

France - Recycling Triman Mark (new)

"Draft Decree on a common set of symbols informing the consumer about recyclable products subject to a system of extended producer responsibility associated with waste sorting instructions" (new)

The decree will require exporters of household packaging, graphic papers, textiles, electric and electronic equipment, furnishings, etc. associated with waste sorting instructions to place a "Triman" logo on their products to inform the consumer about recyclable products.

Although members share France's objective to increase producer responsibility over recyclable products, the United States, New Zealand and Canada say the cost of implementation is disproportionately high compared to the objective, and will be burdensome especially for small and medium-sized enterprises. They asked France to provide details on the size and placement of the logo and highlighted the risk of overwhelming the consumer with information on the package since existing green recycling logos have so far been used effectively. There is also a risk of undermining the environmental objective with increased packaging size and of fragmenting the recycling schemes in the European Union, members said. They urged France to consider less trade-restrictive measures such as developing a consumer education program to foster long term habits of citizens.

The European Union (which speaks on behalf of its member States) said this provision aims to simplify waste sorting activities. It is based on a 2010 study by the French Agency for Environment and Energy Management that highlighted the need for harmonized symbols to improve consumer understanding, the European Union explained. The producer will be required to place the mark before the product enters the market but - if facing difficulties - the producer would be allowed to place it on an attached sheet or packaging. The European Union noted that the draft measure includes a mutual recognition clause among EU member States that would facilitate recognition of each other's symbols.