

WHAT THE 2022 CONSUMER TRENDS MEAN FOR PACKAGING

Mintel's packaging experts explore how the 2022 Consumer Trends will impact global CPG packaging in the coming years.



Benjamin Punchard, Global Packaging Director



Table of Contents

IN CONTROL	5
ETHICS CHECK	13
CLIMATE COMPLEXITY	21

Mintel recommends

Educate and empower consumers to be 'In Control'

In times of uncertainty, consumers crave a sense of agency over their lives, according to the Mintel 2022 Global Consumer Trend [In Control](#).

Packaging can provide a route to transparent information, enabling consumers to feel confident in their responsible packaging choices.

Provide clear metrics to enable an 'Ethics Check'

While many brands have made their voices heard on controversial topics, consumers want to see measurable progress, according to the Mintel 2022 Global Consumer Trend [Ethics Check](#).

Packaging today paints a picture of a brand's equity. Attention to ethical and eco-responsible practices will help ensure that picture remains favourable.

Help consumers decipher 'Climate Complexity'

Concern about the climate crisis is driving consumers to look for help and guidance to shrink their carbon footprint, according to the Mintel 2022 Global Consumer Trend [Climate Complexity](#).

Clear and comparable carbon measures printed on pack will demonstrate to consumers a commitment to monitoring and reduction.



An in-depth expert analysis of how consumer trends will play out in global CPG packaging

Consumers are emerging from the pandemic, economic fluctuations and local and global events of 2020-21 with new behaviours, attitudes and values. Mintel's 2022 Global Consumer Trends recognise these recent consumer shifts, as evidenced by Mintel's consumer data and Trends observations of key consumer behaviour drivers.

As such, Mintel's 2022 Global Consumer Trends provide a strong foundation for Mintel's predictions for what consumers will want and why from CPG packaging in the coming years.

Here, Mintel's global packaging experts will expand upon the 2022 Trends that are most relevant, predicting their potential to drive packaging innovation now and in the future.

Meet the Global Packaging team

The following applications of Mintel's 2022 Global Consumer Trends were identified by Mintel's expert packaging analysts.

- David Luttenberger, [Global Packaging Director](#)
- Benjamin Punchard, [Global Packaging Insights Director](#)

While technological developments are driving change, consumers best understand sustainability from the context of value

Value to the consumer

Consumers are increasingly looking to make environmentally responsible choices.

Brands should provide clear and understandable measures of the environmental impact of both the product and packaging. By seeing a measurable positive outcome, consumers can feel rewarded for their actions and purchase decisions.

Value to the industry

Consumers want to see measurable progress from brands' environmental goals.

Brands should work in harmony with package manufacturers to provide clear on-pack information that highlights environmentally responsible actions, providing transparency of action and showing leadership in environmental initiatives.

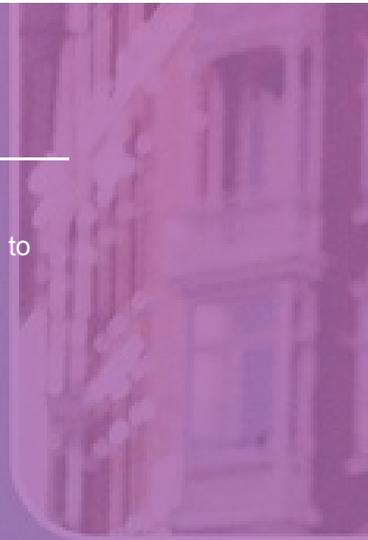
Value to the planet

While it's extremely unlikely that we will see any reduction in atmospheric carbon dioxide in our lifetimes, what we can hope to see is a minimising of our emissions.

Companies and brands must recognise that responding to this challenge will come at a financial cost, forcing a reconsideration in the value and meaning of 'growth'.

IN CONTROL

In times of uncertainty, consumers crave a sense of agency over their lives. Packaging can provide a route to transparent information, enabling consumers to feel confident in their responsible packaging choices.





Rights, Wellbeing and Value

Mintel Trend Drivers are a framework for capturing consumer motivations. *In Control* brings together the key Drivers of **Rights**, **Wellbeing** and **Value**, and show how **Empowerment** and **Protection** are pushing consumers to demand more power over their own lives. By understanding these motivations, brands can change their offerings to focus on flexibility, providing solutions that meet the needs of the individual.

HOPE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

65%

of **Canadians** agree **their behaviour** can make a **positive difference** to the environment

Value to the consumer

Consumers, experiencing the environmental impact of their actions, are increasingly looking to make **environmentally responsible choices*** that address concerns such as **plastic pollution** and **climate change**.

Brands should aim to provide clear on-pack information that highlights understandable measures of the environmental impact of both the product and packaging. This way, seeing a measurable positive outcome, consumers can feel rewarded for their actions and purchase decisions.

Such measures should be supported through actionable information that informs environmentally friendly packaging choices and directs consumers towards environmentally responsible packaging disposal. They should not only respond to consumers' feelings of being responsible for the environment but also arm them with the information they need to act.

** taken from Mintel's 35-market consumer research study, August 2021*

Base: Canada: 500 internet users aged 18+

Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel – Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

EASE OF UNDERSTANDING

54%

of **Chinese consumers** say labelling that **measures environmental impact** using **understandable quantifiers** would encourage them to buy

Consumers seek the information they need to make responsible packaging choices

In these times of uncertainty triggered by the global pandemic, consumers suffer increased feelings of precariousness and financial insecurity. According to Mintel's 2022 Global Consumer Trend *In Control*, this creates in consumers the need to find a sense of control. Growing awareness of misinformation circulating online is feeding an environment of mistrust, making it harder for consumers to make informed decisions.

Brands can deliver the information consumers need to feel like they are in the driver's seat as well as the flexibility and options for them to make decisions that suit both their individual changing needs and their wider environmental concerns. As environmental awareness turns into responsible actions, consumers will look to be in control with clear on-pack information that meets their environmental values and informs them of responsible pack disposal actions.

Base: China: 500 internet users aged 18+

Source: KuRunData/Mintel – Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

NOW: misleading recycling information causes consumer frustration and could drive inactivity

Amid confusion over what can and what can't be recycled, over **half of consumers in the UK*** think brands should make it easier to recycle their packaging.

As such, on-pack material and recycling information should be simple, clear and actionable.

For example, despite plastics labelled as '7' (other) not being collected for recycling in the UK, Darkwoods Coffee asks consumers to 'please recycle'.



Darkwoods Coffee Driftwood Caramel, Almonds & Stone Fruit Ground Coffee



Bottom-of-pack message

* taken from Mintel's 35-market consumer research study, December 2019

NOW: simple messages focused on a single metric can hide the truth about the complexity of delivering sustainable packaging

Clarity and transparency of on-pack eco claims can be driven by legislation or through support such as the US Federal Trade Commission's [Green Guides](#).

Bare necessities

Bear Naked. [How2Recycle](#) recently rescinded its approval for the brand to use the H2R logo, as it believed the 'Recycle Ready' language that accompanied it conveyed contradictory and confusing instructions to consumers (US).



To PET or not to PET?

Schaebens Aloe Vera Drink touts its PET bottle as 'plastic neutral'. The claim means it pays to offset its plastic use but can continue to produce and/or use plastic at the same rate – a nuance that is lost on consumers (Germany).

Bullish on global sourcing

Bulldog. The carbon footprint of a **bamboo-handled razor** with components sourced from around the world belies the generic 'recyclable' message and chasing arrows symbol (US).



NOW: educate, incentivise and organise consumers to tackle packaging waste

Educate consumers through on-pack communication and marketing activities. Create initiatives for consumers to actively participate and contribute towards sustainability.

LACK OF INFORMATION

36%

of **Indians** strongly agree that there is very little information available on how to reduce packaging waste

NEED FOR AWARENESS

52%

of **Germans** think there isn't enough information on how to correctly dispose of compostable food packaging

DRIVING PURCHASE

36%

of **US consumers** have selected a product because it had more environmentally responsible packaging than a competitor

Base: India: 3,000 internet users aged 18+; Germany: 2,000 internet users aged 16+; US: 1,916 internet users aged 18+ who are responsible for food/beverage shopping

Source: Ipsos Observer/Mintel, September 2020; Kantar Profiles/Mintel, December 2020, March 2021

NOW: recycling labels and communication guidance get updated



UK's EPR scheme slated for a major overhaul

The UK's [Extended Producer Responsibility scheme](#) will undergo a major rewrite in 2022.

The goal is to provide a simple 'recycle' or 'don't recycle' label on every package, with the hope of reducing confusion and increasing recycling rates.

Recycling label combines show and-tell messaging

The [Australasian Recycling Label Program](#) is an on-pack labelling scheme that helps consumers to recycle correctly.

Using a combination of illustrations and messaging, the [label](#) provides clear and actionable instructions.



NEXT: consumers seek out tools that enable them to measure their environmental impact and change their behaviour

For many consumers, understanding the impact of their consumption choices is the first step towards making positive changes. This space is increasingly being filled with apps that simplify measurement and give directional feedback.

For example, consumers can now log their plastic footprint with [My Plastic Diary](#) or use [My Little Plastic Footprint](#) to track plastic usage and suggest sustainable alternatives.

Similarly, the [Conservation International](#) calculator, designed for US residents, enables the calculation of a carbon footprint.

Consumers will demand a [clear rating system printed on food packaging](#) that shows the product's environmental responsibility and provides the comparable metrics to enable them to make clear and direct product comparisons.

NEXT: enable accountable responsibility through tracking and positive feedback

An [early-stage start-up called Siklus](#) (Cycle) challenges retail's longstanding formula of eye-catching packaging and throwaway sachets with their on-demand refillable model.

Siklus works by delivering sachet-free personal care and home cleaning products to the customer's doorstep, where they can use their own containers to refill the products as much as they want. Products offered include shampoo, liquid soap, cooking oil, detergent and dishwashing soap.

NEXT: ensure responsible disposal actions are incentivised

The greatest barrier to responsible packaging disposal is inconvenience/apathy; hence, innovations to reduce inconvenience/confusion are likely to have a significant impact.



Financial incentive

In 2022, Slovakia became the first country within Central Europe to adopt a [deposit return scheme for plastic bottles](#).

However, in the UK a second consultation on a deposit return scheme looks to push implementation until [2024 at the earliest](#).

Ethical incentive

[Taboocha Kombucha](#) retails in a [returnable bottle](#). The label states that 'We donate \$1 for every bottle returned to a dog charity', providing an ethical incentive to return the bottle (Hong Kong).



Convenience incentive

Consumers seek easy/convenient responsible packaging solutions. [Reverie Shampoo](#) states that all of its packaging materials are directly printed with ink instead of using applied labels for ease of recycling (France).

NEXT: apps will allow responsible consumers to earn rewards and share their actions online

Beyond providing a personal feeling of achievement, brands will enable the sharing of goals and achievements within consumer social groups.

In the US, refillable glass bottle marketplace start-up Conscious Container has launched [Refill My Beer](#). The three-month pilot plans to distribute and collect 16,000 specially labelled bottles of Michelob ULTRA Pure Gold and Elysian Space Dust IPA.

The launch is supported with an app created by [Globelet](#) that consumers can find by scanning a QR code located on bottle-neck tags and Conscious Container return bins. The app allows users to earn rewards in exchange for tracking and **share how much trash they are preventing from entering landfill and oceans.**

Source: [Waste 360](#)

Brands can leverage the power of social media to recognise and validate consumer actions.

- Linking to consumers' existing social media accounts lets them 'virtue signal' to their peers, enabling the self-recognition of responsible actions.
- Online tracking can build consumers' sense of achievement as they return more bottles. Such tracking can provide the continual reinforcement of return behaviour and act as the basis for reward schemes.
- Online activity can be controlled, for example through a dedicated app specific to a brand or a returnable system, or simply supported, such as through a hashtag provided by the brand.

MY RESPONSIBILITY

65%

of [Canadians](#) believe that their behaviour can make a positive difference to the environment

FUTURE: consumers will consider the environmental impact of their product choices before purchase

Consumers will be asking about the impact of a product or service before they commit to purchase. Brands, retailers and companies will need to satisfy shoppers with efficient resource use in manufacturing, the use of a responsible supply chain and the disposal of both product and packaging without any negative environmental impact.

At the same time, technology will grant consumers control over even the smallest aspects of their lives. This will help them to create lives built around their needs and desires and decipher what's best among the plethora of products and services available.

Packaging will need to connect to the smart online spaces that brands will use to communicate their responsible claims and consumers will use to collaborate on sharing and analysing product information.

Base: Canada: 500 internet users aged 18+

Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel – Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

ETHICS CHECK

While many retailers, brands and package manufacturers have made their voices heard on controversial topics related to diversity, inclusion and equity, consumers want to see measurable progress towards responsibility regarding the environment.





Rights and Surroundings

Mintel's Trend Drivers track seven fundamental themes that influence consumer choice and change. These drivers (*Wellbeing, Experiences, Rights, Technology, Identity, Value and Surroundings*) and their underlying pillars can help explain the key behavioural changes likely to impact consumers in the years ahead. *Ethics Check* sits at the intersection of the **Rights** and **Surroundings** Trend Drivers. Within those Drivers, we are seeing how **Ethics, Equality, Sustainability, Empowerment** and **Protection** needs are coming to the fore. Responding to consumers' intrinsic needs, this Trend shows how brands can demonstrate their progress towards ethical goals to earn the trust of consumers who are increasingly scrutinising ethical practices.

IN GERMANY

55%

of consumers aged 35-44 don't trust companies to be honest about their environmental impact

Value to the industry

It is time for brands' ethical progress reports. While many brands have made their voices heard on controversial topics, consumers want to see measurable progress from their goals.

To deliver maximum value, brands should work in harmony with package manufacturers to provide clear on-pack information that highlights the responsible actions being taken to address environmental concerns. This way, brands provide transparency of action, showing leadership in environmental initiatives.

Such measures can benefit the brand by building its story and communicating 'premium' through a holistic responsibility narrative. However, in addition to spotlighting the achievements and strengths, businesses have to be transparent about their weaknesses, where and why they fall down, and how they plan to address these issues in the future.

Base: Germany: 500 internet users aged 16+

Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel – Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

“

We need to bring the public with us, but we need to first understand where they are in their views.

Paul Vanston, CEO, [INCPEN](#)

”

As ethical claims fragment, consumers seek the detail needed for understanding and persuasion

Consumers are less trusting – of companies, governments and institutions – and are sceptical when it comes to taking brands' word when they say they're doing the right thing. Those same organisations must prove to consumers that ethics are a core part of the way they do business in order to earn their trust now and going forward.

With growing concerns about a range of issues, from product safety to the ethical sourcing of packaging materials to recycling and carbon emissions, consumers want to know more about the products they buy and their packaging and the brands they're buying from.

In addition to spotlighting the achievements and strengths, businesses have to be transparent about their weaknesses, where and why they fall short, and how they plan to address these issues in the future.

The juxtaposition of governments, packaging and the environment

Though driven by a desire to create positive change, ill thought out legislation could force brands and packaging manufacturers to adopt non-optimal solutions. Governments must ensure that legislation aimed at protecting the environment is not based on consumer misperception or pressure brought to bear by those same consumers/constituents. Efforts to address plastic pollution, climate change and resource use must follow from evidence-based scientific studies.

Despite the wheels of consensus and harmonisation turning slowly within the industry and NGOs, governments are stepping up their efforts to listen. Before creating new laws, or amending existing legislation, governments must engage in open dialogue with the industry. Consideration must be given to both current and emergent/future technologies, and the limitations and opportunities that this places on the ability for brands, package manufacturers and consumers to take positive action.

NOW: Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) reporting is moving from optional to mandatory

Sustainability reporting is becoming so prevalent that companies not reporting will find themselves seriously out of step with global norms and falling out of consumer favour.

NEED FOR TRUSTABILITY

51%

of **people surveyed** in 27 markets trust corporate sustainability reporting

INCREASED REPORTING

80%

of **companies worldwide** report on sustainability in some form

CONSUMERS RESPOND

24%

of **US consumers*** are prepared to boycott companies who behave unethically

** taken from Mintel's 35-market consumer research study*

Base: 1,000 internet users aged 18+

Source: *GRI GlobalScan; KPMG; Kantar Profiles/Mintel, July 2020*

NOW: recognise the threat of misunderstood actions being seen as greenwashing

The Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) is a non-profit that aims to 'end plastic waste' by spending US\$1.5 billion on cleaning up plastic waste in developing countries. However, backed by oil and chemical companies including Shell, ExxonMobil and Dow, AEPW has argued against bans and other means of reducing plastic production. This has led to claims that the group is no more than a [plastic industry lobby group](#).

Packaging companies and brands are seen as the *source* of the plastic that can potentially pollute. Consumers increasingly expect responsible solutions to address production as well as clean-up.

NOW: consumers tell their truth about trust and responsibility

Consumers have high expectations of companies when it comes to ethical behaviour.

BRAZIL

33%

of consumers don't trust companies to be honest about their environmental impact

US

47%

of consumers believe companies are responsible for increasing the amount of packaging that is recycled

UK

42%

of consumers believe companies can do more than governments to change the world

Base: Brazil, UK: 500 internet users aged 16+; US: 500 internet users aged 18+

Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel - Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

GLOBALLY

96%

of the world's 250 largest companies report on their sustainability performance

NOW: manufacturers heeding the call to report

Pressure on manufacturers to report their actions and progress towards ESG goals has them increasingly turning to the [Global Reporting Initiative](#) in an effort to increase transparency on their contribution to sustainable development.

The Standards, which were [revised in 2021](#), are designed as modules (Universal, Sector, Topic) that deliver an inclusive picture of an organisation's material topics, their related impacts and how they are managed. **Packaging and containers** fall within Group 3 of the [Sector Standards](#), which are specifically written to help initiate and drive decision-making and sustain actions that continuously improve the ESG initiatives and impacts of organisations, while enhancing their contribution to sustainable development.

Base: sample comprises the top 250 companies from the Fortune Global 500 ranking for 2019

Source: KPMG Survey of Sustainability Reporting 2020

NOW: Wall Street is watching, and rewarding, firms' sustainability reporting

The [Dow Jones Sustainability™ World Index](#) (DJSI) is a global index widely regarded as one of the world's foremost sustainability indices. The Index benchmarks the sustainability performance of companies based on environmental, social and economic performance, including forward-looking indicators.

Globally, 57 container and packaging manufacturers from 23 countries are listed on the Index.

Academics from [HEC Paris](#) researched the value of being included in the DJSI. The research concluded that listing within the DJSI 'attracts more attention from financial analysts' and 'leads to an increase in the percentage of shares held by long-term investors who are paying more attention to CSR-visible firms over time'.

As reported by BSRF, 78% of analysts take ESG performance into consideration for investment decisions, according to the [CFA Institute](#).

“

Listing in the DJSI is a “badge of honor” that gives an important message to the markets that will appreciate the company more. This [badge] can attract top talent whose expectations include a sense of corporate responsibility, benefitting the performance of the company in the long run.

— [Bocconi Students for Responsible Finance](#)

”

NOW: brands and retailers experiment with simple logos to convey complex environmental measures

[Lidl GB](#) is trialling an [Eco-Score](#) label with the hopes that it will empower shoppers to make more sustainable decisions quickly and easily.

The Eco-Score is a five-level product label that shows information about the sustainability of products and packaging at a glance.

The label classifies the environmental impact of the product, from a dark green 'A' for the lowest environmental impact to a red 'E' for the highest.

Along with ingredients and eco certifications, packaging criteria such as production and recyclability are taken into consideration when calculating the overall Eco-Score.

Within the UK, [46% of consumers](#) say an understanding of how their purchases impact the environment would encourage them to buy a product or service.

NEXT: be ready for consumers to expect claims to cover every aspect of packaging and product

Responsible packaging claims do not always cover all packaging material. This is particularly the case in beauty and personal care where '100% recyclable' claims address a board carton but ignore the plastic tube within. Such claims will increasingly be challenged.

For example, recipe box company [Gousto](#) has been told by the UK [Advertising Standards Authority](#) (ASA) that its [claims](#) that a new Eco Chill Box is '100% plastic-free' and '100% recyclable' were misleading. The packaging includes an ice pack made from LDPE, which is not widely recycled within the UK. While the company argued that the claim only referred to the board box, the ASA ruled that consumers would interpret references to the Eco Chill Box to refer to the box as a whole, including all of its components.



[Yeo Valley](#)'s QR codes explain sustainability strategy and add rewards

NEXT: go beyond printed information, communicating commitment with connected packaging

Brands should take advantage of the [renewed momentum for connected packaging](#) to incentivise consumers to use smart labels and find out more about products' carbon footprint.

[Yeo Valley](#) is using QR codes to educate on their sustainability strategy but also to reward consumers for scanning codes with discounts.

IN THE UK

47%

of **consumers** agree that beauty products with an ethical certification are more trustworthy than those without one

FUTURE: brands will need to be proactive in calling out comparable measures

Consumers and legislators will demand that brands work in concert with package manufacturers to simplify communication about their eco footprint. Such simplification means succinct, easily quantified measures that consumers can understand.

While **sustainability** has become an all-encompassing concept to which consumers have difficulty relating, carbon footprinting and on-pack messaging that clarify reductions of green house gas emissions in bite-size, quantifiable measures are gaining traction and could become the de-facto sustainability measuring stick.

Commitments made within the **Ellen MacArthur Foundation** by brands and package manufacturers to reduce fossil-fuel-based packaging, increase package recycling and explore compostables and renewables have made huge headlines. As the deadlines for these commitments come near, consumers will punish those who miss their targets.

Base: UK: 2,000 internet users aged 16+

Source: Kantar Profiles/Mintel, March 2021

CLIMATE COMPLEXITY

Concern about the climate crisis is driving consumers to look for help and guidance to shrink their carbon footprint. Clear and comparable carbon measures printed on pack will demonstrate to consumers a commitment to monitoring and reduction.





Surroundings, Rights and Value

Mintel Trend Drivers are a framework for capturing consumer motivations. Climate Complexity is underpinned by key Drivers **Surroundings, Rights** and **Value**, with a particular focus on pillars **Sustainability, Ethics, Empowerment** and **Convenience**. By understanding how these motivations combine to influence consumer behaviour, brands can help consumers incorporate carbon reduction into their daily lives and provide them with a sense of agency in the face of this growing crisis.

TAKE ACTION

76%

of **Japanese adults** agree that it's necessary for brands/ companies to make big efforts to protect the environment

Value to the planet

Global warming will mean more extreme climates. Every additional 0.5°C of global warming will cause increases in the intensity and frequency of hot extremes, leading to heatwaves, heavy precipitation and droughts. **If no action is taken, global temperatures could rise by 3.2°C by 2050.** As such, brands have a responsibility to conserve resources and act in a way not harmful to the planet.

While it's extremely unlikely that we will see any reduction in atmospheric carbon dioxide in our lifetimes, what we can hope to see is a minimising of our emissions (ie no longer adding to what's already there). Companies and brands must recognise that responding to this challenge will come at a financial cost and force a reconsideration in the value and meaning of 'growth'.

Consumers will be watching these overall emissions closely to determine whether our collective efforts have had an impact.

Base: Japan: 2,000 internet users aged 18+

Source: Rakuten Insight/Mintel, May 2021

NOW: carbon claims grow in numbers and confusion

Consumer misperceptions associated with such on-pack claims as compostable, biodegradable and even recycled content are now extending to **claims regarding carbon** and are likely to continue as on-pack **carbon-neutral claims** have risen 4,386% between Jan 2015 and Dec 2021.

Along with a proliferation of carbon claims comes confusion as to which are good, better, best or perhaps just less bad. For example, **carbon offsetting** is experiencing a backlash as consumers learn exactly what it means. While offsetting does not reduce carbon emissions, it is an immediate and measurable way for businesses to take responsibility for their current carbon footprint.

NOW: a lack of consistency in on-pack carbon claims is a barrier to understanding

Many on-pack carbon claims are reduced to simple statements or logos. This simplicity does not serve to provide clarity as many claims appear to be contradictory. For example, in attempting to communicate a better carbon footprint, some brands claim to be 'carbon negative', whilst some give the apparently contradictory claim of 'carbon positive'.

Mintel's Global New Products Database has recorded the following on-pack claims related to carbon reporting:

- Carbon Neutral
- Carbon Negative
- Carbon Positive
- Carbon Balanced
- Carbon Free
- Carbon Offset

NOW: carton board conforming to calls for carbon neutrality

Bean sleeves won't tax the environment

Heinz introduced a PEFC-certified paperboard multi-pack sleeve in the UK that it claims is manufacturing and transportation carbon neutral



Neutrality fits the protocol

Graham's Organic. Global carton company Elopak's carbon-neutral packaging is certified according to PAS2060 and The CarbonNeutral Protocol.

NEXT: consumers will be exposed to the carbon impact of different packaging materials

With consumers currently focused on the [impact of plastic](#), many brands are looking to shift to alternative materials. However, growing climate concern will highlight the conflict between plastic reduction and carbon emission reduction.

For example, in Vietnam, bottled water company BeWater launched an aluminium can that claims to be better for the environment than plastic as it is 'infinitely recyclable'.

However, this claim has been [challenged by Stephan Ulrich](#), regional programme manager of the International Labour Organisation in Vietnam. He states that the claim is 'pure fantasy', noting that aluminium may be highly recyclable, but there is not enough recycled material to meet demand, and both raw and recycled aluminium have high carbon footprints.



Tenzing Natural Energy Drink

NEXT: brands will make packaging material choices based on carbon emissions impact

As brands measure their carbon footprint, the carbon reduction benefits of different materials will clarify.

For example, energy drink brand [Tenzing](#) chose to use an aluminium can as it is 100% recyclable and therefore has the benefit of a circular economy. However, after partnering with [CarbonCloud](#) to measure their carbon footprint, the brand was alerted to the high level of carbon emissions associated with the use of raw (as against recycled) aluminium. As a result, the brand has committed to a plan to increase their use of recycled aluminium from the current 50%.

IN AUSTRALIA

37%

of consumers believe a carbon tax on companies that emit carbon dioxide would have a high positive impact on the environment

NEXT: Australian government looks to technology, not taxes, to reduce carbon emissions

On Oct 21, 2021, the Australian government became the first national government to award carbon capture and storage projects with carbon credits that are intended to offset emissions.

Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) can be earned by the projects, with each ACCU representing one ton of carbon emissions 'avoided'. The \$1billion fund would back Australian early-stage companies in the development of clean energy technology.

The long-term goal of the plan is that it will help Australia achieve net carbon zero status by 2050 by focusing on the development and deployment of technology rather than through taxes.

ACCUs will be able to be sold to the Australian government at auctions or on the private voluntary market.

Base: Australia: 500 internet users aged 18+

Source: Dynata/Mintel – Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

NEXT: brands will put their 'trust' in carbon labelling

Brands using flexible packaging made from certain **Amcor** materials can now include the '**Reducing CO2 Packaging**' Label from **Carbon Trust**.

The effort is part of the company's lifecycle assessment service, which enables brands to measure their packaging's carbon footprint from raw materials through end of use. The announcement comes at a time when sustainability is an increasingly important factor in consumers' purchasing decisions.

Qualification for the use of the label is based on the ability to demonstrate a carbon footprint reduction of 20% or more. The first Amcor customer pilot for this labelling service has been successfully completed in Europe, and roll-out will accelerate in coming months. In Spain, for instance, **59% of consumers** say labelling that shows CO2 emissions would encourage them to purchase a product or service.

COST OF CARBON

82%

of Chinese adults agree that a carbon tax would have a moderate to high impact on the environment

FUTURE: all responsible packaging actions will be justified by their carbon impact

Carbon emission reduction presents both a challenge and an opportunity to not just brands but every person that calls planet Earth home. For innovative and creative brands, the opportunity exists to set the standard for sustainability across every category – legacy brands have no more advantage in this space than the most nascent start-up. The challenge, however, is that the stakes are extremely high and failure to innovate is no longer an option.

Brands will need to help consumers understand the complex impact of packaging on carbon emissions. For example, make clear the carbon metrics involved in the conflicting needs to reduce food waste versus reducing packaging material. As such, the 'sense of story' on packaging will become stronger to include the cost of eco-responsible packaging versus the cost of producing and delivering the goods.

Base: China: 500 internet users aged 18+

Source: KuRunData/Mintel – Sustainability Barometer, March 2021

Key takeaways

In Control

Packaging can provide a route to transparent information, enabling consumers to feel confident in their responsible packaging choices.

Ethics Check

Packaging today paints a picture of a brand's equity. Attention to ethical and eco-responsible practices will help ensure that picture remains favourable.

Climate Complexity

Clear and comparable carbon measures printed on pack will demonstrate to consumers a commitment to monitoring and reduction.



Meet the expert

Benjamin Punchard

Global Packaging Director

Benjamin delivers actionable insight on the packaging sector drawing on over a decade of international experience. Over this time he has worked with the leading multinational packaging companies to provide strategic market recommendations.

Read more by this expert | Get in touch

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