

About COMPASS®

COMPASS (Comparative Packaging Assessment) is a design-phase web application that provides comparative environmental profiles of packaging alternatives based on life cycle assessment metrics and design attributes. COMPASS helps packaging designers make more informed material selections and design decisions early in the development process.

COMPASS assesses packages on:

Consumption Metrics

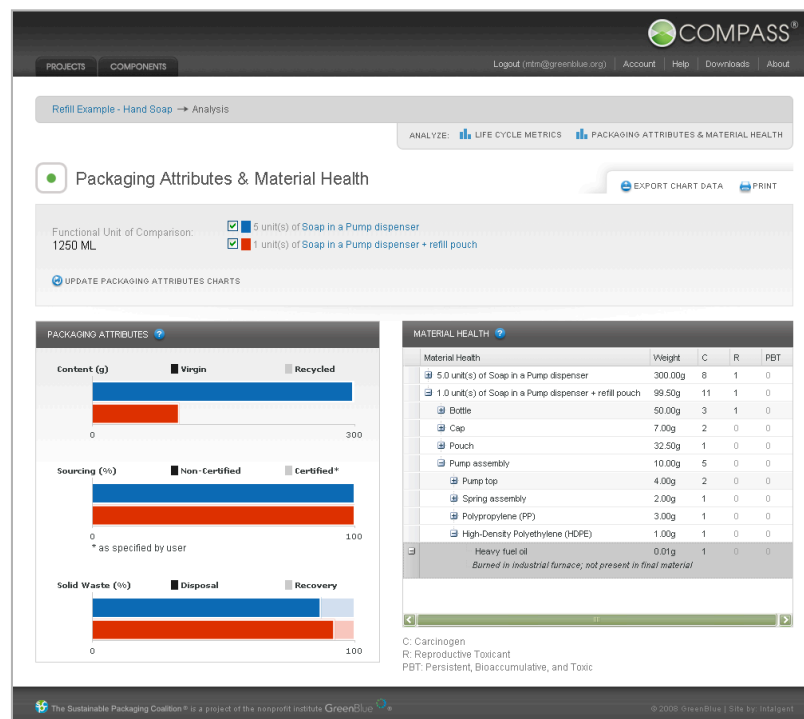
- Fossil Fuel
- Water
- Biotic Resource
- Mineral

Emission Metrics

- Greenhouse Gas
- Human Impacts
- Aquatic Toxicity
- Eutrophication

Packaging Attributes

- Content (Recycled or Virgin)
- Sourcing
- Solid Waste
- Material Health



COMPASS was developed by the Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC), a project of the nonprofit sustainability institute GreenBlue, and partly funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The SPC is an industry working group with over 200 member companies from across the packaging supply chain.

COMPASS Users

Since its launch in March 2009, over 80 companies have subscribed to COMPASS and are using it to guide their packaging development globally. This includes Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, UPS, and academic institutions Michigan State University and the Rochester Institute of Technology, which are using COMPASS in their packaging curriculum.

Praise for COMPASS

“We have integrated COMPASS into our portfolio of sustainable packaging design tools. COMPASS is the latest way to empower our engineers to create more sustainable designs. With its low-cost, user friendly interface, and immediate, LCA-like feedback, this tool provides a perspective that was inaccessible before. We see COMPASS as a key, first step to integrating life cycle thinking into our packaging early in the design process.”

Joe Keller, Packaging Sustainability – Section Head, Procter & Gamble

Omonigho Idris, Researcher – Product Safety and Regulatory Affairs, Procter & Gamble

“COMPASS is utilized in graduate and undergraduate courses at the Packaging Science Program at RIT. One of the goals of the program is to enhance the educational aspects of sustainable packaging innovation through the use of applied tools. The SPC’s COMPASS is a key tool that is used to facilitate this goal. Most recently, COMPASS was used in the design of an award winning student entry of sustainable packaging design for the American Packaging Corporation Challenge 2010.”

Professor Karen Proctor, Rochester Institute of Technology, Packaging Science Program

"In developing our Eco Responsible Packaging Program, UPS evaluated several tools for calculating life cycle metrics. We decided on COMPASS, due to its breadth of information and our confidence that the Sustainable Packaging Coalition would be committed to keeping this tool updated with the best-available information. COMPASS is now an integral part of our Eco Responsible Packaging Program. It provides many of the metrics we use as we evaluate our customers' choices of packaging materials and determine eligibility for our program. We value our relationship with the SPC and welcome the release of v2.0, the next step in the development of the COMPASS tool."

Arnold Barlow, Manager of Sustainability Solutions, UPS

“We use COMPASS to teach graduate and undergraduate students to evaluate the environmental footprint of packaging systems. The use of COMPASS allows the students not only to evaluate and select the packaging system (primary, secondary and packaging system) with the lower environmental footprint, but also helps them to think in terms of life cycle indicators such as greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy. This type of thinking is needed for our students to design sustainable packaging systems.”

Susan Selke, PhD – Professor, Michigan State University

Rafael Auras, PhD – Assistant Professor, Michigan State University

“Use of the COMPASS tool provides data driven information on the life cycle impacts of packaging scenarios that help inform sustainable packaging decisions for implementation to help lessen our environmental footprint. The COMPASS tool was selected because it is easy to use and has the flexibility to compare what-if packaging scenarios during the design phase of projects or on benchmarking activities for marketed products to help drive continual environmental improvements with our packaging.”

Johnson & Johnson