

Hong Kong Green Label Scheme
Product Environmental Criteria for
Paper Envelope with Recycled Content (GL-001-002)



BACKGROUND

The Hong Kong Green Label Scheme (HKGLS) is an independent and voluntary scheme, which aims to identify products that are, based on life cycle analysis consideration, more environmentally preferable than other similar products with the same function. The Scheme is organized by the Green Council (GC) with contributions from the HKGLS Advisory Committee and a number of supporting organizations.

The prime objectives of HKGLS are:

- For Consumers: assist in making purchases of products that are less harmful to the environment;
- For Industry: stimulate development and production of environmentally preferable alternatives.

This specification sets out the requirements that papers envelope will be required to meet in order to be licensed to use the HKGLS label. The requirements include environmental criteria and product characteristics. The specification also defines the testing and other means to be used to verify conformance with the environmental criteria and product characteristics.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The use of waste paper for production of paper envelope with recycled content considerably reduces the amount of waste paper. Moreover, production of pulp results in significant burden on the environment. Process effluents can contain high concentrations of organic substances, which deplete oxygen from receiving waters. Chlorine-based and halogenated bleaches can accumulate and have toxic effects if discharged.

LABEL OBJECTIVE

The aim of the environmental criteria developed for paper envelope with recycled content is to:

- Promote the use of recycled paper as a means of conserving resources and reducing the amount of waste paper entering the waste stream.
- Reduce toxicity of process effluent generated from pulp production, minimize the environmental loading of the receiving water bodies.
- Minimizing waste production by reducing the amount of primary packaging and promoting its usability and/or recyclability.

PRODUCT DEFINITION

This document and all product environmental criteria therein apply to all paper envelopes with recycled contents.

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PRODUCT ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

The table below sets out the environmental criteria for the product category of Paper Envelope with recycled content (GL-001-002) under the HKGLS.

Criteria	Verification Method
1. The recycled paper shall contain at least 50% recycled fibre, including 20% post-consumer fibre.	C,D
2. The envelope shall not use water-insoluble glues.	B,C,D
3. The chemical oxygen demand (COD) in the water discharge from both pulp and paper production shall not exceed 20kg/tonne of paper produced.	C,D
4. The processing of waste papers shall be done without any dyestuff, optical brighteners and non – biodegradable complexing agents such as ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA).	C,D
5. The recycled paper input shall not be bleached during the recycling process with chlorine.	C,D
6. Where surfactants are used in the manufacturing process, such as for the de-inking of recycled paper input, these surfactants shall be readily biodegradable.	C,D
7. Solvents used in the cleaning of production equipment shall be free of halogenated hydrocarbons.	C,D
8. Packaging requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General packaging requirements (Refer to criteria for packaging materials: GL-Packaging) 	B,C,D

Legend:

A - Analytical testing shall be performed by laboratories that meet the requirement laid out in the EN45001 standards or any equivalent systems (e.g. HOKLAS, IEC/ISO 17025)

B – Inspection of product samples

C- Review of supporting information as required by the GC

D – Interviews with relevant personnel and/or site visits to relevant facilities