



PRACTICAL WAYS RETAILERS CAN EMBRACE SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING

PACKAGING can be labelled as FSC if it is produced and labelled under a valid FSC Chain of Custody (CoC) Certificate. 'If your supplier is FSC certified and sourcing the FSC-certified materials on your behalf, the FSC label can be applied to your packaging,' explains Gerard Busse, marketing manager at FSC South Africa.

Text only claims printed on packaging such as 'Made from FSC certified board' are not permitted. An FSC label must be used and applied by an FSC-certified organisation.

'Specifying FSC-certified materials and asking your packaging supplier to apply an FSC label gives your customers an assurance that your business has chosen to source responsibly,' Gerard asserts. 'It can also enhance your corporate social responsibility policy and increase credibility with stakeholders, governments, NGOs, and the general public.'

'An FSC-certified packaging supplier can issue an invoice that includes the FSC claim(s) and their FSC certificate code. This is your assurance that you have purchased FSC-certified packaging,' he notes.

FSC label types

FSC labels include a range of product types such as wood, paper, board and packaging. Packaging can carry the FSC label if it's produced using FSC-certified materials under a valid FSC CoC Certificate. Timber products and cellulose may also be sourced with FSC certification for use in packaging applications.

The FSC logo, the name Forest Stewardship Council and the acronym FSC are all registered trademarks. It is the responsibility of the relevant FSC-certified entity to ensure that the trademarks are used correctly.

An FSC-certified company is provided with access details for the FSC Trademark Portal, where it can download labels featuring its unique license code, along with the FSC logo for promotional use. Designers creating artwork on behalf of an FSC-certified company can be provided with 'for placement only' graphics to incorporate into the designs.

There is also provision within the FSC standards whereby two FSC-certified organisations can enter into an agreement that allows the supplier to label products with the buyer's FSC license code. The products to be labelled need to be included in the certificate scope of both organisations (for full details, refer to FSC-STD-50-001).

FSC-certified paper and board are widely available and most carry an FSC 100%, FSC Mix or FSC Recycled claim.

FSC 100%

All the timber or fibre in the product comes from an FSC-certified forest, which is managed with consideration for people, wildlife and the environment. These forests are independently audited to meet FSC's forest management principles and criteria. FSC 100% products are processed using the FSC transfer system.



FSC Mix

The timber or fibre in an FSC Mix product is a mixture of some/all of the following:

- Virgin timber/fibre from an FSC-certified forest
- Reclaimed/recycled timber/fibre
- Virgin timber/fibre from other controlled sources (controlled wood), which has been assessed using the relevant FSC standards as being at low risk of coming from unacceptable sources..



When produced under the FSC percentage system, the product must contain a minimum of 70% FSC-certified wood/fibre and/or recycled input, and the balance must be controlled wood. If the product is produced under the FSC credit system, there is no minimum FSC input; however, only a proportion of products can be labelled and/or promoted as FSC certified. Again, the balance must be controlled wood.

FSC Recycled

All timber or fibre must be pre- or post-consumer reclaimed. For wood products produced under the FSC percentage system, a minimum of 70% of the inputs must be post-consumer reclaimed. There is no threshold for paper products, but all inputs must be verified as reclaimed. FSC Recycled products can also be produced under the FSC credit or transfer systems.

Promoting certified products and packaging

Brands such as retailers who buy finished packaging, labelled as FSC, from an FSC-certified company can apply for a promotional trademark licence to use the FSC trademarks in promotional materials and marketing campaigns.



According to Gerard, 13 of the 30 largest international retail chains have signed a promotional licence agreement with the Forest Stewardship Council, enabling them to create powerful point-of-sale materials, which signal their commitment to responsible sourcing of forest-based products.

Use of the FSC trademarks via a promotional trademark licence can also help brands to enhance the transparency of their supply chains and communicate their corporate responsibility.

Some brands choose to hold their FSC CoC Certification so that the licence code (within the FSC label applied to their products) links back to them rather than their supplier.

- Appeared in the June 2021 issue of PPM