

Developed by the Environmental Paper Network in partnership with the Responsible Purchasing Network, this document provides contract details for recycled content, responsibly-sourced fiber, cleaner production practices, recyclability, and promotion.

Model Environmental Specifications

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1. Recycled Content

- All paper and paper products must contain the minimum levels of postconsumer recycled content for federal agencies as outlined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.¹ Vendors are encouraged to offer products that contain a higher percentage of postconsumer material than these minimums.
- Vendors must verify the postconsumer recycled content of products offered. Preference will be given to paper and paper products with recycled content that is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).² Other certification systems may be considered if their standards meet or exceed FSC's standards; their governance and funding mechanisms are fully balanced, transparent, and independent; and they are widely accepted by environmental and social stakeholders.
- After maximizing recycled content, preference will be given to paper and paper products whose remaining content includes other recovered materials, including, but not limited to, pre-consumer fiber and agricultural residues.
- Recycled copy paper must function properly in all [Organization]'s copiers, fax machines, laser printers, and ink jet printers without jamming.
- All packaging, including ream wrappers and cartons/boxes, must contain a minimum of 30 percent postconsumer recycled content, and include a written statement verifying the actual percentage of recycled content. Efforts should be taken to reduce the use of packaging materials when possible.

2. Responsibly-Sourced Fiber

- Vendors must verify the source of any virgin fiber content in paper and paper products. Preference will be given to suppliers and manufacturers that have a "chain of custody" tracking system in place to reliably identify the origin of fiber sources.

¹ For more information on federal minimum recycled content standards, see the Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines and Recovered Materials Advisory Notices at www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/procure.

² For more information on Forest Stewardship Council, see: www.fscus.org and www.fscoax.org (FSC U.S. and international web sites), www.certifiedwood.org (certified wood supply database and tracking services), www.forestworld.com (certified wood supply database and tracking services), and web sites of certifiers specified on FSC web sites.

- Preference will be given to paper and paper products that can be guaranteed to be free of fiber that threatens endangered forests. Endangered forests are defined as those meeting the criteria outlined in the Wye River Coalition's *Endangered Forests: High Conservation Value Forests Protection – Guidance for Corporate Commitments*³ and ForestEthics, Greenpeace, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Rainforest Action Network's *Ecological Components of Endangered Forests*⁴.
- Preference will be given to papers that can be guaranteed to be free of fibers from the conversion of diverse natural forest ecosystems into plantations. [Organization] supports Forest Stewardship Council's criteria specifying November 1994 as the cut off date for no more conversion of natural forests to plantations. Wood from forests converted to plantations after November 1994 is unacceptable unless the plantations are being restored to natural forests.
- Preference will be given to paper and paper products with a remaining virgin tree fiber content that is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).⁵ Other certification systems may be considered if their performance-based forest management and chain of custody standards meet or exceed FSC's standards; their governance and funding mechanisms are fully balanced, transparent, and independent; and they are widely accepted by environmental and social stakeholders.
- If paper and paper products made from alternative fiber crops (e.g. hemp, kenaf, etc.) are offered, vendor must submit in writing that the fiber source crops were grown and harvested using sustainable farming practices.
- Vendors must verify that fiber content of paper and paper products do not contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This includes transgenically modified trees and plants that have genes of other animals and plants inserted.

3. Cleaner Production Practices

- Preference will be given to paper and paper products that are processed chlorine-free (PCF).
- Preference will be given to suppliers and manufacturers that use renewable energy to supply electricity for their facilities, either on-site or through the purchase of renewable energy certificates (RECs). Vendors must provide information including percent electricity from renewable sources used for power generation, type of renewable energy, and any third party certifications, such as Green-e.⁶

4. Recyclability

- Paper and paper products must be recyclable in business or municipal recycling programs.
- All packaging, including ream wrappers and cartons/boxes, must be recyclable in business or municipal recycling programs.

³ The Wye River Coalition's *Endangered Forests: High Conservation Value Forests Protection – Guidance for Corporate Commitments* is available at www.environmentalpaper.org/documents/EF-Report.pdf.

⁴ ForestEthics, Greenpeace, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Rainforest Action Network's *Ecological Components of Endangered Forests* is available at http://forestethics.org/downloads/EFDefinitions_April_2006_2.pdf.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Renewable energy sources include solar, electric, biomass, wind, geothermal, small hydropower, biodiesel, and fuel cells. For more information on renewable energy sources, see www.green-e.org/ipp/national_standard.html.

5. Promotion

- [Organization] strongly encourages Vendors to submit materials electronically whenever possible. If submitting hard copies, it is desirable that materials are printed on paper with a postconsumer waste content of 30 percent or higher. [Organization] also encourages the use of submittal materials (i.e. paper, dividers, binders, brochures, etc.) that contain postconsumer recycled content and are readily recyclable. [Organization] discourages the use of materials that cannot be readily recycled such as PVC (vinyl) binders, spiral bindings, and plastic or glossy covers or dividers. Alternative bindings such as reusable/recyclable binding posts, reusable binder clips or binder rings, and recyclable cardboard/paperboard binders are examples of preferable submittal materials. Respondents are encouraged to print/copy on both sides of a single sheet of paper.
- [Organization] strongly urges Vendors to adopt a paper policy consistent with the Environmental Paper Network's *A Common Vision for Transforming the Paper Industry: Striving for Environmental and Social Responsibility*⁷ as well as implement other environmentally and socially responsible policies and practices.
- Vendors will help [Organization] track purchases of environmentally preferable paper and paper products by providing semi-annual and annual reports on all products purchased under this contract. Information to be included in these reports must include, but are not limited to, total number of products purchased by category, total dollars spent on products by category, and the environmental attributes of products purchased.
- Vendors will also help purchasers identify environmentally preferable paper and paper products on its website and in its catalogs.



The mission of the Responsible Purchasing Network (RPN) is to promote and practice responsible purchasing by identifying best practices, developing effective purchasing tools, educating the market, and using its collective purchasing power to maximize environmental stewardship, protect human health, and support local and global sustainability.



The Environmental Paper Network (EPN) links environmental organizations that collaborate to support the conversion of the pulp and paper industry to socially and environmentally sustainable processes

⁷ For more information on the Environmental Paper Network's consensus criteria, see *A Common Vision for Transforming the Paper Industry: Striving for Environmental and Social Sustainability* at www.environmentalpaper.org/documents/CommonVision-treatise.pdf.