

Stationery

- Ethical Procurement
- Environmental Relief Potential

Issues

- The scope of 'stationery' should include paper based consumables (writing, printing, copying, notepads, folder inserts etc), toner cartridges and ink, writing implements and general office accessories
- Stationery suppliers will typically have vast supply chains, and will acquire products from many sources; the challenge for the end consumer is to try as much as possible to ensure that the products we ultimately use are sourced ethically, and provide environmental relief in their manufacture
- Stationery supply is a highly competitive market, technologies are converging and environmental performance in manufacture or supply is being seen as a differentiation factor
- Our purchases need to consider how the supply is sourced, as well as how to minimise impacts from use and disposal of product

Considerations

1. Identify Requirement

- Consider the specifications of the stationery and consumables used in your office against the criteria stated in the UNEP procurement guidelines (below). These are classified into four criteria, being:
 - paper and paper based consumables;
 - toner, inks and printer cartridges;
 - writing implements

2. Plan

- Consider how you want to decide on a stationery supplier. The UNEP guidelines provide a checklist with a scoring mechanism, but ultimately, it may be more of a commercial decision for your firm, which may be based on price or relationship, however you should always consider the environmental and ethical sourcing issues before you reach a final decision.

3. Select

- Selection of a stationery supplier should be made after you have satisfied their ability conform to the majority of the issues identified by the UNEP procurement guidelines.
- It will be very difficult to prove to yourself that the supplier does meet this conformity and it is unlikely that you will have the resources to perform independent auditing yourself. In

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this instance you should seek assurance from the supplier (as a minimum in the form of a self-assessment) in the following areas:

- that production of the 'product' conforms to international labour standards and where possible this is independently verified;
- that the supplier has a written corporate environment policy;
- that the supplier has an environmental management system in place;
- that the supplier recognises the environmental impact of their freight and has a program in place to mitigate the CO₂ through transportation of products;
- that the supplier has a return and disposal program (for items such as toner or ink cartridges and perhaps packaging).

Further Information

UNEP 'Sustainable procurement guidelines for office stationery' - Product Sheet

<http://www.pnuma.org/industria/esp/documentos/compras%20sustentables/UNEP%20Purchasing%20criteria%20-%20Stationery%20-%20Product%20Sheet.pdf>