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# Detailed Packaging Assessment Template





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This template can be adapted and used by Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) Members to assess new and/or existing packaging. It provides a comprehensive set of questions that relate to the strategies that underpin the principles of the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPG). Not all questions may be relevant to every business or packaging format being assessed. You are encouraged to tailor the template to suit your needs.

Below is an overview of the principles and strategies of the SPG. The first of these is that packaging needs to be 'fit for purpose', that is, designed to meet market and consumer needs at minimal cost. Design issues relating to functionality, cost and market appeal are not specifically covered in the template, however it is acknowledged that these will guide the selection of appropriate sustainability design strategies.

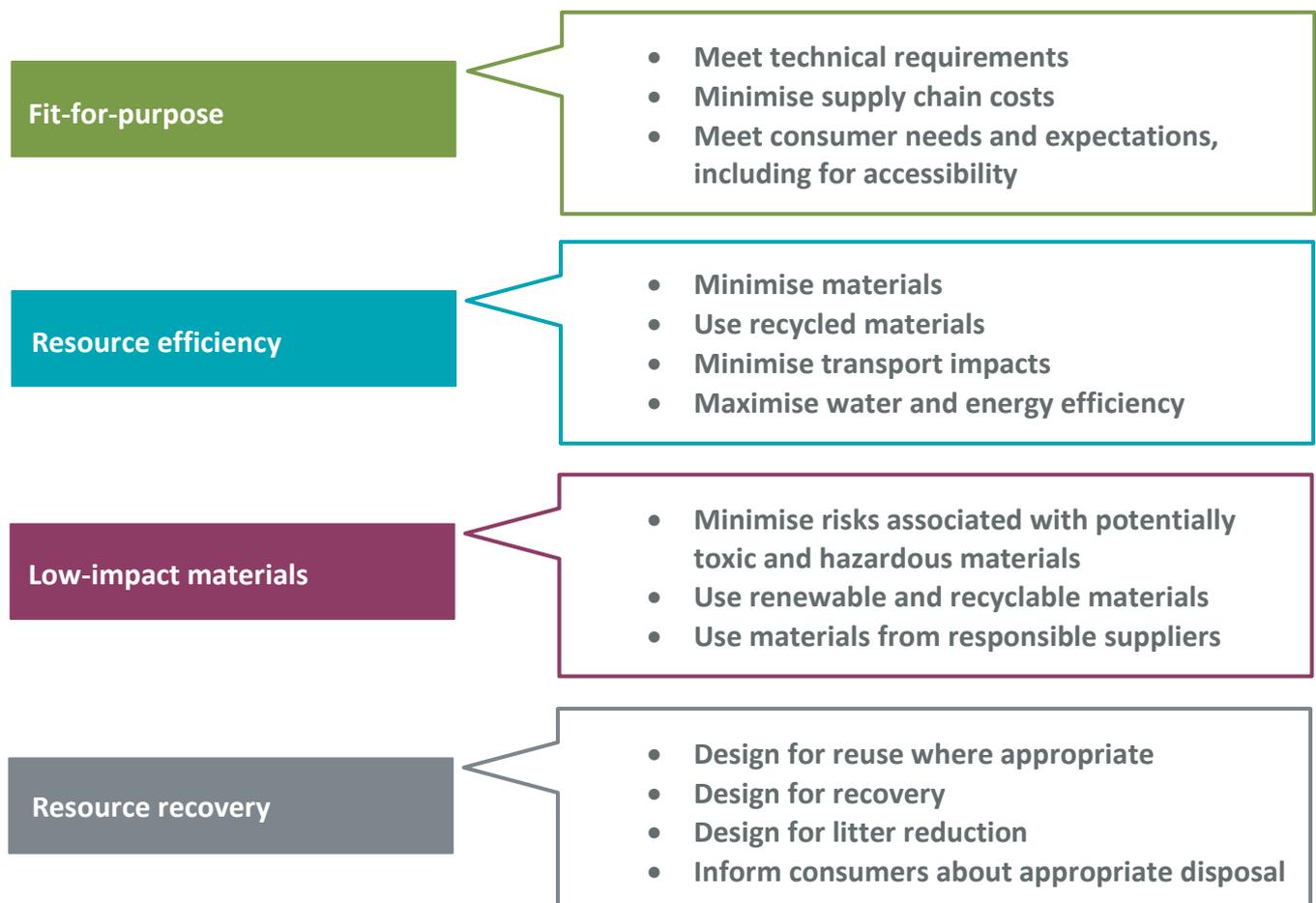


Figure 1: Principles and strategies of the SPG





<b>Product (SKU)</b>	<b>Date of assessment</b>
<b>Contact</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
<b>Packaging description</b>	
<b>Existing or new packaging?</b>	
<b>Why was this packaging selected for evaluation?</b>	
<b>Date/time of workshop</b>	
<b>Attendees</b>	

## Summary of Outcomes

<b>Activities to undertake to improve sustainability of packaging format/category</b>
<b>Environmental benefits to come out of the assessment</b>
<b>Environmental impacts, risk and barriers</b>





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	Consumer packaging	Secondary packaging (used to bundle consumer product)	Tertiary packaging (used to bundle secondary packaging)	Opportunities for improvement	Evidence for auditors
<b>Minimise materials (source reduction)</b>					
1. Is the packaging necessary?					
2. Has the package been designed to use the minimum amount of material necessary to suit the required level of functionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum number of separate layers?</li> <li>• Minimum packaging weight?</li> </ul>					
3. Are there any options to further reduce materials?					
4. Does the design of the package allow the product to be completely dispensed, ie. To avoid product wastage?					
<b>Maximise water and energy efficiency</b>					
5. Have you and your suppliers taken steps to optimize energy inputs?					
6. Have you and your suppliers taken steps to optimize the water efficiency of production processes?					





	Consumer packaging	Secondary packaging (used to bundle consumer product)	Tertiary packaging (used to bundle secondary packaging)	Opportunities for improvement	Evidence for auditors
<b>Use recycled materials</b>					
7. What is the amount and percentage of recycled material?					
8. Could alternative formats or materials incorporate recycled material or offer a better environmental solution? If so, how much, and why were they not selected?					
9. If a recycled content claim is made, is the minimum level of recycled content specified in accordance with AS/NZS 14021 (Environmental labels and declarations- Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)).					
<b>Use renewable and/or recyclable materials</b>					
10. What is the potential for, and availability of, materials derived from a renewable source?					
11. Are the renewable raw materials grown and harvested using sustainable farming or forestry practices?					
12. What is the potential for incorporating recyclable materials?					
<b>Minimise hazards associated with potentially toxic and hazardous materials</b>					
13. Have you applied conventional and conservative risk management principles in the selection of substances for packaging applications (eg. inks, pigments & adhesives)? This includes elimination or minimization of toxic and hazardous substances.					





	Consumer packaging	Secondary packaging (used to bundle consumer product)	Tertiary packaging (used to bundle secondary packaging)	Opportunities for improvement	Evidence for auditors
<b>Use materials from responsible suppliers</b>					
14. Are your raw materials sourced from suppliers who have documented environmental management systems?					
15. Are you or your suppliers APCO Members?					
<b>Design for transport</b>					
16. Can the distribution packaging be reduced or eliminated through redesign of the primary or secondary package, or vice versa?					
17. Are you currently using shelf ready/retail ready packaging? Is it being used effectively? If it is not being used effectively, has this been communicated to others in the supply chain?					
18. Have you designed your consumer packaging to maximise the efficiency of secondary or tertiary packaging, eg. in pallet configuration?					
19. Are you fully utilising the transport options such as pallet efficiency and truck height? Are there any efficiencies that can be achieved?					
20. Is there an opportunity to switch to more efficient vehicles, hybrid vehicles or renewable energy sources for your distribution fleet?					
21. Do you consider back-loading of used packaging or waste products once deliveries have been made? Can your distribution network aid the recovery of used packaging?					





	Consumer packaging	Secondary packaging (used to bundle consumer product)	Tertiary packaging (used to bundle secondary packaging)	Opportunities for improvement	Evidence for auditors
<b>Design for reuse</b>					
22. Have you considered and compared the environmental benefits of reusable packaging with single-use packaging?					
23. Has the product been designed to maximise the number of return trips/reuse?					
<b>Design for recovery</b>					
24. To what extent are the packaging materials collected for recycling in the geographic area in which the product will be sold?					
25. How much of the packaging is recyclable?					
26. How many materials are being used in this package? If more than one material is used, are the different materials compatible in the recycling process?					
27. Have you consulted with recyclers or composters (depending on the intended recovery process) to find out whether any components will be problematic in the recovery process or in the end-product?					
28. Have you developed and implemented appropriate labelling on packaging to encourage consumers to recycle or compost?					
29. Is rigid plastic packaging labelled with PACIA's plastic identification code?					





	Consumer packaging	Secondary packaging (used to bundle consumer product)	Tertiary packaging (used to bundle secondary packaging)	Opportunities for improvement	Evidence for auditors
<b>Design for litter reduction</b>					
30. Is the package likely to be consumed away from home and therefore have the propensity to become litter?					
31. To what extent is this packaging type represented in the litter stream <sup>1</sup> ?					
32. How many separate or easily separable components that could end up as litter does the packaging item have (eg. screw cap lids, peel off seals), and can they be reduced?					
33. Do you provide advice for consumers on the label to encourage appropriate disposal or recovery?					
34. Have options been considered for away-from-home recycling as part of an overall littering abatement program?					
<b>Design for consumer acceptability</b>					
35. Has the consumer's ability to access the product within the packaging been adequately considered in the design process?					
36. Have you considered whether the level of information on the packaging ensures the consumer is aware of its contents and how to open the package?					
37. Could an alternative design be used efficiently to minimise the requirement for tools such as a knife or scissors?					
<b>Provide consumer information on sustainability</b>					
38. What environmental issues have been considered during development of the product's market strategy?					
39. Will any environmental claims be made about the packaging item?					

<sup>1</sup> Data on packaging in the litter stream is available from Keep Australia Beautiful



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