

Selecting the Green Issues for your Tender or RFP — Worksheet

Purpose

This worksheet will help you identify the environmental impacts that are likely to be most relevant to a product or service that you are going to purchase. It is intended to help choose which green issues should be included as minimum or mandatory specifications in your tender or RFP.

Before you get started with this worksheet, make sure that you have checked to see if there is a Green Product Factsheet (see [Appendix B](#) of the Buying Green Guide) that describes the relevant green issues for the product or service you are about to purchase. The Green Product Factsheets pre-identify the most significant green issues that you can include in a tender or RFP.

Instructions

Your first step is to identify the relevant green issues through some basic product research and through speaking with end-users or any green experts within your organization. Second, you'll need to consider which green issues you'll want to include in your tender or RFP. As discussed in the main text of the Buying Green Guide, there are often trade-offs involved when it comes to deciding which green issues to focus on for your purchase. This worksheet will help you with that process.

Read each question below and check the appropriate box to indicate your best understanding of the potential scale of the green impact (High, Medium or Low or Don't Know). If you aren't sure about the scale of the impact then you'll want to do some more research or consult with others within your organization.

Where there is potential for significant impact (e.g. you have marked energy use as high) then you'll want to ensure a specification or criteria is included for this issue within your tender or RFP. If an impact area received a medium or low rating, then check to see if it is related to one of your organization's core environmental strategy areas. If it does, then you'll likely want to include this in your tender or RFP. Otherwise, these impact areas can be optional criteria that you may include within an RFP scenario where you have more flexibility to see how vendors can address a variety of issues.

Name of Tender/RFP

Completed by/Contact Details

Date Completed

WORKSHEET #2: GREEN ISSUES

Issues/Impacts

What is the likely level of impact?

Energy Use: What is the potential energy use of the product over its lifetime? Is it likely to be significant? For example, if you are buying a large appliance check “High”. If you are buying cleaning products then check “Low”

High Medium Low Don't know

Recycled Content: Is the product made from a potentially scarce resource or a non-renewable resource (e.g. tropical hardwood, old growth timber, or a petroleum based product). If so, check “High”. If the material that the product is made from is easily renewable then check “Medium” or “Low”.

High Medium Low Don't know

Product Recycling and Disposal: Can the product be easily recycled at the end of its natural life, or will it be collected by the vendor as part of a product stewardship or ‘take-back’ program? If so, check “Low”. If it is likely to be expensive or difficult to recycle then check “High”.

High Medium Low Don't know

Packaging: Does the product come with non-recyclable packaging or difficult to recycle packaging (e.g. Styrofoam™, pallets, moulded plastics)? Or will the packaging be costly to manage and handle? If so, check “High”. If the packaging can be easily recycled then check “Medium” and if there is minimal packaging or it can be returned to the vendor then check “Low”.

High Medium Low Don't know

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions: What is the level of GHG emissions in the making or using of the product? Will it have a significant ‘carbon footprint’? If so, check “High”. If the GHG emissions are likely to be low then check “Low”.

High Medium Low Don't know

Note: You may need to consult some research or get help from a ‘green expert’ to estimate the carbon footprint of a product.

Toxic/Hazardous Chemicals: Does the product contain toxic chemicals that could have a negative effect on human health and safety? If so, check “High”. If the ingredients are completely natural or organic then check “Low”.

High Medium Low Don't know

Other Issues/Impacts (e.g. water conservation, local air quality etc.)

High Medium Low Don't know

Results:

Make sure a specification or criteria is included in your tender or RFP for all the questions that have resulted in a “High” rating. For those that are “Medium” or “Low”, consider how important these issues are to your organization and then make a decision on whether to include them or not. Remember, you'll need to do some upfront research before completing this worksheet, and it is often best to work with other end-users, specification writers or internal ‘green experts’ to work through this process.