A.I.S.E. CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABLE CLEANING 2020+

Charter ASP packaging criteria: Definitions
Version 1.0 (1 January 2021)

At the time of preparation of this commitment some of the key concepts that are being discussed lack a harmonised definition at European level or a standardised approach to the measurement of progress. Instead, there is a proliferation of segmented definitions and methodologies that are perhaps applicable solely to certain sectors and/or applications.

A.I.S.E. is committed to participate in future discussions at EU level to help refine concepts such as 'recyclability' but also to develop a common framework to measure the success of parallel on-going initiatives.

In the context of this A.I.S.E. voluntary initiative on plastic packaging the following definitions and technical clarifications shall be considered.

Recycled material

Recycled material is defined as waste recycled after use, including:

- material from post-consumer waste, collected via official collection schemes;
- material from outside existing collection streams, such as maritime litter, beach litter, etc.;
- 'post-industrial recycled' material, i.e. material from post-industrial sources; this does not include material from own processes which has been reused/recycled, such as regrind.

Recyclable packaging

The definition for 'recyclable packaging' used in this A.I.S.E. initiative is the one from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation New Plastics Economy Global Commitment[1] together with its clarification notes, i.e.:

A packaging or packaging component is recyclable if its successful post-consumer collection, sorting, and recycling is proven to work in practice and at scale.

Notes

1. In the context of a 2025 timeframe and the Global Commitment, a package can be considered recyclable if its main packaging components, together representing >95% of the entire packaging weight, are recyclable according to the above definition, and if the remaining minor components are compatible with the recycling process and do not hinder the recyclability of the main components. Otherwise, only the recyclable components of a package (or the recyclable parts of components - see footnote 3) can be counted towards achieving this commitment, and only when other components do not hinder or contaminate their recyclability.

Examples:

- If a bottle and its cap are recyclable, the packaging can be claimed to be recyclable if it has a label (<5% of total weight) that does not hinder the recyclability of the bottle and cap.

[1] https://newplasticseconomy.org/assets/doc/global-commitment-download.pdf

- If that same bottle has a label that hinders or contaminates the recycling of the bottle and cap, the entire packaging is non-recyclable.
- If a package has (a) certain component(s) that are not recyclable and that make up >5% of the total packaging weight (e.g. 12%) and that do not hinder or contaminate the recycling of the remaining recyclable components of the package, then only that recyclable part (e.g. 88%) can be counted towards this commitment.

Longer-term, the aim should be for all packaging components (e.g. including labels) to be recyclable according to the above definition.

2. A packaging component is a part of packaging that can be separated by hand or by using simple physical means (ISO 18601), e.g. a cap, a lid and (non in-mould) labels.
3. A packaging component can only be considered recyclable if that entire component, excluding minor incidental constituents (6), is recyclable according to the definition above. If just one material of a multi-material component is recyclable, one can only claim recyclability of that material, not of the component as a whole (in line with US FTC Green Guides and ISO 14021).
4. ISO 14021 defines post-consumer material as material generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end users of the product which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain. It excludes pre-consumer material (e.g. production scrap).
5. Packaging for which the only proven way of recycling is recycling into applications that do not allow any further use-cycles (e.g. plastics-to-roads) cannot be considered 'recyclable packaging'.
6. ISO 18601:2013: A packaging constituent is apart from which packaging or its components are made and which cannot be separated by hand or by using simple physical means (e.g. a layer of a multi-layered pack or an in-mould label).

The 'recyclable' definition above applies at a global level for global commitments: it is a characteristic of packaging and is not linked to any local context or specific geographical area. As such, this definition does not apply to claims linked to specific geographical areas (e.g. on-pack recycling labels, customer communications), as these should always take into account the local context and systems in place (in line with ISO 14021 and US FTC) and be in line with the local regulations that apply to such claims.

It is understood that there might be barriers, which go beyond the company's responsibility and control, e.g. unavailable recycling infrastructure in one or more regions covered by the Charter. In case the Charter ASP packaging requirements for recyclability cannot be met for those reasons, evidence has to be provided (in case of external verification organised by A.I.S.E.) that those requirements cannot be met since they are beyond the company's control; however, the infrastructure for recycling should be available at scale in the majority of the countries where you market your products in the Charter area.

There is ongoing discussion at EU level for 'at scale' definition; we will amend accordingly as soon as available.

Note:
The Ellen MacArthur Foundation adds in its first 2019 report on the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment a definition for 'at scale' – with quantification: The threshold suggested to prove recycling works 'in practice and at scale' is a 30% post-consumer recycling rate achieved across multiple regions, collectively representing at least 400 million inhabitants.

Reusable packaging
The definition for 'reusable packaging' used in this A.I.S.E. initiative is the one from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation New Plastics Economy Global Commitment together with its clarification notes, i.e.:
Packaging which has been designed to accomplish or proves its ability to accomplish a minimum number of trips or rotations in a system for reuse.

Source: ISO 18603:2013 - Packaging and the environment - Reuse, modified (packaging component mentioned in notes)

Notes

1. A trip is defined as transfer of packaging, from filling/loading to emptying/unloading. A rotation is defined as a cycle undergone by reusable packaging from filling/loading to filling/loading (ISO 18603).
2. The minimum number of trips or rotations refers to the fact that the 'system for reuse' in place should be proven to work in practice, i.e. that a significant share of the package is actually reused (measured e.g. by an average reuse rate or an average number of use-cycles per package).
3. A system for reuse is defined as established arrangements (organisational, technical or financial) which ensure the possibility of reuse, in closed-loop, open-loop or in a hybrid system (ISO 18603).
4. See above for the definition of reuse, which stresses amongst other things the need for the packaging to be refilled or used again for the same purpose for which it was conceived.

Compostable packaging

The definition for 'compostable packaging' used in this A.I.S.E. initiative is the one from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation New Plastics Economy Global Commitment together with its clarification notes, i.e.:

A packaging or packaging component is compostable if it is in compliance with relevant international compostability standards and if its successful post-consumer collection, (sorting), and composting is proven to work in practice and at scale.

Notes

1. ISO 18601:2013: A packaging component is a part of packaging that can be separated by hand or by using simple physical means (e.g. a cap, a lid and (non in-mould) labels).
2. Including ISO 18606, ISO 14021, EN13432, ASTM D-6400 and AS4736.
3. ISO 14021's usage of term clarifies post-consumer material as material generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end users of the product which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain.

It should be noted that composting can take place in an industrial facility, following a controlled process managed by professionals, as well as in a collective or at home, where the process is subject to the householder's skills and other environmental conditions. The terms 'composting' and 'compostable' as referred to in this appendix refer to industrial composting.

Multi-component cardboard packaging

In case multi-component cardboard packaging, i.e. a carboard containing layers of non-fiber materials(s), or different types of cardboard would be combined as one packaging functional unit, it is required that the individual cardboard components meet the ASP requirements for recycled content or certification under an endorsed certification standard such as FSC, SFI or PEFC and that the marketed multi-component package is recyclable.

Classification/Definition

Marketed multi-type cardboard package must be recyclable in the paper stream:

- Non-fiber content: a 100% fiber-content package typically is difficult to realise as cardboard standard packages contain adhesives, inks and other components. The final cardboard package placed on the market must comply with the applicable limits for non-fiber content.
- Design should ensure that package recyclability is facilitated as much as possible. This means that, when different components are combined, their compatibility with each other in the existing recycling stream or the ease of their mechanical separability should be taken into account by their design.
- Example: it would not be acceptable to mix a cardboard material 100% FSC with a material 50% FSC, even if the overall FSC content by weight would be > 70%.