

# PACKAGING AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS

## Demonstrate your commitment



What are companies doing to reduce the environmental impact of their packaging? ”

# 5 RULES

Twenty years ago, companies set up the French Green Dot Scheme to reduce the environmental impact of their packaging: an innovative model based on cooperation and shared effort among companies, consumers, local communities and the authorities.

This initiative owed its impetus to Antoine Riboud, a pioneer in the area of incorporating environmental and human issues into any economic development project.

Today, remarkable progress has been made in the efforts to reduce and recycle packaging: France's national recycling rate is approaching 67%, the volume of packaging has been cut, despite rising consumption, and sorting household waste has become part of the everyday life of millions of French people<sup>1</sup>.

These ongoing efforts need to be publicised and shared. The finding initially reached 20 years ago, that everyone should apply themselves to working together on a daily basis to produce goods differently, sort more effectively and recycle more, is now more valid than ever.

Your annual report or sustainability report is an ideal way to publicise the reality of the progress made so far and to define the new targets to be achieved.

Publicising these results and your own commitment is a way of proclaiming your investment in the French Green Dot Scheme and of perpetuating the initial gesture made by millions of people every day to protect the environment and the world's natural resources.

**Éric Brac de La Perrière**

CEO, Eco-Emballages

May 2012

1/ Eco-Emballages/Utopies study, 2011

# PACKAGING AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS

## 5 RULES

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**Communication** on the impact of packaging in your business should provide an impetus for making progress, and create a stimulating and comprehensive reporting framework to encourage innovation, anticipate regulatory requirements and drive forward practices both within your company and among your consumers. It should also offer a vehicle for constructive discussions with your stakeholders.

**The 5 rules proposed by Eco-Emballages** will enable you to broach the subject of packaging in your sustainability report, abiding by the reference principles of materiality, completeness, balance, comparability, accuracy, clarity and reliability. If your company embarks on a sustainable development programme, these rules will also help you to structure your approach to packaging.

**Sustainability reports** cover a number of subjects. These rules seek to be straightforward and concise, and are accompanied by tools to assist with their implementation. They will enable you to test your report using the check-list provided, for carrying out a self-diagnostic, and you will have the opportunity to discover the tools and services offered by the French Green Dot Scheme.

RULE

01

# POSITION YOUR PACKAGING IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMPANY'S BUSINESS

## WHY?

Packaging is often perceived as a future waste, yet it has a role to play vis-à-vis the product, by protecting it and allowing it to be transported. It may even contribute to sustainable development by limiting food wastage, the environmental impact of which often far exceeds that of the packaging itself. It represents a variable share of the environmental impact of the product + packaging combination. Nevertheless, on average, 72% of companies do not even address the function of packaging or set out its environmental impact.

By positioning the role played by packaging in the context of its business and its environmental impacts, the company will help its stakeholders to reach a better understanding of this issue, the degree of importance that needs to be placed on it, and of the strategy that will naturally follow on. This will demonstrate that the action plan put in place by the company is built on solid foundations.

## HOW?

Your sustainability communication should present a brief summary of the following:

**1** **The role played by packaging** should be pointed out, so that stakeholders can identify this, in terms of protection, transportation, preservation, consumer safety, information and marketing. Depending on the products your company makes, the importance of these various aspects may vary and justify the type of packaging developed. Needless to say, the consumer is purchasing a packaged product, not an

empty package, and reminding this will prevent packaging being presented solely as future waste.

At this stage too, it is necessary to explain how packaging is designed, a step that will offer several benefits: explaining that the design of the package meets specific requirements for each type of product (preservation time, protection from the atmosphere or from light, hygiene considerations, etc.), pointing out that its design involves a complex technical process and, if applicable, highlighting the integration of eco-design at the definition stage of the packaging specifications.



### 2 A brief presentation of the nature and types of packaging

used is essential to ensure that stakeholders can identify the quantities, the average weights involved (if appropriate, in comparison with the product's own weight) and the materials used. Setting out details of your packaging is also a way to raise stakeholder awareness of the various types of packaging available, so that they can distinguish and understand more easily the respective importance of packaging for household and industrial uses (multi-packs, transportation). Lastly, this overview should describe all segments of the company's business, including those that are often less visible: not just consumer goods that enjoy high levels of customer recognition but for instance also products used for outside catering activities or in hotels and restaurants.

**3 The environmental impacts** can then be presented using a Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA) for your main products, and indicating the share represented by packaging in the overall impact of the combined product + packaging. Depending on the sector in question and the environmental indicator used, this share may vary. It is very substantial in the drinks industry but may be much lower in the dairy products sector, for example. The result will justify the importance placed on packaging within the company's sustainability strategy. Naturally, you can then set out your sustainability strategy with regard to packaging: the choices made will be transparent and understandable.

**4 The regulations applicable** to packaging should be briefly presented. This will provide your stakeholders with a better understanding of how far you go beyond the regulatory requirements. This will also provide an opportunity to point out that, in addition to environmental requirements, there are many other regulations influencing the choice of packaging design, with a view to protecting the consumer's health and safeguarding product hygiene.

### WHAT IS A LIFE-CYCLE ASSESSMENT?

A Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA) is a method of quantifying the impacts on the environment (e.g. depletion of non-renewable resources, climate change, water pollution) of a product or service, by looking at its entire life-cycle, from the production of each of its components or ingredients through to the end of its life, when it is discarded.

This is the subject of four international standards (ISO 14040 to 43).

### RESOURCES

→ French National Packaging Council 2011, "Prevention consumer goods loss and waste: the key role of packaging", available at: [http://www.conseil-emballage.org/Img/Publications/74\\_2.pdf](http://www.conseil-emballage.org/Img/Publications/74_2.pdf)

→ French National Packaging Council 2011, "Packaging and health, security and safety", available at: [www.conseil-emballage.org/Img/Publications/71\\_1.pdf](http://www.conseil-emballage.org/Img/Publications/71_1.pdf) (in French)

→ A series of EN ISO 14040 standards regulating the carrying out of Life Cycle Assessments, available on the Afnor website: [www.afnor.org](http://www.afnor.org)

## WHAT ARE THE FUNCTIONS OF PACKAGING?

The main functions of packaging are set out below. They are described in detail on the French National Packaging Council website, at [www.conseil-emballage.org](http://www.conseil-emballage.org)

### Preserving/protecting

- Isolating the product from its external environment (risks of leaking, evaporation of solvents, preventing children from using hazardous products, etc.).
- Protecting the content from external stresses (mechanical impacts, transfers of taste and smell, penetration by germs, insects or undesired products, preventing theft, optimising the lifespan of perishable products, etc.).

### Informing

- Conveying essential information or details of legal issues (expiry date, instructions, directions for use, associated risks, composition, presence of allergens, price, quantity, weight, etc.).
- Supplying information on how the goods were produced (environmental or fair trade labels, information required by law or provided on a voluntary basis, labels guaranteeing the origin of certain products, etc.).

### Multi-packs

- Combining several units of consumption in line with the purchase frequency.
- Assembling products into units that can be easily handled (e.g. packets of biscuits), to permit various methods of consumption (on the move, etc.).
- Product promotion (promotional multi-packs).
- Making it easier for the consumer to pick up and carry products, for staff to stack them on shelves, and to facilitate handling operations.

### Transporting/storing

- Facilitating delivery from the place of production to the place of sale, without the product suffering any damage.
- Protecting against tampering (theft or contamination).
- Providing logistics centres with information on the content.
- Providing the consumer with options for tidy storage, etc.

### Facilitating product use

Use of the product goes hand in hand with its packaging, and the two are often indissociable:

- Simplified opening and handling for certain consumer groups (the elderly, children, sportsmen and women, etc.).
- Closing up the package, for later consumption of the rest of the product.
- Multiple portions for nomad use or piecemeal consumption.
- Dispensing only the exact amount required, in order to limit product wastage.
- Releasing the product: emptying out as much as possible of the contents of the package.
- Using the combined packaging/content for any method of preservation (freezing) or preparation (cooking in a conventional oven, microwave oven, bain-marie, etc.).

### Packaging the product on an industrial scale

- Satisfying the requirements of automated processing on a production line, with no untimely disruption.
- Guaranteeing the safety of employees processing packaging operations.
- Carrying out the packaging operation at acceptable costs.

### Being visible and communicating the company's brand values

- Facilitating the act of purchase by enabling the consumer to recognise the package on the shelf.
- Communicating the company's benefits and brand values.
- Ensure consumer acceptance, during the product purchase and consumption phases.



Explaining how packaging is designed is an opportunity to highlight the integration of eco-design in company's operations. 



## How to present the Green Dot



Since 1992, manufacturers and companies marketing packaged products have been required to manage the packaging waste derived from the products

consumed by households as a consequence of a European Directive.

To meet this obligation, they can act either individually or collectively by contributing to an approved company.

The Green Dot [in French, Point Vert] is the symbol of the mutual scheme, managed in France by Eco-Emballages on a not-for-profit basis, and in Europe by 27 Green Dot schemes.

In France, it has more than 50,000 member companies who finance the selective collection and sorting scheme covering household packaging waste.

Over the past twenty years, these companies have invested 4.4 billion euros to reduce the environmental impact of their packaging, through the development of recycling facilities and reducing packaging at source.

In 2011, 67% of household packaging waste was recycled and turned into materials for making new products in France.

The target set at the "Grenelle de l'Environment" Forum, held in France in 2007, is to achieve the goal of 75% recycling.

Thanks to the Green Dot scheme, 50,000 companies and 36,000 local communities in France have joined forces to develop the sorting and recycling of household packaging waste.



# RULE 02

## SPEAK ABOUT PREVENTION, BUT PREVENTION AS A WHOLE!

### WHY?

Waste prevention at source constitutes the first of the measures listed in European legislation. It is also a regulatory obligation covering packaging design: "packaging shall be so manufactured that the packaging volume and weight be limited to the minimum adequate amount to maintain the necessary level of safety, hygiene and acceptance for the packed product and for the consumer"<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, this is a key subject for any report dealing with the topic of packaging, as part of a sustainability programme.

Weight reduction is the historical route adopted by industry in order to reduce the amount of waste. More recently, other options have been explored: reducing the volume, refills, bulk supply and integration of recycled material are all alternatives that need to be explained and highlighted where they offer a genuine environmental benefit.

These various initiatives involve major investments and research and development efforts. They also assume identifying acceptable reduction limits beyond which the packaging no longer fulfils its purpose or no longer meets the consumer's expectations. This may then result in product wastage, the environmental impacts of which would be greater than those of the reduction achieved in packaging.

Today, 33% of companies<sup>4</sup> present isolated, disparate or unstructured examples of packaging reduction. This way of operating reinforces the idea that packaging is superfluous and easy to do away with.

A constructive dialogue with stakeholders will however be possible if you set out all of the issues involved in packaging reduction in a structured way, using examples that are representative of your business.

3/ European Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste, Article 9  
4/ Eco-Emballages/Utopies study, 2011

### HOW?

**1 Putting forward representative examples** assumes describing packaging reduction actions linked to the company's main products, but also covering the diversity of these actions (weight reduction, simplification, recyclability), whether as regards household, industrial or transportation packaging. Being representative also assumes putting forward packaging types in respect of which progress is yet to be made and explaining the rules governing the packaging reduction policy.



**2 Clarifying all of the issues and results** implies setting out the investments associated with the actions carried out, and the necessary lead-times for research and development. Some actions are sometimes perceived as obvious, whereas in fact they required substantial investments and a significant development time e.g. for adapting production lines.

If applicable, the example should demonstrate how a limit was reached (risk of product losses, transportation packaging needing to be strengthened, etc.) or why such an action had not previously been possible.

The results should be set out in detail, e.g. in terms of weight or volume saving. The company should also position its own packaging in relation to the average figure for its sector; describing an action taken to reduce weight when their unit weight is still higher than market average might be perceived as "greenwashing".

**3 Referring to recognised and comparable indicators** is a key factor in enabling the reader to position the action taken by the company and the progress it has made in relation to clearly set targets.

The number of indicators used by companies is currently quite small and variable, and as a result, performance comparisons cannot be made. However, there are recognised standards, such as those published by the Global Packaging Project (GPP) and the French National Packaging Council (CNE) (see p. 20). These indicators should cover all relevant environmental indicators and not be limited to a single environmental impact, such as climate change, even though it is focusing a great deal of the public debate.

**4 Exploiting the actions taken in association with Eco-Emballages** will demonstrate your involvement with a recognised player in a mutualised initiative, which will allow everyone to move forward. Eco-Emballages provides its member companies with a number of tools and services, such as on-site diagnostics or eco design partnerships. You can then present the results and the progress of actions taken on the basis of these tools and services.

### RESOURCES

→ Global Packaging Project:  
[globalpackaging.mycgforum.com/](http://globalpackaging.mycgforum.com/)

→ French National Packaging Council 2011, "Key prevention indicators", available at:  
[www.conseil-emballage.org/lmg/Publications/63\\_0.pdf](http://www.conseil-emballage.org/lmg/Publications/63_0.pdf) (in French)

→ Tools and services offered by Eco-Emballages to its member companies:  
[www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/prevention/outils-services-formation/](http://www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/prevention/outils-services-formation/) (in French)

→ Pro Europe: discover tools and services for eco-design provided to Green Dot schemes members in Europe:  
[www.proeurope4prevention.org](http://www.proeurope4prevention.org)

“

Eco-Emballages provides its member companies with a number of tools and services, such as on-site diagnostics ”



## Use the Eco-Emballages reporting tool for monitoring packaging reduction at source!

Eco-Emballages provides you with an indicator for reporting the actions you take to reduce packaging at source.

The methodology used by this tool is based on the indicators laid down by the Global Packaging Project and the French National Packaging Council. It complies with the European Standard EN 13428 for packaging prevention by reduction at source, with the requirements set by the French public authorities for the French Green Dot Scheme, and has been validated by the French Environment Protection Agency.

It therefore constitutes an external reporting standard, which implements the principles of recognised standards governing sustainability reporting to packaging, which previously had no dedicated standard.



This tool is accessible on the <http://reduction.ecoemballages.fr>, which also presents a catalogue of actions of packaging reduction at source, to assist with the dissemination of best practices.

**RULE**

**03**

## SET OUT YOUR COMMITMENT TO RECYCLING

### WHY?

The development of a recycling industry was the first significant action carried out in response to regulatory requirements with a view to reducing the environmental impact of household packaging waste. Since the creation of the Green Dot scheme from 1991 in Europe, at the initiative of the manufacturers covered, 40 million tonnes of household waste packaging have been recycled and 4.4 billion euros invested.

The foundation of the Green Dot scheme in Europe is also an example of a collective action to reduce impacts on the environment. By jointly creating a not-for-profit company, the industry has demonstrated its determination to achieve the targets set for recycling, using an effective scheme, leaving aside any consideration for market shares or competitive advantage. In the eyes of your stakeholders, being part of this collective commitment demonstrates your involvement in working towards the goal of sustainable development.

And yet... just 18% of companies<sup>6</sup> mention their packaging eco-design initiative to their customers in their annual reports (sorting instructions, benefits of sorting or other environmental aspects) and just 16% mention the Green Dot in their sustainability communication, even though this symbol appears on their packaging. The packaging industry created the Green Dot scheme, and the contributions made by each of its member companies are used to finance the joint selective collection and recycling scheme in France.... So why not speak about it?

*6/ Eco-Emballages/Utopies study, 2011*

# 03

## HOW?

**1** Point out that after packaging reduction, recycling is one way to reduce the environmental impact of packaging. Recycling is one of the measures laid down by the European Directive on waste, and these are listed in order of priority after packaging reduction at source. The steps you take will therefore be all the more credible and robust if your sustainability communication demonstrates that this hierarchy is being acted upon, to implement actions corresponding to all of the ways to reduce the environmental impact of packaging.



**2** Explain that European and French regulations set targets for recycling rates. The reaching of a target recycling rate is defined in European legislation, sometimes with more ambitious targets in certain countries. Your report should point this out, so as not to give the impression that this initiative is one taken by your company alone.

The implementation of this legislation in France and a number of other European countries has involved the creation of green dot bodies such as the French Eco-Emballages, at the initiative of the packaging industry. If your company has chosen to meet its obligations by contributing to the Green Dot scheme, you can point out that this offers a performance guarantee covering the three pillars of sustainable development:

- achieving the recycling targets imposed by legislation, since 1992, to demonstrate environmental performance;
- optimised financing of household packaging waste collection and sorting, with the contribution paid to Eco-Emballages being earmarked for financing recycling, to promote economic performance;
- developing an industry and creating jobs, notably for populations attempting to integrate into society, to promote societal performance.

**3** Show how your company is contributing to the existing schemes, such as Eco-Emballages in France, and the efforts it is making to improve recyclability. Your contribution should be presented to stakeholders in such a way that they can understand your participation in the selective collection and recycling scheme. This involves:

- a presentation of the trend in your financial contribution. This may be explained by the trend in your sales, but also by your eco-

design efforts. For example, a reduction in respect of certain packaging may reflect a reduction in weight or the benefit of a bonus provided for in the Eco-Emballages fee. Likewise, surcharges may reflect the presence of disturbing items or items that cannot be recycled in their current state via the existing routes. Eco-Emballages can help you to analyse these trends and supply explanations, in the form of a statement in your report:

- the steps you have taken to improve the recyclability of your packaging, enabling progress to be made in the recycling scheme's performance. Eco-Emballages offers services and partnerships, such as opinions on packaging recyclability, which you can present in your report.
- the actions you take to encourage consumers to sort their waste, via messages on your packaging or via communication campaigns. Eco-Emballages also offers partnerships with companies with a view to sharing its expertise in terms of mobilising consumers around this subject.

## RESOURCES

→ Marketing partnership tools and services offered to Eco-Emballages member companies:  
[www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/sensibilisation/les-enjeux/](http://www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/sensibilisation/les-enjeux/) (in French)

→ Pro Europe : discover tools and services for packaging sustainability communication and marketing provided to Green Dot schemes members in Europe:  
[www.proeurope4prevention.org](http://www.proeurope4prevention.org)



Contributing to the Green Dot scheme offers a performance guarantee covering the three pillars of sustainable development: environment, economic development and society. ”



## How to present Eco-Emballages

Eco-Emballages was created in 1992 by pioneering companies in the sustainability field who wished to offer a mutualised solution for the reduction and recycling of household packaging waste.

Taking the form of a French limited liability, not-for-profit company, Eco-Emballages is one of the two companies approved by the authorities for the task of managing household packaging waste on behalf of the companies that marketed it.

Its mission is to manage the reduction, collection, sorting and recycling scheme covering household packaging waste, by mobilising all of the players involved.

Accordingly, Eco-Emballages:

- receives financial contributions from companies and supports their efforts to reduce



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EMBALLAGES**

- packaging at source and to improve their recyclability;
- draws on the support of local communities to develop the performance of selective collection;
- raises consumer awareness of the issues of sorting and recycling through communication actions at both national and local level (elected representatives, local communities, NGOs, etc.);
- helps to develop outlets for the materials collected, to ensure that they undergo a second life.

# RULE 04

## PUBLICIZE YOUR CONSUMERS' AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIONS

### WHY?

Any eco-design action taken in respect of a product and its packaging seeks to reduce its impact on the environment. However, if the consumer can no longer identify the eco-designed product on the supermarket shelf and therefore transfers to a different product, this initiative will have served no purpose. If you simplify or reduce the weight of your packaging, informing consumers may help them to actively reduce their quantity of waste. Likewise, providing citizens with information regarding sorting schemes will enable them to sort more and better – and will help to make recycling more efficient. As proof of this assertion, among a sample of consumers who had been exposed to messages about sorting of packaging, 76% thought that this communication encouraged them to sort more, and a majority felt that this enhanced the brand conveying the message (BVA/Eco-Emballages survey, 2009).

On the other hand, consumers are increasingly well-informed and wary of the idea of “green-washing”. Clumsily conceived marketing and communication therefore poses a risk to the company. Reference standards exist – and your sustainable development programme should demonstrate that you are fully integrating these into your operations.

Raising the awareness not only of consumers but also of your own employees can thus make a real contribution to a sustainability strategy and as such, you need to explain to your stakeholders the action you have taken in this area.

### HOW?

**1** **Present your communication on your actions concerning eco-design and of sorting information.** Your sustainability report can explain the steps you are taking in terms of marketing and awareness-raising. The choice of media, the nature of the messages and their impact must be explained. It will

be easier to demonstrate that you are acting for the benefit of the environment if your approach is carefully constructed. Quantified indicators (in terms of the number of packages carrying a message, visits to your website, etc.) can be used and will reveal the impact of your action to raise awareness.

### 2 On-pack, communicate on the subjects of sorting or your eco-design actions.

Your package is your first medium of communication. Admittedly, the amount of space available is sometimes limited, but this communication medium – which offers a direct link with the consumer – is the ideal place for transmitting messages concerning:



- sorting. The package is the first medium that the consumer holds in their hand at the time of sorting, and for a very good reason... It therefore offers the best way to raise their awareness of how to sort waste effectively and to provide practical tips on this subject;
- eco-design. The use of renewable resources, recycled materials, a reduction in mass and recourse to certified resources. All of this information is of interest to consumers and may be explained to them using simple equivalents. The consumer is ready to sort his waste, but he will sort more and better if he understands that the company too has made efforts in this area;
- recycling. Communicating on the subject of packaging recycling rates and their benefits for the environment will allow you to make the most of your efforts and involve the consumer in this dynamic.

### 3 Eco-Emballages can help you with your communication on the subject of recycling.

Environmental claims are regulated by various standards and good practice guidelines. These guides are extremely useful for preventing wrong assertions from being made. To help use them, Eco-Emballages provides its member companies with support to ensure that any claims made regarding packaging, and in particular its recyclability, correspond to the reality of the sorting schemes in France, and comply with the relevant standards.

To take matters further, Eco-Emballages is building partnerships both on- and off- pack (point-of-sale advertising, Internet, press and TV advertising, etc.) with its member companies, involving consumers and encouraging them to sort their waste. Eco-Emballages thus offers the guarantee of a valid and effective message, and the security of a recognised player.

You can also affix a brand label to give consumers the correct instructions for sorting. You will make life easier for them when they come to sort their waste if you provide the correct instructions and use a standard format that they can easily recognise on all of their everyday products. Explaining this step in your sustainability communication will demonstrate your desire to extend your action by involving your consumers, so that prevention and recycling can become a reality.

## RESOURCES

→ Marketing tools and services offered to Eco-Emballages member companies:

[www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/sensibilisation/les-enjeux/](http://www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/sensibilisation/les-enjeux/) (in French)

→ Eco-Emballages offers its member companies l'Info-tri Point Vert (sorting information) to help consumers to sort their waste properly:

[www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/sensibilisation/outils-services-formation/](http://www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises/sensibilisation/outils-services-formation/) (in French)

→ Training courses on responsible communication and marketing linked to packaging are offered to Eco-Emballages member companies:

[www.ecoemballages.fr/formation/entreprises/marketing-et-communication-responsables/](http://www.ecoemballages.fr/formation/entreprises/marketing-et-communication-responsables/) (in French)

→ A series of NF EN ISO 14020 standards regulating environmental claims, available on the Afnor website: [www.afnor.org](http://www.afnor.org) (in French)

→ ARPP (French advertising control body) recommendations:


[www.arpp-pub.org/IMG/pdf/Recommandation\\_developpement\\_durable.pdf](http://www.arpp-pub.org/IMG/pdf/Recommandation_developpement_durable.pdf) (in French)

→ French National Packaging Council position paper on environmental claims relating to product packaging:

[http://www.conseil-emballage.org/IMG/Publications/76\\_2.pdf](http://www.conseil-emballage.org/IMG/Publications/76_2.pdf)





Extend your action by involving your consumers, so that prevention and recycling can become a reality. 



## Use the « Info-tri Point Vert »

Can a yogurt pot be recycled? What are you supposed to do with a camembert box? Can a disinfectant bottle go in the sorting bin? Consumers seek practical information to help them sort their waste properly. By helping them to do this, you will help to reduce the environmental impact of your packaging and to drive up the national recycling rate.

To assist with this task, Eco-Emballages offers you a ready-to-use tool: the Info-tri Point Vert providing on-pack sorting instructions to consumer.

By choosing the Info-tri Point Vert, you will enjoy the security and the guarantee offered by the Green Dot scheme in terms of reliable and checked sorting instructions. Hundreds of companies have already chosen the Info-tri Point Vert and are thus helping to make this uniform signage a benchmark for consumers who are looking for information on sorting instructions.

Monitoring the implementation of the Info-tri Point Vert can demonstrate your commitment to the goal of raising consumer awareness in your sustainability objectives.

Download the the Info-tri Point Vert graphic charter from: <http://www.ecoemballages.fr/entreprises>



# RULE 05

## PROVIDE RESULTS AND ENABLE THE READER TO UNDERSTAND THEM

### WHY?

According to the Utopies study carried out on behalf of Eco-Emballages, over 72% of companies do not mention any objectives in terms of improvement, monitoring indicators or means implemented when they address the packaging issue in their sustainability communication. Such communication remains limited, and is expressed via a sample of good practices, without any global performance indicator. Where such indicators exist, they are calculated in different ways, which prevents any comparison from being made, and their number varies from one company to another.

Yet standards do exist for sustainability reporting and are referred to by many companies in their publications. These standards (*GRI, GPP, CNE, see p. 20*) apply to sustainability reports in general, and thus to packaging in particular! The basic principles they lay down include:

- comparability. "Reported information should be presented in a manner that enables stakeholders to analyze changes in the organization's performance over time, and could support analysis relative to other organizations"<sup>7/</sup>;
- stakeholder inclusiveness. "The reporting organization should identify its stakeholders and explain in the report how it has responded to their reasonable expectations and interests."

Consequently, it is essential to have uniform, comparable and recognised indicators. Indicators specific to the packaging industry have been developed and published by organisations such as the Global Packaging Project and the French National Packaging Council (*see p. 20*). Referring to these organisations will enable you to comply with the principles applicable to reporting and will add credibility to the steps you are taking.

<sup>7/</sup> GRI guidelines for sustainability reporting: [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)

# RULE 05

## PROVIDE RESULTS AND ENABLE THE READER TO UNDERSTAND THEM

### HOW?

In order to comply with the rules applicable to sustainability reporting, the company's strategy on packaging should:

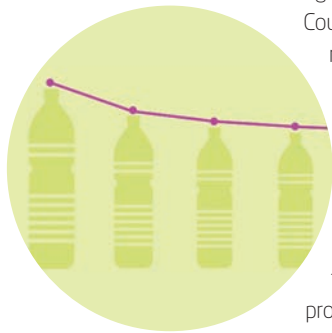
- 1 Be understandable and clearly explained.
- 2 Be based on an action plan setting targets that are quantified and relevant to packaging-related issues.
- 3 Make reference to indicators that are recognised within the industry.

**Your company's packaging strategy should be clear in the eyes of your stakeholders.** They will be more convinced by your commitment to sustainable development if you can demonstrate that it has been fully integrated into the operations of your company. The strategic priorities should therefore be clarified, together with the motivations behind the choices made. Rule no. 1 of this guide will help you here.

**This strategy shall be based on an action plan that relies on an appropriate organisation system and resources.** The strategic priorities should be expressed in terms of operational and quantified targets, referring to a clear deadline. A clear explanation should be given as to why these targets and deadlines have been chosen. The associated action plan is an additional transparency feature regarding your internal organisation system, and monitoring this plan will enable you to communicate regarding what you have achieved, and the action taken to remedy any delays.

**Share the progress made in your performance... in the light of your targets!** Any communication of quantitative data should be based on multi-sector reporting standards – such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) – and on projects specific to the packaging sector (such as the indicators laid down by the Global Packaging Project and the French National Packaging Council). The trend in this performance should be commented on, explaining the trend in your results.

The indicators should reflect all of the rules laid down in this guide, and cover all subjects: packaging reduction, awareness-raising and recycling. The choice of indicators should be clearly explained. By way of example, rather than presenting a standalone packaging reduction action, it will be more relevant to state what proportion of the company's packaging it can apply to, what proportion it is actually being applied to, and what



### THE FRENCH GRENELLE II REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS GOVERNING REPORTING (ARTICLE 225)

Article 225 of the French Grenelle II Law strengthens the obligation incumbent upon companies to provide information on the social and environmental consequences of their operations, and on their commitments to society, with a view to promoting sustainable development. The implementing decree dated 24 April 2012 provides details of the information required, which includes measures to prevent, recycle and remove waste, and of sustainable use of resources. This information must be checked by an accredited verification body. These 5 rules will help you to meet these obligations, by incorporating packaging into your communication.

target has been set by the company for the deployment of this solution. Recycling, by using indicators such as national recycling or recovery rates, should be discussed. Your company will have met these regulatory recycling targets via its contribution to the Green Dot scheme: you may have delegated your responsibility to your national Green Dot scheme, but the result applies to your packaging. To help you, Eco-Emballages provides a reduction-at-source indicator to quantify the reduction in your packaging (see p. 17). To help push the recycling rate upwards via increased consumer awareness, Eco-Emballages also offers standard sorting instructions charts (see p. 17), the deployment of which can be monitored by an indicator.

### RESOURCES

- **Global Reporting Initiative**  
[www.globalreporting.org/Home](http://www.globalreporting.org/Home)
- **Global Packaging Project**  
[globalpackaging.mycgforum.com/](http://globalpackaging.mycgforum.com/)
- **French National Packaging Council:**  
[www.conseil-emballage.org/](http://www.conseil-emballage.org/)
- **Eco-Emballages packaging reduction indicator:**  
<http://reduction.ecoemballages.fr>

PROVIDE RESULTS AND ENABLE THE READER TO UNDERSTAND THEM



## STANDARDS TO UNDERPIN YOUR RESULTS AND GIVE THEM CREDIBILITY

A multi-sector standard, the GRI and two projects specific to the packaging sector provide information on good practice and common indicators, both of which offer a token of credibility.

### Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

This offers an international standard to measure the companies sustainability achievements. The GRI's governance provides representation for all stakeholders (industry, civil society, the trade unions, environmental associations) in the process of defining indicators. The GRI has laid down a number of reporting principles, which include materiality, completeness, balance, comparability, accuracy, clarity and reliability.

It also highlights the need to involve stakeholders in the process of defining the company's own programme.

**For further information, visit: [www.globalreporting.org/Home](http://www.globalreporting.org/Home)**

### Global Packaging Project (GPP)

This forum comprises a large number of private companies at international level, and has enabled the publication of a standard dedicated to the packaging issue. The protocol published sets out the reporting principles and the indicators to be adopted, covering all aspects of sustainability: environmental, economic and social development.

Recourse to a recognised external standard, published under the auspices of recognised bodies, acts as a token of credibility for a company's sustainability reporting.

The GPP's documents are free for download.

**For further information, visit: [www.globalpackaging.mycgforum.com](http://www.globalpackaging.mycgforum.com)**

### Conseil National de l'Emballage - French National Packaging Council (CNE)

This association, which was set up in 1997, acts as a debating forum and a consultation body among the various players involved in packaging: producers of packaging material, packaging manufacturers, companies selling consumer products, retailers, approved companies and waste operators, local communities, consumers associations and environmental protection bodies.

The CNE's mission involves drawing up and disseminating good practice covering the design, use and marketing of consumer product packaging. Historically, the CNE was closely involved in the development of a packaging waste prevention policy, and in general terms, it sought to act as a driving-force for creating a responsible eco-design policy for consumer products. The CNE publishes a catalogue of good practice in the field of prevention, which can be consulted on-line at its website.

**For further information, visit: [www.conseil-emballage.org](http://www.conseil-emballage.org)**

## PACKAGING AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORTS

# CHECK-LIST

Eco-Emballages offers tools and services to help you implement the 5 rules applicable to your programme and your sustainability strategy and communication.

In the pages that follow, a check-list will enable you to test your report, and summarises all the questions that you need to ask yourself about packaging, so that you can deal with the subject in a relevant, comprehensive and reliable way.

Eco-Emballages also offers on-site diagnostics conducted by independent experts, which will enable you to carry out a review of the current situation, so that you can embark on your programme, or help you to define objectives for achieving progress.

# CHECK-LIST

Eco-Emballages proposes 5 rules for dealing with the packaging issue in your sustainability communication. The check-list below will help you to implement these.

	Subject	Yes	No	N/A	Page
<b>RULE 1 : POSITION YOUR PACKAGING IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMPANY'S BUSINESS</b>					
<b>Your sustainability communication should describe:</b>					
➤ The role played by your packaging in relation to your products – and how it is designed	Your report sets out the roles played by the packaging in relation to the product contained within	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	Your report briefly explains the process of designing suitable packaging and shows how the eco-design is integrated into the company's operation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ The nature of the packaging used by your company	Your report sets out the packaging types, the materials they are made of, and their weights and quantities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	Your report describes household packaging, as well as industrial and transportation packaging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ The environmental impacts of your packaging as compared with the impacts of your products	Your report presents the relative environmental impacts of the packaging and the product, e.g. using a representative LCA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Regulatory obligations applicable to packaging	The report points out the regulatory requirements linked to the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	The report points out that packaging must also meet health and safety regulations covering both the product and the consumer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
<b>RULE 2 : SPEAK ABOUT PREVENTION, BUT PREVENTION AS A WHOLE!</b>					
<b>Your sustainability communication should:</b>					
➤ Present representative examples of prevention, but also those on which action is yet to be taken	The examples presented are representative of the company's products and packaging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	The report describes what has already been achieved, but also areas of progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–



Subject	Yes	No	N/A	Page
<b>RULE 2 : SPEAK ABOUT PREVENTION, BUT PREVENTION AS A WHOLE!</b>				
<b>Your sustainability communication should:</b>				
➤ Explain all of the issues and results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Refers to recognised and comparable indicators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Reports the actions carried out with Eco-Emballages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
<b>RULE 3 : SET OUT YOUR COMMITMENT TO RECYCLING</b>				
<b>Your sustainability communication should:</b>				
➤ Point out that after packaging reduction, recycling is one way to reduce the environmental impact of packaging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Explain that European and national regulations set target recycling rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Describes how your company is contributing to existing Green Dot schemes, such as Eco-Emballages in France, and its efforts to improve recyclability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–



	Subject	Yes	No	N/A	Page
<b>RULE 4 : PUBLICIZE YOUR CONSUMERS' AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIONS</b>					
<b>Your sustainability communication should:</b>					
➤ Describe how you communicate regarding your actions in the areas of eco-design and raising awareness of sorting	Your report sets out the media used, the targets and the nature of these awareness-raising messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	Your report presents indicators of results and means (number of packages carrying a message, number of webpage visits, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Presents information on messages encouraging consumers to sort their waste and on the eco-design messages affixed to your packaging	Your packaging is your first medium of communication: it can carry information on sorting, recycling or your eco-design efforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	You show how the environmental claims carried by your products comply with recognised standards (ISO standards, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ Describe your partnerships with Eco-Emballages, if applicable	Follow up the implementation of partnerships with Eco-Emballages in order to raise consumer awareness of sorting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
<b>RULE 5 : PROVIDE RESULTS AND ENABLE THE READER TO UNDERSTAND THEM</b>					
<b>Your sustainability communication should present the company's packaging strategy</b>					
➤ In a way that is legible and clearly explained	Your packaging strategy is clearly explained, and derives naturally from the application of Rule 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ By relying on an action plan presenting quantified targets that are relevant to packaging-related issues	Your report presents a defined action plan and an organisation system appropriate to the implementation of your strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	Your report presents quantified targets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
	Objectives are defined in relation to clearly indicated deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–
➤ By referring to indicators that are recognised by the industry	Your targets are measured by indicators relating to recognised standards (GRI, GPP and/or CNE)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	–







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