- Sourced, manufactured, transported and recycled using renewable energy;
- Able to maximise the use of renewable and recyclable resources;
- Manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices;
- Made from materials healthy in all probable end-of-life scenarios;
- Physically designed to optimise materials and energy;
- Effectively recovered and utilised in biological and/or industrial closed loop cycles.

Interestingly, most of these requirements are supply chain and SCM issues to a greater or lesser extent. For example, "sourced", "manufactured" and "transported" in point three refer respectively to the so-called "buy", "make" and "move" links in the supply chain. Point five has implications for the design and management of production links in all packaging supply chains. Points six and seven emphasise new product development (NPD) and design for manufacture (DFM) concepts, both of which are important dimensions in the design and management of packaging supply chains. Finally, there is both implicit and explicit reference throughout the definition on re-use and re-cycling issues: this has significant implications for the growing area of reverse logistics and the reverse supply chain.

A recent report by Pike Research estimated that sustainable packaging will represent about one third of the total global packaging market by 2014. This trend has significant implications in terms of the design and management of packaging supply chains. Embracing the philosophy of economic sustainability has the potential to be commercially and economically advantageous, thus building on the traditional sustainability-oriented role of SCM in the elimination of waste.

About the Author

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