

The ecodesign incentive bonus guide

2023

Schedule of Contributions

Your packaging ecodesign efforts could help you earn
a credit on your contribution!

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Ecodesign at the heart of the modernization of curbside recycling

In 2021, ÉEQ introduced an **ecodesign incentive bonus** pilot project to support organizations working towards ecodesign for their containers and packaging (C&P) and encourage others to follow suit.

The **modernization of curbside recycling** will enable companies to play a leading role in the system and its management, in partnership with municipalities, and thus become responsible for the containers, packaging and printed matter they put on the market, from design to the end-of-life management through recycling. The integration of the ecodesign incentive bonus therefore aims to **eco-modulate the Schedule of Contributions (SoC)** to support the shift to a fee structure that is more in line with the impact of the material across the value chain.

The objectives of the pilot project are to:

- Recognize ecodesign approaches for C&P put on the market in **calendar year 2022**.
- Document the ecodesign **strategies**, challenges and potential solutions.
- Identify the **environmental gains** and social and economic benefits.
- **Share** the initiatives undertaken by the companies that earn a bonus.

This guide presents the terms of the bonus and description of eligible ecodesign actions.

To obtain more information on the pilot project or submit a bonus request, go to the **[bonus page](#)**.

A simplified and improved process

The first year of the incentive bonus pilot project provided ÉEQ with learning opportunities that led to a number of improvements. The process to submit an application was simplified, and the amount of available bonus was increased.

- The bonus percentage was increased to **50% of the payable contribution** for designated C&P.
- A **maximum of \$25,000** can be granted of each bonus application.
- A company can submit more than one application for a bonus and be granted up to **a maximum of \$60,000**.
- A **minimum bonus of \$5,000** per company, or equal to the company's total contribution, when the total contribution is less than \$5,000, can be granted if the bonus request(s) are deemed eligible by ÉEQ.

The ecodesign incentive bonus is driven by ten ecodesign actions in four themes that are each associated with a bonus equal to 20% of the contribution payable for designated C&P. An additional 10% bonus may be granted to conduct a case study.

When submitting a bonus request, the company must indicate the ecodesign actions it undertook and specify whether it wants its initiatives published as a case study featured in the **Ecodesign Portal**. Companies can accumulate bonuses up to a maximum of 50%.

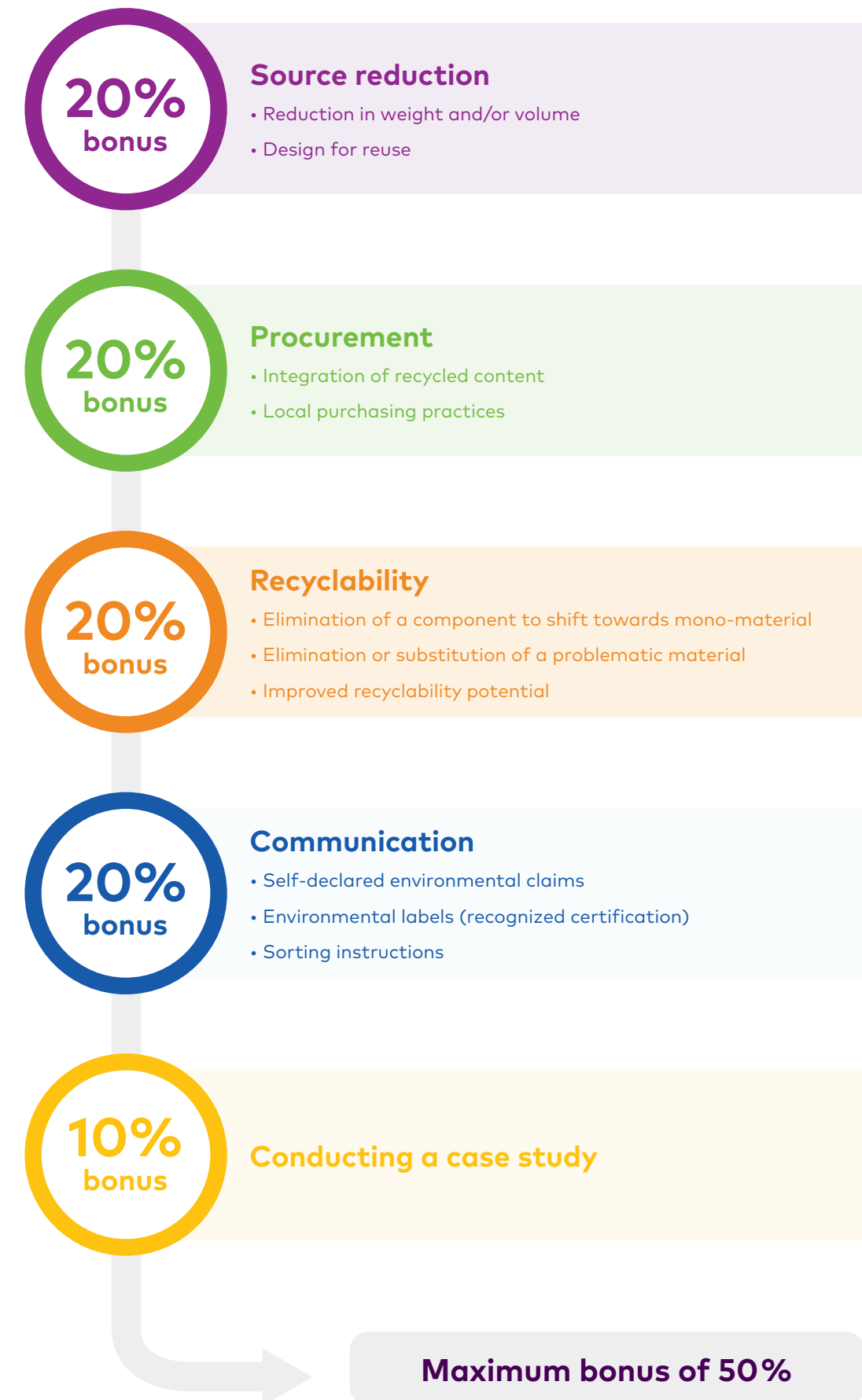
Important note

C&P made from the following materials are not eligible for an ecodesign incentive bonus:

- × Cork and wood
- × Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)
- × Polylactic acid (PLA) and other degradable plastics
- × Steel aerosol containers
- × Ceramic and porcelain

However, an elimination or substitution initiative aiming to shift to a material accepted in curbside recycling may be eligible for a bonus!

In addition, business-to-business (B2B) packaging and printed matter are not eligible to the ecodesign incentive bonus.



Source reduction

Source reduction is the first of the 3RV strategies to consider when aiming to reduce a product's environmental impact. With regard to C&P, source reduction means using fewer materials to obtain the "right packaging" and, by the same token, reducing the impacts associated with production.

Reduction in weight and/or volume

Sufficient and effective packaging "the right packaging" is designed with the right amount of materials to protect the product and avoid overpackaging.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company reduces the weight and/or volume of the designated C&P by:

- Improving the packaging/product ratio, and/or
- Eliminate excess headspace

To be eligible:

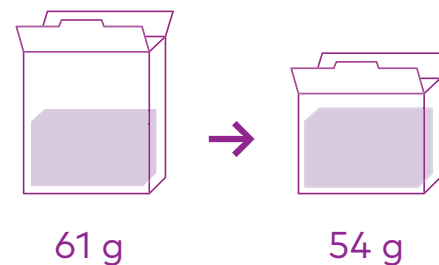
- The total weight and/or volume of the designated C&P **must have been reduced** by at least 3% compared to the previous year **without transferring** the C&P's weight to secondary or tertiary packaging or having a negative impact on its recyclability.

Eligible initiatives

- ✗ New product
- ✓ Optimized packaging

Example

Reducing the mass of a cardboard container by decreasing the headspace (same amount of packaged product).



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Technical data sheet detailing the weight and/or volume before and after optimization
- Documents deemed relevant by ÉÉQ to verify the weight and/or volume before and after optimization

Design for reuse

Reusing a packaging extends its service life and avoids the production of new packaging and related impacts.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company markets the designated C&P to enable its reuse through one of the following strategies:

- C&P used as a refill (e.g., concentrated or large format)
- C&P that may be reused at filling stations (e.g., bulk)

To be eligible:

- "Refil" **must appear** on designated the C&P.
- The filling stations **must have** the same branding as the designated C&P and be available during the entire year in which the Schedule of Contributions applies. The company must also promote the filling stations.

Important note

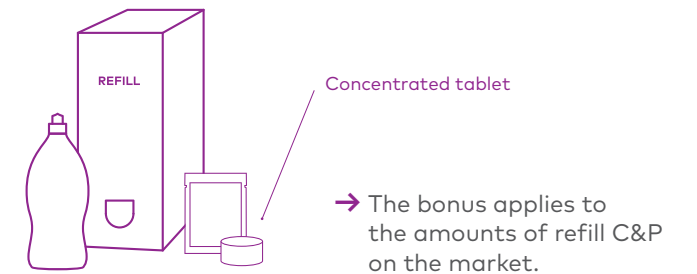
- ✗ C&P reused under a private deposit-return system are not eligible.
- ✗ C&P in large economy sizes that may be used on their own are not eligible.

Eligible initiatives

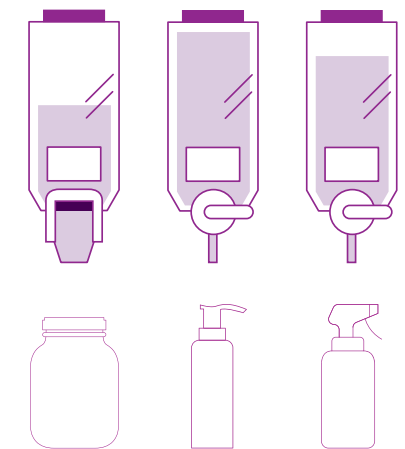
- ✓ New product
- ✓ Optimized packaging

Examples

Refill container (e.g., concentrated or large format)



Filling station



- The bonus applies to the amount of reusable C&P on the market.

Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Proof that the C&P is marketed as a refill (e.g., image of the C&P on which the information appears)
- Proof that an operational filling station with the same branding as the designated C&P was available in Québec during the entire reference year (e.g., image or URL of the webpage on which the information is published)

Procurement

Environmental and social impacts are generated across the supply chain. The choice of materials and suppliers constitutes the starting point of a range of opportunities to enhance the performances of C&P and therefore warrants special attention.

Integration of recycled content

C&P made from recycled content provide recovered materials with a new service life and avoid the impacts of extracting raw materials.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company has integrated post-consumer or post-industrial recycled content into the designated C&P.

To be eligible, the recycled content of the designated C&P **must meet** these minimum thresholds:

Paper/cardboard C&P	30%
Plastic C&P	15%
Glass C&P	30%
Aluminium C&P	70%
Steel C&P	30%

Important note

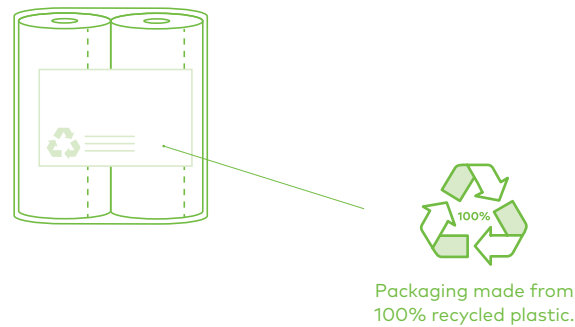
- ✗ C&P for which a credit for postconsumer recycled content was requested are not eligible.

Eligible initiatives

- ✓ New product
- ✓ Optimized packaging

Example

Film made from recycled plastic.



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Proof of the percentage and provenance of the recycled content (e.g., confirmation letter from the supplier)

Local purchasing practices

Québec's manufacturing industry offers many benefits: it supports local economies, fosters transport over short distances, better materials traceability across the value chain and compliance with the laws, regulations and standards of Québec and Canada.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the designated C&P put on the market by the company is made in Québec.

To be eligible:

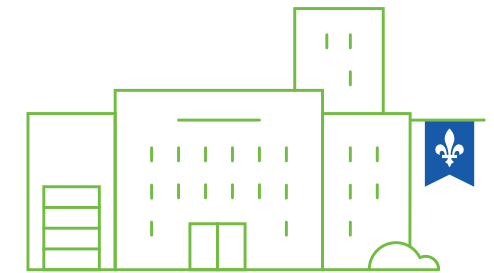
- The process to manufacture the C&P (including labelling, printing, etc.) **must take place** in Québec.

Eligible initiatives

- ✓ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

Packaging manufacturer located in Québec.



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Proof from the manufacturer that the manufacturing process takes place in Québec (e.g., confirmation letter from the manufacturer)

Recyclability

The recyclability of a container or packaging depends on several factors, including its capacity to be efficiently sorted and baled at sorting centres, the potential outlets for the materials from which it is made and the presence of problematic components (e.g., additives, inks, glues, labels, etc.) during conditioning and recycling.

Elimination of a component to shift towards mono-material

C&P made from a single material are simpler to recover and sort and avoids the contamination of the materials meant for conditioning and recycling.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when one or several components of the designated C&P made from a material that is not the main material were eliminated.

To be eligible:

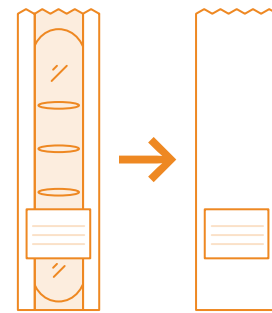
→ The elimination of one or more components **must not negatively impact** the essential functions of the C&P and must foster better recyclability (collection, sorting, conditioning, recycling).

Eligible initiatives

- ✗ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

Paper bag with a plastic window replaced by a bag without window.



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Image of the designated C&P before and after optimization

Elimination or substitution of a problematic material

Some materials are not recyclable or not commonly recycled locally or can disrupt the collection, sorting, conditioning or recycling processes. The materials often pose processing issues for sorting centres and/or market development.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company eliminated or substituted a material that impeded the recyclability of the designated C&P.

To be eligible:

→ The substitution **must not negatively impact** the essential functions of the packaging or transfer mass towards secondary or tertiary packaging.

Important note

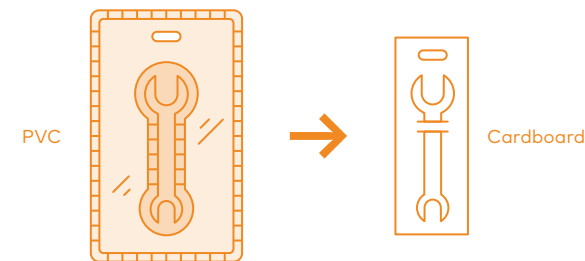
A material is deemed problematic when it is targeted by a malus by ÉEQ (e.g., PLA, PVC) or deemed problematic in an international recycling guide (e.g., **Golden Design Rules, APR Design® Guidance**).

Eligible initiatives

- ✗ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

PVC clamshell packaging replaced by a cardboard packaging.



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Image of the designated C&P before and after optimization
- Technical data sheet before and after optimization

Improved recyclability potential

The recyclability of C&P is not limited to the choice of a material that is accepted curbside. The shape, colour and additives of the dominant material and packaging components (e.g., label, glue, closures) can impact recyclability.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company improves the recyclability potential of the designated C&P through recognized and verifiable design optimization initiatives.

To be eligible:

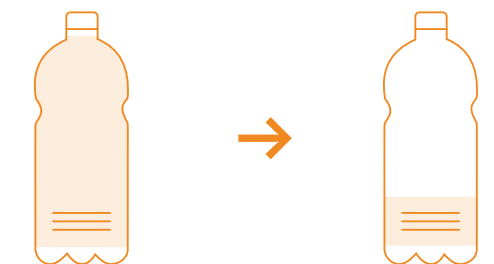
→ The optimization initiatives **must be based** on internationally-recognized guidelines (e.g., **Golden Design Rules, APR Design® Guidance**) and/or be verifiable through testing (e.g., repulpability, recyclability).

Eligible initiatives

- ✗ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

Change of size and material of a label on a bottle.



Full body sleeve not compatible for recycling.

Smaller label compatible for recycling and allowing the identification of the bottle in sorting centers.

Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Images of the C&P before and after optimization
- Narrative on the optimization in relation to the standard or guideline
- Field test and validation reports (if applicable)

Communication

Communication is a transversal action in any ecodesign initiative, since it promotes the commitments and actions stemming from the willingness to enhance the environmental performances of containers and packaging.

Self-declared environmental claims

A self-declared environmental claim is made by the manufacturer or any other advocating entity and which is not verified by an independent third party. Claims must be based on accurate, precise and verifiable data and be validated upon request.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company includes an exact, precise and verifiable self-declared environmental claim directly on the designated C&P or shares it through another means (e.g., webpage, advertisement, etc.).

To be eligible:

- The claim **must pertain** to the designated C&P.
- The self-declared claim **must be based** on the **communication guide** published by ÉEQ and comply with the principles of ISO 14021.

Important note

- ✗ Resin identification codes are not eligible.
- ✗ The Möbius loop with no further explanation is not eligible.

Eligible initiatives

- ✓ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

Description of the environmental benefits obtained from the ecodesign initiative.



"This new bag uses 9% less plastic than the original and generates 18% fewer greenhouse gas emissions."

Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Image or preview of the designated C&P or of the media in which the claim appears
- Proof to verify the self-declared claim

Environmental labels (recognized certification)

Environmental labels are established according to a recognized certification program. They indicate that specific requirements are met and that the claims are verified by an independent third party.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company has included an environmental label on the designated C&P or shares it through another means (e.g., webpage, advertisement, etc.).

To be eligible:

- The certification **must pertain** to the designated C&P.
- The environmental label **must be based** on a recognized certification program and verified by an independent third party.

Important note

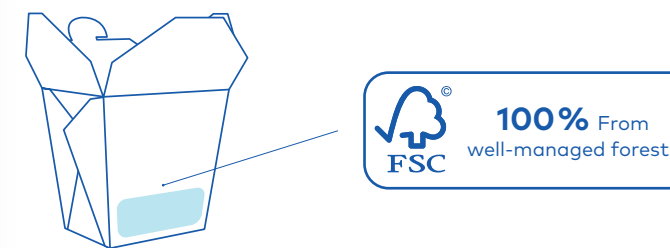
- ✗ C&P with at least one component made of PLA or any other degradable plastic are not eligible.

Eligible initiatives

- ✓ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

FSC certification mentioned on a fibre container.



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Image or preview of the designated C&P or of the media in which the certification appears
- Attestation document from the certification program including the date of validity

Sorting instructions

Sorting instructions provide information for consumers on how to manage each component of C&P at the end of its service life for efficient sorting. They may be in the form of a short text or clear pictograms.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company includes sorting instructions on the designated C&P.

To be eligible:

- The sorting instructions **must pertain** to all components of the designated C&P.
- The sorting instructions **must reflect** the reality of Québec's curbside recycling system.

Important note

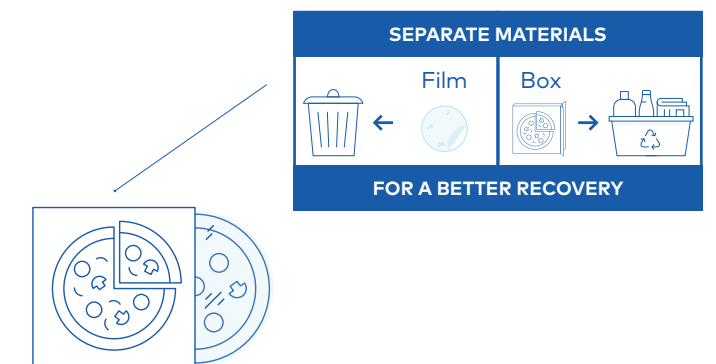
- ✗ Sorting instructions for recovery other than curbside recycling are not eligible (e.g., composting).
- ✗ Resin identification codes are not eligible.
- ✗ The Möbius loop with no further explanation is not eligible.

Eligible initiatives

- ✓ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Example

Use of pictograms and explanatory text to indicate how to sort the different materials.



Supporting documents

(to be submitted upon request)

- Image or preview of the designated C&P on which the sorting instruction appears

Conducting a case study

This additional bonus aims to reward companies that share their ecodesign initiative for designated C&P on the **Ecodesign Portal** through case studies. In addition to earning the additional bonus, companies that conduct a case study can share their experiences and contribute to the promotion of best practices.

Presenting a case study involves the transmission of additional data:

- For a new product, the case study will be descriptive, with a focus on the objective of the initiative, challenges, benefits and key actions.
- For an optimized packaging, the case study will be comparative (with the original C&P) and include a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions balance using the **OptimAction** tool.

OptimAction

OptimAction is a tool that calculates the net environmental benefits gained by improving the C&P based on various indicators (e.g., GHG emissions reductions, greater recycled content, higher recovery rate, fewer materials used, lower packaging/product ratio, transport optimization).

[Click here](#) to learn more about OptimAction's methodology.

Terms and eligibility criteria

The bonus applies when the company conducts a case study of the ecodesign initiative for designated C&P.

To be eligible:

- Companies must submit the data collection form within three months following the notice of eligibility of the bonus request.

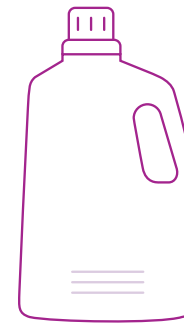
Eligible initiatives

- ✓ New product
- ✓ Packaging optimization

Supporting documents

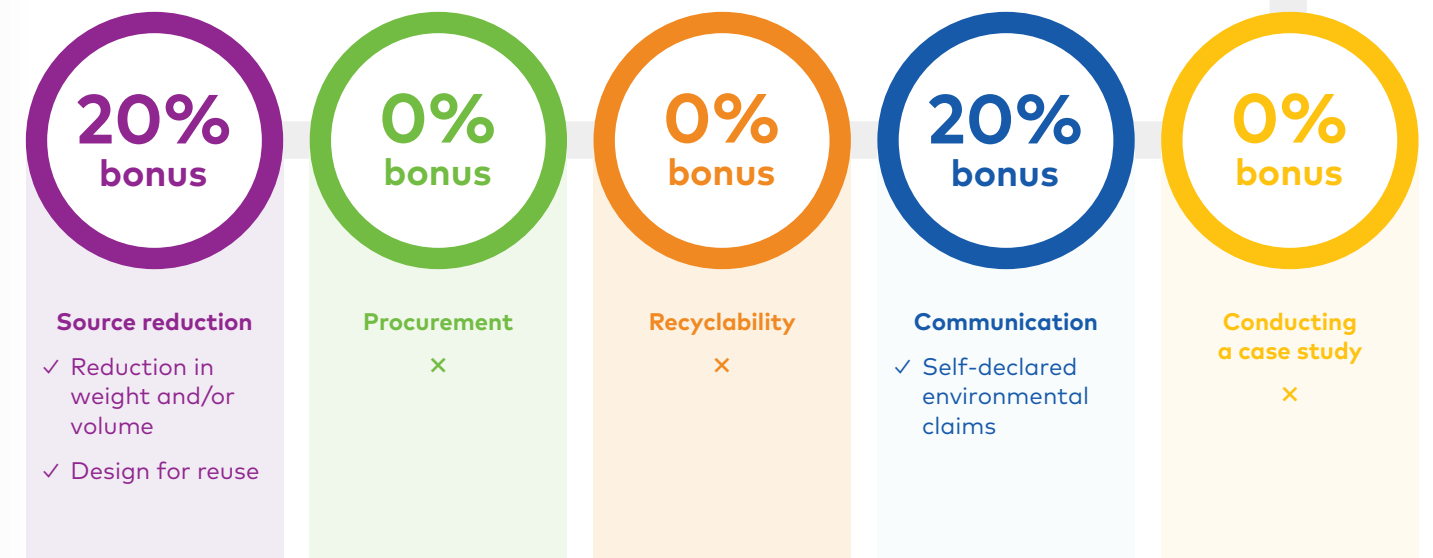
- OptimAction data collection form
- Qualitative data collection form

Fictitious case example: Detergent container.



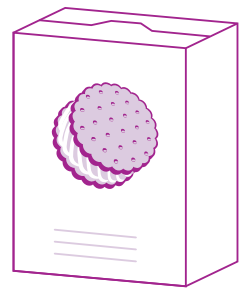
Ecodesign actions

- Reduced bottle weight
- Reusable packaging in filling stations
- Self-declared environmental claim on the container



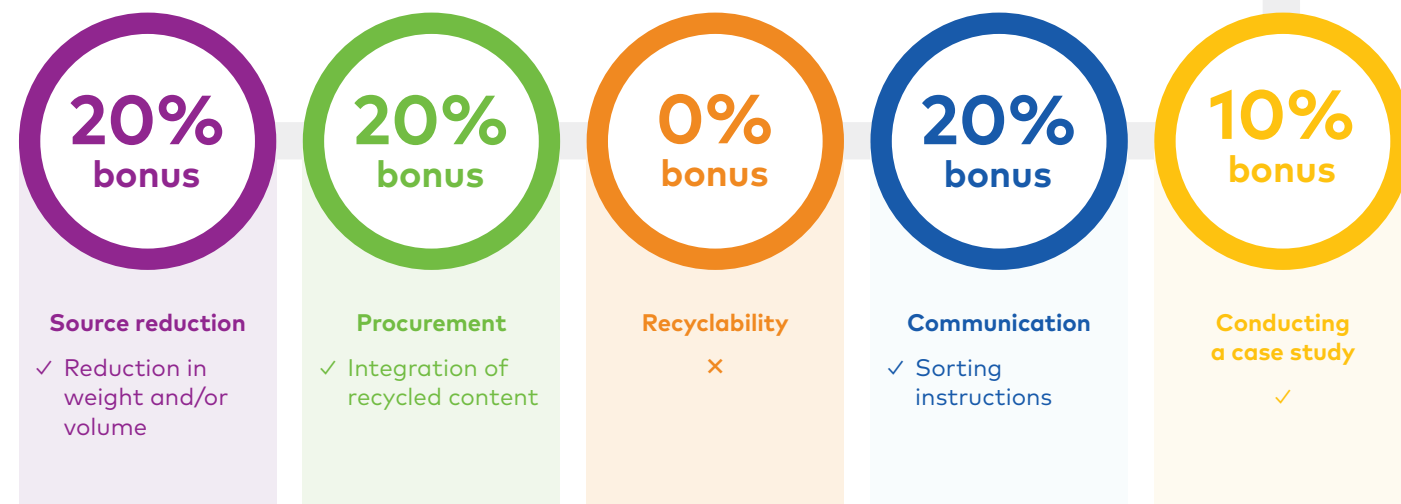
Fictitious case example:

Ice cream sandwich packaging.



Ecodesign actions

- Reduction of headspace
- Integration of recycled content
- Sorting instructions on the packaging
- Conducting a case study



Glossary

3RV

Hierarchy of actions for the sound management of residual materials: reduce, reuse, recycle and valorize.

Bonus

Credit on the payable contribution for designated materials to recognize good ecodesign practices and enhance collection, sorting, conditioning and recycling.

Deposit-return

Recovery method by which a sum of money collected upon the purchase of a product is refunded, in full or in part, to promote post-consumption recovery.

Eco-modulation of the Schedule of Contributions

Approach to modulate the contribution fee formula of an eco-organization through the addition of environmental criteria.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions balance

Estimation of greenhouse gas emissions before and after the process to optimize the container or packaging. The indicator is calculated based on the simplified life cycle assessment method and the ISO 14040/44 standard.

Headspace

The space inside a container or packaging that is not occupied by the product itself. The space may be empty or filled with cushioning material.

Malus

Penalty on the payable contribution for designated materials that do not have recycling streams or that are deemed disruptive to collection, sorting, conditioning, and recycling.

Packaging/product ratio

The ratio of the total weight of all components of a container or packaging in relation to the weight of the packaged product. The reduction of the packaging/product ratio is an indicator that the package has been optimized. However, the reduction in packaging mass should not compromise the protection of the packaged product.

Post-consumer recycled content

Materials that are generated by consumers, recovered through curbside recycling and reintroduced into a manufacturing process to give them a second service life.

Post-industrial recycled content

Materials originating from a production site that are diverted from the industrial waste stream and reintroduced into a manufacturing process.

Primary packaging

Primary packaging refers to the packaging item that contains the product being sold to the consumer, the one that they will be taking with them. This one is in direct contact with the product. Primary packaging may include several layers.

Problematic materials in curbside recycling

Material that is difficult to recycle, that is not widely recycled locally or that may be disruptive to collection, sorting, conditioning, and recycling.

Secondary packaging

Secondary packaging is a second level of packaging. It is used to hold together primary packaging items in order to facilitate handling in the store. It is the box that store employees open before placing the products on the shelves.

Mono-material

Container or packaging made of only one material.

Tertiary packaging

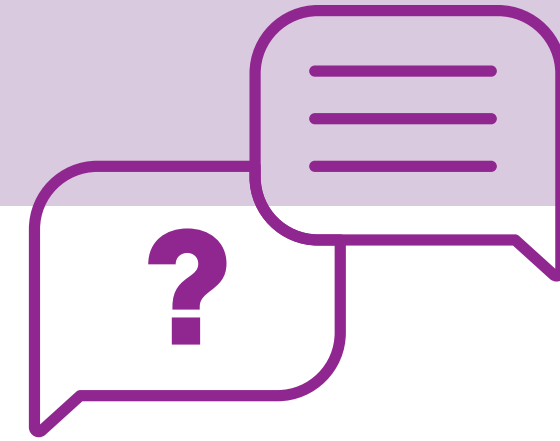
Tertiary packaging refers to the packaging material used for shipping and handling. It is important to take this into consideration, as it protects products during shipping and prevents losses and breakage that generate a heavier environmental impact.

Traceability

Capacity to track a material at every stage in the supply chain, from the source of raw materials to the manufacturing and distribution processes and end-of-life management.

References

- APR – The Association of Plastic Recyclers (2022). *APR Design® Guidance*. Online: <https://plasticsrecycling.org/apr-design-guide>
- CGF – The Consumer Goods Forum (2011). *Global Protocol on Packaging Sustainability 2.0*.
- CPP – Canada Plastics Pact (2022). *GDR Canadian Guidance*. Online: <https://goldendesignrules.plasticspact.ca/#gdresources>
- ÉEQ – Éco Entreprises Québec (2021). *Accurate communication: a useful reference guide about packaging ecodesign*. Online: <https://ecoconception.eeq.ca/en-ca/manage-my-project/tools>
- ÉEQ (2022). *OptimAction. Méthodologie*.
- FSC (2020). *FSC® Trademark Use Guide*.
- ISO – International Organization for Standardization (2016). *ISO 14021:2016 – Environmental labels and declarations – Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)*.
- RECYC-QUÉBEC (2022). *Lexique*.



Questions? Get in touch with us!

Consult the **frequently asked questions**, you will find your answers.

Your question is not there?

The **Ecodesign and Circular Economy** team is here to support you and can assist you in your bonus request.



From curbside recycling
to the circular economy:
Together for a sustainable world.

eeq.ca