

## Green Paper Procurement Policies

There is a growing and positive trend of paper buyers who have adopted or are developing green purchasing policies. Setting a green purchasing policy requires becoming informed on a range of issues. There are responsible resources of information available on developing good purchasing policies, including a Buyers' Guide from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC).<sup>1</sup>

Overall, green procurement policies should:

- Use clear language
- Be based on life-cycle analysis
- Demonstrate responsible fibre sourcing and sustainable forest management
- Reward leadership
- Promote competitiveness

**Use Clear Language** – Avoid vague terms and those with conflicting definitions, such as endangered forests, ancient forests, intact forests, or old growth forests. These terms have different meanings depending on the stakeholder. Adopting such terms could run the risk that they will be interpreted differently (and evaluated differently) by relevant stakeholders, and not provide increased protection to global forest resources.

**Life Cycle Analysis** – Adopt a life-cycle approach as a guiding framework. While some issues may be more important than others, taking a single criterion approach to sustainable practices may not ensure long-term sustainability.

For example, a procurement policy needs to address products made with both recycled content and fresh fibre. This is important for a number of reasons. Any measurement of the environmental benefits of recycled fibre must consider whether waste paper has to be transported long distances or if brighter paper grades need additional processing. Life cycle assessment may show that harvesting and processing fresh fibre from sustainably managed forests can also offer an excellent environmental choice.

In addition, the paper fibre cycle depends on fresh fibre from well-managed forests as well as a strong recovered paper supply network. Recycled fibre breaks down with each use and about 15 per cent of paper products, such as tissues and documents stored for extended periods of time, cannot be recycled. A recent study found that without fresh fibre from sawmill residues and harvesting, paper supplies would disappear in weeks to months depending on the grade of paper.<sup>2</sup>

### PROCUREMENT POLICY EXAMPLES

#### **John Wiley & Sons**

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*“Developed and implemented Responsible Paper Sourcing guidelines, which give preference to producers who are recognized by one or more third-party certified sustainable forest management schemes; abide by all local environmental laws and regulations; demonstrate an ongoing commitment to clean and efficient production; and, whenever possible, align with producers who operate in accordance with the ISO 14001 environmental management standard.”*  
[http://www.wiley.com/legacy/annual\\_reports/ar\\_2009/citizenship.htm#task2](http://www.wiley.com/legacy/annual_reports/ar_2009/citizenship.htm#task2)

#### **Direct Marketing Association**

First four elements of their **Green 15**  
*“1. Encourage your paper suppliers to increase wood purchases from recognized forest certification programs.  
2. Require your paper suppliers to commit to implementing sustainable forestry practices that protect forest ecosystems and biodiversity as well as provide the wood and paper products that meet industry needs.  
3. Ask your paper suppliers where your paper comes from before buying it with the intent of not sourcing paper from unsustainable or illegally managed forests.  
4. Require your paper suppliers to document that they do not produce or sell paper from illegally harvested or stolen wood.”*

<http://www.the-dma.org/Green15/OverviewDMAGreen15.pdf>

<sup>1</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers / Forest Products Association of Canada Buyers' Guide  
[http://www.fpac.ca/en/resource\\_centre/resources/buyers\\_guides.php?edit\\_document=1](http://www.fpac.ca/en/resource_centre/resources/buyers_guides.php?edit_document=1)

<sup>2</sup> Fibre Cycle Research <http://www.metafore.org/index.php?p=Paper+Fiber+Life+Cycle&s=570>

# Green Procurement Briefing Paper - November 2009

**Responsible Fibre Sourcing and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)** – Focus on forest management and not forest type. Examples of key considerations of responsible fibre sourcing and sustainable forest management include 3rd-party/independent SFM certification, and evidence that companies are collaborating with local communities, Aboriginal people, governments and conservation interests. These kinds of proactive approaches are seen as being crucial to progress, as they help to ensure that the “right things” are happening on the ground.

Examine all the 3rd-party SFM certifications including the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI), and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). Many paper buyers have determined that all of these internationally recognized SFM standards meet their criteria and push global progress towards well-managed forests. A resource comparing the main SFM certifications in detail is available to help.<sup>3</sup>

**Reward Leadership** – Provide suppliers with incentives for taking action on green procurement objectives, including existing efforts that promote sustainability. Actions may include getting 3rd-party SFM certification, voluntary pollution control actions, and collaborative engagement with local communities, Aboriginals, governments and conservation interests.

**Promoting Competitiveness** – Ensure green procurement policies are inclusive and objective rather than monopolistic, discriminatory, and subjective. This avoids potential trade barriers and anti-competitive practices. Economic viability is another essential element – to be effective, green procurement policies need to also be achievable and economically viable.

## Potential Criteria

Here is a list of potential criteria that paper buyers may wish to consider when refining or developing a green purchasing policy. In keeping with internationally accepted principles of free trade, purchasing policies should be non-discriminatory and transparent. More details can be found in PwC / FPAC's Buyers Guide.<sup>4</sup>

- Responsible fibre sourcing, including traceability or chain of custody
- Sustainable forest management certification
- Forest and biodiversity conservation
- Avoidance of illegal logging
- Maintaining and enhancing air and water quality
- Energy efficiency and emissions reduction
- Efficient use of resources
- Recovery and recycling
- Social responsibility
- Research and education
- Public reporting
- Continual improvement

## Working with Suppliers

Good suppliers are ready to collaborate with paper buyers on the development and refinement of green procurement policy processes. Paper buyers should engage with their suppliers to understand how certain commitments will work, and how different environmental commitments impact their ability to meet price, quality and service requirements. Green procurement policies should include achievable commitments for today that can be improved upon over time.

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<sup>3</sup> Comparison of 3rd-party SFM certifications

[http://www.fpac.ca/documents/sustainability/FPAC\\_ForestryCertification\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fpac.ca/documents/sustainability/FPAC_ForestryCertification_EN.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> PwC / FPAC Buyers' Guide

[http://www.fpac.ca/en/resource\\_centre/resources/buyers\\_guides.php?edit\\_document=1](http://www.fpac.ca/en/resource_centre/resources/buyers_guides.php?edit_document=1)