

BACKGROUNDER

A CANADA-WIDE ACTION PLAN FOR EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

CCME Ministers are working toward substantial reductions in the amount of waste generated and sent to landfills by adopting the principle of extended producer responsibility (EPR) as a component of Canada's waste management strategy. EPR gives physical and/or financial responsibility for the life cycle of a product, including the post-consumer stage, to the producer. This approach provides incentives to producers to incorporate environmental considerations into the design of their products, and shifts the historical taxpayer responsibility for part of the waste stream to the individual brand owner, manufacturer or first importer.

Legislation and/or Regulations to Enable EPR

Canadian jurisdictions commit to working towards the development of EPR framework legislation and/or regulations to allow for action on the following identified priority products and materials.

EPR for Specific Product Categories

Phase 1

Jurisdictions commit to working towards managing the following products and materials in operational EPR programs within six (6) years of ministerial concurrence:

- Packaging
- Printed materials
- Mercury containing lamps
- Other mercury-containing products
- Electronics and electrical products
- Household hazardous and special wastes
- Automotive products

Existing product stewardship, non-EPR programs, will be reviewed within six (6) years of ministerial concurrence within the context of this Action Plan.

Jurisdictions will seek within two (2) years of the CAP's adoption to identify a more detailed phased implementation plan for the product categories and products listed in Phase 1.

Phase 2

Jurisdictions commit to working towards managing the following products and materials in operational EPR programs within eight (8) years of ministerial concurrence:

- Construction materials
- Demolition materials
- Furniture
- Textiles and carpet
- Appliances, including ozone-depleting substances (ODS)

- Jurisdictions will seek, within two (2) years of ministerial concurrence, to publish a detailed list of products to be managed through EPR programs for each of the above, Phase 2, product categories.

Territories

Given their unique circumstances of geography, population and infrastructure, it must be recognized that EPR may not be an appropriate instrument for all products or product categories in the northern Territories. EPR programs, stewardship programs or a variety of supporting measures may therefore be necessary to achieve the desired outcomes across all product categories.

Within six (6) years of ministerial concurrence Territorial jurisdictions will review their progress toward the development of EPR frameworks for all product categories and provide an update to CCME which will include a determination of whether EPR will be pursued for each of the remaining Phase 1 and Phase 2 categories.

Harmonization of EPR Programs

To promote harmonization across Canada, EPR programs will follow these principles:

- Encourage producers to design products to minimize impacts to the environment and human health.
- Transfer end-of-life responsibility for waste product or materials to producers and importers from municipalities and other waste management authorities.
- Give governments the responsibility for setting performance targets, creating a level playing field for producers and importers, and ensuring the public has free and open access.
- Give producers and importers the responsibility for program design, operation and funding.

Tracking Performance

The key performance measure for the Action Plan will be the number of operational EPR programs and product categories in place by the commitment target dates. Progress in implementing EPR programs for Phase 1 and Phase 2 product categories will be reported annually through CCME.

Key performance indicators to measure the performance of the product and material EPR programs will include:

- kilograms per capita captured or recovered,
- dollars per kilogram captured or recovered,
- per cent of waste captured, per cent of waste recovered,
- per cent diverted, and,
- avoided greenhouse gas emissions.

Performance indicators may be adjusted to recognize the unique circumstances of particular products and product categories.

Supportive Policies and Regulations

In a complex and competitive national and global business market signals to producers from a relatively small market like Canada may not be strong enough alone to influence new environmentally conscious product design and supply chain management. The environmental objectives of EPR may therefore need to be supported and reinforced by other measures, such as: eco-labelling; restrictions on toxic substances; recycled content standards and regulations; green procurement policies; environmental performance/voluntary agreements and a variety of other potential standards, bans, guidelines and educational tools.