life cycle, i.e. from first concept to the end of its useful life. It considers environmental criteria such as reducing the quantity of raw materials required, introducing recycled materials and improving potential recyclability.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

- (%) recycled content
- Better packaging ratio/product
- More packaging products/pallet
- Recyclable



#### TRADITIONAL CRITERIA

- Facilitate handling
- Safety
- Communications with the consumer
- Resist shocks

## Why should we be concerned about packaging and printed matter?

Increasing regulatory pressures, economic and environmental concerns as well as social acceptance are all factors that have companies reconsidering the management of their packaging and printed matter.

Companies are adapting, innovating and leveraging packaging and printed matter optimization initiatives in their innovation and sustainable development strategy.





# Why should we be concerned about packaging and printed matter?

The packaging you generate is part of an overall problem.

Packaging is subject to a whole range of pressures.

Companies are adapting, innovating and including more packaging and printed matter optimization options in their sustainable development strategy.

## THE GOVERNMENT AND YOUR CLIENTS EXPECT IT

### EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR)

- The compensation plan for municipal curbside recycling services requires companies that put containers, packaging and printed matter on Quebec's market to make financial contributions in accordance with the quantities, weight and type of materials they generate.
- ÉEQ collects contributions totalling more than \$135 million annually from some 3,000 companies and organizations, including retailers, distributors, durable product and consumer goods manufacturers as well as service providers. Over the past 10 years, almost \$1 billion has been paid to municipalities.
- Contributing companies are important players in Quebec's economy. Their activities in Quebec generate overall earnings of \$110 billion annually and provide close to 1 million direct jobs.
- Product packaging was recognized as a priority by the Canada-Wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility.

### YOUR CUSTOMERS HAVE EXPECTATIONS

Companies must meet the growing expectations of many stakeholders.

- Customer expectations relating to less overpackaging and more recyclability
  - Consumers are prepared to pay more for more eco-friendly packaging<sup>1</sup>.
  - Consumers are ready to boycott companies that put « irresponsible » packaging on the market<sup>2</sup>.
- Environmental NPO expectations relating to fibre procured from sustainable sources
  - Environmental groups regularly call out companies on matters of deforestation and sustainable forest management.
- Management and shareholder expectations
  - Economic effectiveness is the core of company management, and all costs incurred during packaging and printed matter life cycles (procurement, transportation, end-of-life management) must be taken into consideration.
- Large banner and brand owners are subject to many environmental performance requirements applicable to their packaging and printed matter
  - Many North American retailers have implemented a responsible packaging policy that prohibits the use of certain materials, requires minimum percentages of recycled content and sets reduction objectives.

## ADAPTING AND MEETING BUSINESS NEEDS

Packaging and printed matter must meet certain basic criteria in addition to fulfilling specific functions depending on the business sector.

### Essential criteria applicable to packaging and printed matter:

- Protect the product
- Facilitate handling and transportation
- Improve consumer experience
- Promote the product it protects

### Examples of specific functions of packaging and printed matter according to each sector:

- **Food and restaurant services:** packaging that ensures food safety and conservation, conserves and preserves component integrity, absorbs liquids
- **Health and beauty products:** packaging with tamper-proof seals, that ensures long conservation, is ergonomically designed to allow frequent transportation

- **Toys:** packaging that is safe for users (e.g. risk of choking or sharp edges), is not contaminated with paints or toxic substances
- **Clothing and footwear:** packaging that protects clothes from soiling, absorbs humidity, prevents discolouration
- **Hardware and electronics:** packaging that prevents theft and breakage, prevents injury associated with product handling (e.g. sharp objects)

### Creating value for the company

Rethink how you select packaging and printed matter! This new ecodesign mindset can be put into practice via packaging optimization initiatives. By doing so, you can lighten the environmental footprint of packaging items throughout the product's life cycle, and create value by reducing costs, increasing product differentiation and promoting innovation within the company.



## What are the benefits?

Ecodesign is a win-win-win: the company that applies the process, the consumer who wishes to make responsible choices and society as a whole. A wise choice from every standpoint because it yields positive and practical results!

## Benefits at every step

### ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Ecodesign is a cost-effective approach that can increase your profit margins by as much as 12% compared to conventional packaged products<sup>1</sup>. Ecodesign can both add value and reduce costs in a variety of ways.

#### Lower raw material procurement costs

Non-essential materials can be avoided and fewer different materials used.

#### Lower transportation and distribution costs

By eliminating service space and reducing size and weight, more products can be transported at once, therefore reducing transportation costs.

### COMPETITIVE AND REPUTATIONAL BENEFITS

People around the world like ecological packaging, with consumers consistently selecting this option as one of the top two features they would be most likely to pay extra for<sup>2</sup>.

#### Meet consumer expectations

Choose eco-friendly packaging and printed matter and eliminate overpackaging.

#### Adapt in the face of regulatory requirements

Be prepared for new environmental norms and take extended producer responsibility in stride.

#### Strengthen the company's competitive position

Demonstrate your company's leadership and communicate your eco-design efforts to customers.

### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Britain's Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has provided companies with ecodesign guidance that resulted in a 6.6 million tonne reduction in greenhouse gases (equal to 2.2 million fewer vehicles on the road for 1 year) and avoided the production of 12.6 million tonnes of residual materials<sup>3</sup>.

#### Reduce the quantity of materials used

Use fewer materials to reduce the environmental impacts associated with production and transportation (non-renewable energy consumption, GHG emissions, water consumption).

#### Reduce energy requirements

Produce fewer GHG emissions associated with packaging manufacturing and assembly.

#### Reduce impacts on human health and eco-systems

Use packaging and printed matter that is free of substances harmful to humans and the environment.



#### Lower end-of-life management costs

#### Fewer product losses

Packaging is designed so as to maximize the life of the product and prevent breakage.

#### Lower energy costs

Less energy can be used both at the time of manufacturing and at packaging and printed matter assembly.



#### Develop team culture and retain personnel

#### Promote innovation and continuous improvement

Improve internal procedures and develop new skills.

#### Differentiate your packaging and printed matter

Use new ways to set your products apart in a highly competitive environment.

#### Improve your capacity to meet environmental requirements

Meet consumer demand or fulfill bidding requirements.

#### Improve supplier relationships

Cooperate with suppliers on optimization opportunities.

**12,6 MILLION TONNES**  
OF RESIDUAL MATERIALS AVOIDED

#### Increase packaging recyclability and reduce quantities sent to landfills

Integrate end-of-life considerations when selecting packaging (sorting and disassembly, conditioning and market outlets for materials).

#### Extend the product's life

Ensure the product is protected while avoiding the premature production of additional product.

#### Reduce impacts by including recycled materials during packaging production

Include recycled materials so that fewer raw materials are required and materials that would otherwise be sent to landfill can be reclaimed.



## How can you take action?

Implementing an ecodesign initiative in your company is easier than you think.  
What's most important is to understand the steps to follow!

Here is a typical process. You can easily take inspiration from this example and adapt it to your needs.

## What the manager needs to consider

### How many people will be needed to implement an ecodesign initiative?

Large companies may assign one or more managers to lead responsible innovation and ecodesign initiatives. Most often, the initiative is carried out by existing product development teams who integrate environmental criteria in the design process. External specialists may be called upon to fill gaps in expertise that is unavailable internally, for example to carry out customer and stakeholder needs assessments or life cycle analyses, or to determine recyclability potential.

### What personnel should be assigned to this type of project?

Packaging ecodesign requires the involvement of several operational units in the company, as well as the support and direction from management. The units that could be closely or tangentially involved throughout product development include:

- Management
- Marketing
- R&D
- Production
- Procurement

### How long does a typical initiative take?

When embarking on its first initiatives in which environmental factors and stakeholder expectations are taken into consideration, a company will need to conduct a situation analysis, identify avenues for improvement and determine potential solutions. Time needs to be invested in laying the groundwork, determining procedures and gathering information, while outside expertise may be sought to help in launching the initiative.

Each optimization and ecodesign project will be an opportunity to clarify your understanding of the issues you face and identify available opportunities. While implementing the initiative will not require a top to bottom review of your business practices, you will need to establish a structured foundation based on a clear vision.

If a company masters the ecodesign mindset, implementing an initiative is not likely to slow down the product development process. Ecodesign can stimulate innovation, and a solid process will improve product quality, limit late-process changes and thus speed up product marketing.

Integrating ecodesign in basic innovation management practices will be the key to making it part of the company's fabric and advancing its continuous improvement process.

### How much money needs to be invested in the initiative?

Many assistance programs are available to help companies integrate ecodesign in their processes.

### Resources and subsidies available to companies include:

- IDP's PARI-CNRC ecodesign strategy interventions
  - Understanding ecodesign issues and opportunities
  - Defining a vision and action plan for implementing an ecodesign initiative
- IDP training and guidance programs, with support from the Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et des Exportations (MEIE)
  - Team skill building
  - Implementing ecodesign projects
- MAPAQ's Programme Levier, a tool developed by Quebec's food processing industry to create winning conditions that increase competitiveness and spur development:
  - Strategic development
  - Quality assurance systems
  - Structured business partnerships
- Projet ACCORD by the Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et des Exportations (MEIE), to promote ties among business people and entrepreneurs in a given region who have a common vision of their business sector and have defined a long-term strategy for progress.
- Fonds de développement de la transformation alimentaire (FDTA)
  - Programme d'aide financière pour l'optimisation des emballages (financial assistance program for packaging optimization): Program designed to provide financial assistance to Quebec food processing companies wishing to optimize a packaging item or a process linked to packaging.
  - Programme d'aide financière pour l'optimisation d'un emballage au moyen de l'analyse du cycle de vie (financial assistance program for packaging optimization using life cycle analysis): Program designed to provide financial assistance to Quebec food processing companies wishing to establish a diagnosis of their environmental performance, carry out a life cycle analysis of a product or optimize the selection of a process, packaging item or ingredient.



# Begin your ecodesign journey

Packaging and printed matter optimization is the objective.  
Ecodesign provides the means to achieve it.

## 1. EVALUATE

### your initial situation

First, take the time to review your current situation in terms of your objectives, your business sector or a specific packaged product and/or printed matter. This step is essential to clearly defining priorities.

Here is a decision-making tool to help you with the process and take action. See the self-assessment quiz in the appendix to determine how far you've come with your packaging and printed matter optimization initiative.

#### Where do you begin?

##### List all your packaging items.

Make a list of all your products before picking out the ones that need special attention.

*List your packaging and printed matter by priority, for example: private brands, biggest sellers, lines under redevelopment, products needing differentiation, ability to influence, new products or recently launched lines*

## 2. IDENTIFY

### which ecodesign strategies are right for you

Ecodesign is made up of four strategies to improve the product at each step of the process. The strategies will enable you to not only optimize procurement, design and recyclability, but also effectively communicate the benefits of the initiative!

First, be sure to understand ecodesign strategies so you can determine which ones are the most suitable to your packaging and printed matter. Then, select the ideal process to generate the most benefits for your company. For more information, go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca) or discover the 4 main strategies in the appendix.

#### How can I make good optimization choices?

##### Use ecodesign tools!

- Training
- Life cycle analysis
- Ecolabels and their criteria
- Principles of eco-responsible design
- List of substances to use and those to avoid

## 3. DEVELOP

### a new packaging design

You don't have to look very far to improve your packaging. Simple changes can sometimes make a significant difference! For example, take the opportunity when reviewing or developing a product line to apply an ecodesign initiative and generate new ideas!

#### How to get your teams on board?

Put together a business case and document all expected benefits.

#### What to do when your influence is not enough for your suppliers?

- Start the discussion on ecodesign
- Promote the benefits of your products
- Work cooperatively with them

## 4. COMMUNICATE

### the improvements you made and set yourself apart

It's time to introduce the new packaging and printed matter that you redesigned according to selected strategies. To promote your improved packaging, put the spotlight on the initiatives and related benefits to inform customers and build loyalty.

Use OptimAction, the interactive tool to visualize, measure, document and communicate the environmental benefits of your initiative. Visit [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca) for more information.



## Attend a training session

ÉEQ offers a variety of tools to help companies implement ecodesign initiatives. View the next date [training](#) will be offered to help companies develop and carry out packaging ecodesign projects.

The course not only provides practical information on how to operationalize the content suggested in the OptimEco.ca portal, but also trains company employees on using available communications tools (such as OptimAction) to highlight packaging optimization efforts and resulting benefits.

Training course is tailored exclusively for the packaging sector. The format is innovative as, in addition to one-day's theoretical and practical training that includes a tour of a sorting centre, followed by a half-day's session of personalized coaching which is given on company premises. The training is designed for ÉEQ's contributing companies and packaging manufacturers.

Contact us if you have questions or comments on other tools ÉEQ makes available to companies to encourage the development of voluntary ecodesign and optimization initiatives for packaging and printed matter.

## True or false? Myths and facts about packaging

Commonly held, but unfounded, ideas sometimes become urban legends. Let's debunk a few.

1

TRUE ou FALSE?

Reducing packaging is always a good idea.

**FALSE**

If there is too little packaging, commonly referred to as underpackaging, it will fail in its primary purpose: product protection, thus avoiding waste.

2

TRUE ou FALSE?

Ecodesign is complex and expensive.

**FALSE**

Ecodesign is a continuous improvement process that can be customized and carried out at low cost

3

TRUE ou FALSE?

Packaging and printed matter optimization is a process that only very large companies are equipped to apply.

**FALSE**

Ecodesign is a step-by-step approach that is accessible to all companies. The process can be applied at each company's pace and according to specific objectives.



4

TRUE ou FALSE?

Bio-sourced plastics (bio-plastics or plant-based) are always better for the environment than conventional plastics.

**FALSE**

A number of factors must be considered before that statement can be true, including procurement source, type of manufacturing process and end-of-life management, among others.

5

TRUE ou FALSE?

Bio-degradable packaging and printed matter are always better for the environment.

**FALSE**

That statement is only true if packaging and printed matter are composted under ideal conditions. In Canada, few municipalities currently have the necessary infrastructure to do so.

6

TRUE ou FALSE?

All plastics are recyclable.

**TRUE, BUT...**

Theoretically, all plastics are recyclable but, in practice, they are not all recycled because no market outlets are available for certain plastics.

7

TRUE ou FALSE?

We only need to make a packaging item recyclable to reduce its environmental impacts.

**FALSE**

Recyclability is only one of the many factors that can be improved. Other steps in the item's life cycle that should be assessed for improvement include procurement, manufacturing processes and transportation.

8

TRUE ou FALSE?

The number of different materials used in a packaging item does not affect its recyclability.

**FALSE**

To increase recyclability, packaging and printed matter should ideally be made with a single material so as to simplify the item's recovery by consumers and sorting before it is sent on to recyclers.

9

TRUE ou FALSE?

Adding recycled content to a packaging item contributes to reducing its impact on the environment.

**TRUE**

Adding recycled content helps avoid the environmental impacts associated with the production of raw materials.

10

TRUE ou FALSE?

The following symbols mean that the packaging item is recyclable.



**FALSE**

These symbols are part of an international coding system. They describe the nature of the plastics making up the packaging item to facilitate sorting and recycling. However, market outlets for the materials are not necessarily available for all of them<sup>1</sup>.

11

TRUE ou FALSE?

The following symbol means that the product is recyclable.



**TRUE... AND FALSE**

Up until quite recently under the ISO 14021, all four versions of the Mobius strip may be used to indicate recycled content or its recyclability.



12

TRUE ou FALSE?

It is always better to offer products in bulk, without packaging, than to offer pre-packaged products.

**FALSE**

Packaging has a very specific function: to protect the product. A new product that becomes unusable due to improper protection will have a greater impact on the environment.

1. <http://www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/Upload/Publications/Fiche-plastiques.pdf>



# About us

## OPTIMECO KIT

Welcome to OptimEco's kit, an Éco Entreprises Québec (ÉEQ) initiative. The OptimEco kit is designed to complement the information provided on the OptimEco.ca portal. It provides solid arguments for getting your teams' commitment to an eco-design process as well as practical avenues for taking action now! The kit is intended for ÉEQ's contributing companies, their suppliers and manufacturers of containers, packaging and printed matter.

Based on ecodesign strategies and internationally-recognized norms and standards to meet today's packaging optimization challenges, OptimEco.ca is an innovative tool that provides companies that do business in Canada with support in designing packaging and printed matter using a sustainable development approach that results in savings, innovation and a reduced environmental footprint.

The portal recognizes and promotes optimization initiatives registered in the OptimAction interactive tool ÉEQ developed in partnership with Quantis in order to allow companies to visualize and communicate the benefits of each initiative. With this tool, the user can document optimization initiatives and detail the results using qualitative and quantitative indicators, including reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and transportation optimization, among others, throughout the packaging item's life cycle.

**The production of the OptimEco kit was made possible thanks to the contribution of the following partners:**



**Associated Partners:**



**Financial partner:**



# Contact us

For more information on the OptimEco kit, the innovative OptimEco.ca portal or the OptimAction interactive tool with which you can visualize and communicate the benefits of your packaging or printed matter optimization initiative, contact Éco Entreprises Québec's experts at [optimeco@ecoentreprises.qc.ca](mailto:optimeco@ecoentreprises.qc.ca)



*Optim*ECO kit

**APPENDIX**

## SELF-ASSESSMENT QUIZ

Where do you stand regarding packaging and printed matter optimization?

This self-assessment quiz is based on the process presented in the optimization kit. It covers the main actions to take to improve the environmental performance of your packaging and printed matter and enables you to determine where you stand with regard to best practices applicable to packaging and printed matter optimization.

### A ASSESS YOUR STARTING SITUATION

	LEVEL 1 Does not apply to us	LEVEL 2 Only partially applies to us	LEVEL 3 Completely applies to us
1 We have established a complete picture of our packaging and printed matter: inventory, materials, priorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 We have identified stakeholders involved in packaging and printed matter issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 We understand stakeholders' expectations regarding our packaging and printed matter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 We have identified the specifications we need to incorporate in order to optimize our packaging and printed matter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 We are aware of regulations governing packaging and printed matter applicable to our sector.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 We are aware of best practices applicable to packaging and printed matter in our sector.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 We have established clear and precise objectives regarding packaging and printed matter optimization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 We are focused on implementing an ecodesign program for packaging and printed matter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 We wish to be leaders with regard to eco-friendly packaging and printed matter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## C DEVELOP NEW PACKAGING AND PRINTED MATTER DESIGNS

	LEVEL 1 Does not apply to us	LEVEL 2 Only partially applies to us	LEVEL 3 Completely applies to us
13 We have established an action plan to optimize our packaging and printed matter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 We have already developed one or more prototypes of eco-responsible packaging and/or printed matter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 We have involved in-house teams from all concerned departments and/or our suppliers in the optimization process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 We have developed a detailed specification document (technical ecodesign specifications) for our suppliers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## D COMMUNICATE

	LEVEL 1 Does not apply to us	LEVEL 2 Only partially applies to us	LEVEL 3 Completely applies to us
17 We have communicated our actions and the environmental benefits of our packaging and printed matter optimization initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 We have produced a summary sheet on each of our optimization initiatives via OptimAction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 We have measured the positive benefits resulting from all our optimization initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 We have issued in-house communications on the positive benefits resulting from all our optimization initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 We have issued public communications on the positive benefits resulting from all our optimization initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# SELF-ASSESSMENT QUIZ

How many times did you check off

LEVEL 1 ?

LEVEL 2 ?

LEVEL 3 ?

**FINAL SCORE**

**A + B + C + D**

IF MOST OF YOUR  
RESPONSES WERE **LEVEL 1**

CONGRATULATIONS. You have begun looking into optimization and ecodesign initiatives applicable to packaging and printed matter. You are invited to register for training offered by Éco Entreprises Québec in cooperation with the Institut de développement de produits and Quantis. The training was specifically developed for companies like yours. Go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca) portal for in-depth information on ecodesign and details on the suggested approach.

IF MOST OF YOUR  
RESPONSES WERE **LEVEL 2**

CONGRATULATIONS. You are on the right path towards adopting optimization and ecodesign best practices applicable to packaging and printed matter. Go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca) portal for in-depth information on ecodesign and details on the suggested approach. Register for training specifically developed for companies like yours by Éco Entreprises Québec in cooperation with the Institut de développement de produits and Quantis.

IF MOST OF YOUR  
RESPONSES WERE **LEVEL 3**

You are a leader in packaging and printed matter optimization and ecodesign, or on your way to becoming one! Don't hesitate to communicate your approach and related benefits to your customers and suppliers. Add your optimization initiative to [OptimAction](http://OptimAction), the interactive communications tool, to put the spotlight on your commitment to sustainable development. Go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca) portal or register for training offered by Éco Entreprises Québec for in-depth information on ecodesign and details on the suggested approach.

# Discover the 4 general strategies

## 1. INTEGRATE RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT CRITERIA

Get your suppliers involved in your efforts to find eco-responsible solutions.



**SELECT MATERIALS THAT ARE MORE ECOLOGICAL**  
Eliminate dangerous or toxic substances.



**USE RECYCLED MATERIALS**  
In this way, you can give a second – or even third or fourth... – life to new packaging and printed matter.

### Some concrete examples



Using its packaging policy as a guide, RONA wishes to apply responsible procurement practices to all the packaging used by the company. The policy sets out specifications on paperboard fibre sourcing and criteria applicable to the types of plastics used. [Read more.](#)



In 2007, Hydro-Québec established an ambitious responsible procurement policy for its printing and copy paper. The policy states that only fine paper containing 100% recycled FSC-certified fibre (post-consumer, non-chlorine bleached) is to be used for printing and copying. [Read more.](#)



## 2. DESIGN OPTIMALLY

Use the right quantity of materials to protect your products, including primary, secondary and tertiary packaging.



### OPTIMIZE THE PACKAGING/PRODUCT RATIO

Reduce overpackaging while ensuring that the product is adequately protected.



### REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Streamline and simplify packaging manufacturing and assembly.



### OPTIMIZE TRANSPORTATION PACKAGING

Reduce service space and minimize secondary and tertiary packaging.



### OPTIMIZE LOGISTICS

Select modes of transportation that have fewer environmental impacts.



### IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND REDUCE WASTE

Do what you can to extend the product's life as well as minimize usage losses and waste.

### Some concrete examples



In 2010 and after 7 years of R&D, Naya was the first company in the world to market its product in water bottles made with 100% post-consumer recycled plastic (rPET). In addition, by increasing bottle volume from 500 to 600 ml, the company reduced its packaging/product weight ratio by 17%. For more information, go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca)



The secondary packaging optimization initiative Biscuits Leclerc applied to Chocomax bars resulted in many economic and environmental benefits. By reducing the packaging/product weight ratio by 15%, the company lowered its paperboard costs by 10%. For more information, go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca)

### OPTIMIZED FOOD PACKAGING

It is estimated that, from initial agricultural production to final consumption, 1.3 billion tonnes of food products are lost every year worldwide, which comes out to between 200 and 300 kg per year per inhabitant in developed countries<sup>1</sup>. Packaging design choices can significantly contribute to reducing food loss and waste.

These choices include:

- Ensuring that the volume of product, i.e. package size, matches the consumer's needs (household size and lifestyle)
- Ensuring that the product is properly preserved (reclosable packaging, portionable)
- Facilitating product consumption (easy and complete emptying of the container)

1. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/mb060e/mb060e00.pdf>



### 3. IMPROVE END-OF-LIFE MANAGEMENT

Another important objective is to minimize or even avoid the environmental impacts of packaging and printed matter at the end of their life.



#### DESIGN FOR REUSE

Avoid the production of new packaging and related end-of-life impacts, including GHG emissions.



#### OPTIMIZE RECYCLABILITY

Facilitate packaging elimination at the end of its life, use packaging and printed matter made from a single material, include recyclable materials and inform consumers about how to dispose of packaging once it is no longer needed.

#### Some concrete examples

**metro**

In 2011, Metro worked closely with its supplier to eliminate the rigid PVC used to package its liquid broth concentrate, and replaced it with a 100% recyclable plastic, therefore significantly increasing the material's recovery rate. For more information, go to [OptimEco.ca](http://OptimEco.ca)



## 4. COMMUNICATE YOUR APPROACH

Communicating your experience is a key aspect of completing the ecodesign process.



### COMMUNICATE IN-HOUSE

Take advantage of all opportunities to improve products and processes, foster discussion and encourage close cooperation among teams involved in packaging decisions, procurement, design and marketing.



### COMMUNICATE WITH SUPPLIERS

Convey your ecodesign requirements and cooperate in finding solutions.



### COMMUNICATE WITH CONSUMERS

Promote your initiative and encourage consumers to recover and recycle your packaging and printed matter, provide clear information on the materials used and instructions for end-of-life management.

### Some concrete examples



Cascades is a leader in environmental communications because its messages are precise, factual and verifiable, thus providing consumers with information on the environmental benefits of the ecodesign initiatives applied to its products and packaging. Message content is based on scientific data resulting from life cycle analyses (LCA) that are reviewed by expert third parties and certified under recognized ecolabels. Read more.



Lassonde is another communications leader that publicly announced its packaging optimization objectives and makes related results available on its website. Read more.