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Environment
Manatū Mā Te Taiao

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Guidance to Completing the Application Form for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme

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While every effort has been made to ensure that this guide is as clear and accurate as possible, the information it contains is general guidance only.

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This is written as a general publication only, and reflects the Ministry's view. It is not a Ministerial guideline under section 12 of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

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- *Assessors' Specification Guidelines for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme*
- *Application Form for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme*
- *A Guide to Product Stewardship for Non-priority Products in the Waste Minimisation Act 2008*

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www.mfe.govt.nz



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About this document

Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to provide:

- information to aid scheme managers in completing an application for accreditation of a product stewardship scheme (for both voluntary and priority product schemes)
- an understanding of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 in relation to product stewardship schemes.

This guide does not

This guide does not introduce product stewardship to a beginner.

Intended audience

The primary intended audiences for this document are:

- scheme managers, when completing the initial application and notifying of a variation
- independent assessors appointed by the Ministry for the Environment.

How to use this guide

You should use this guide in conjunction with the *Application Form for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship scheme*.

Further information

Further information is also available from the Ministry for the Environment. Contact details are:

psaccreditation@mfe.govt.nz

Free phone: 0800 499 700

Phone: +64 4 439 7400

Fax: +64 4 437 7700

Ministry for the Environment

Environment House

23 Kate Sheppard Place

PO Box 10362

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Specific documents

Application Form for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme (see www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/product-stewardship/accredited-schemes.html)

Product stewardship frequently asked questions (see www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/product-stewardship/faqs.html)

Introduction

What is product stewardship and why seek accreditation?

Product stewardship schemes are initiatives that help reduce the environmental impact of manufactured products.

Part 2 of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 provides for accreditation of product stewardship schemes. Accreditation is a form of endorsement by the government and means that the scheme has been assessed against the requirements of Sections 13, 14 and 15 of the Act.

This guide, and the application form it refers to, relate to the accreditation of product stewardship schemes, for both voluntary and priority products. Additional guidance is also available on product stewardship for priority products (as and when priority products are established).

The manager of any product stewardship scheme for any product can apply for accreditation.

See www.mfe.govt.nz/laws/waste-minimisation.html for a copy of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

Further information

A Guide to Product Stewardship for Non-priority Products in the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 provides further detail on the requirements of the Act. This is available from the Ministry or as a downloadable PDF on the Ministry website (see www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste/guide-product-stewardship/index.html).

If you require further information about applying for product stewardship accreditation please contact us:

<mailto:psaccreditation@mfe.govt.nz>

www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/

Freephone: 0800 499 700

Phone: +64 4 439 7400

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Environment House

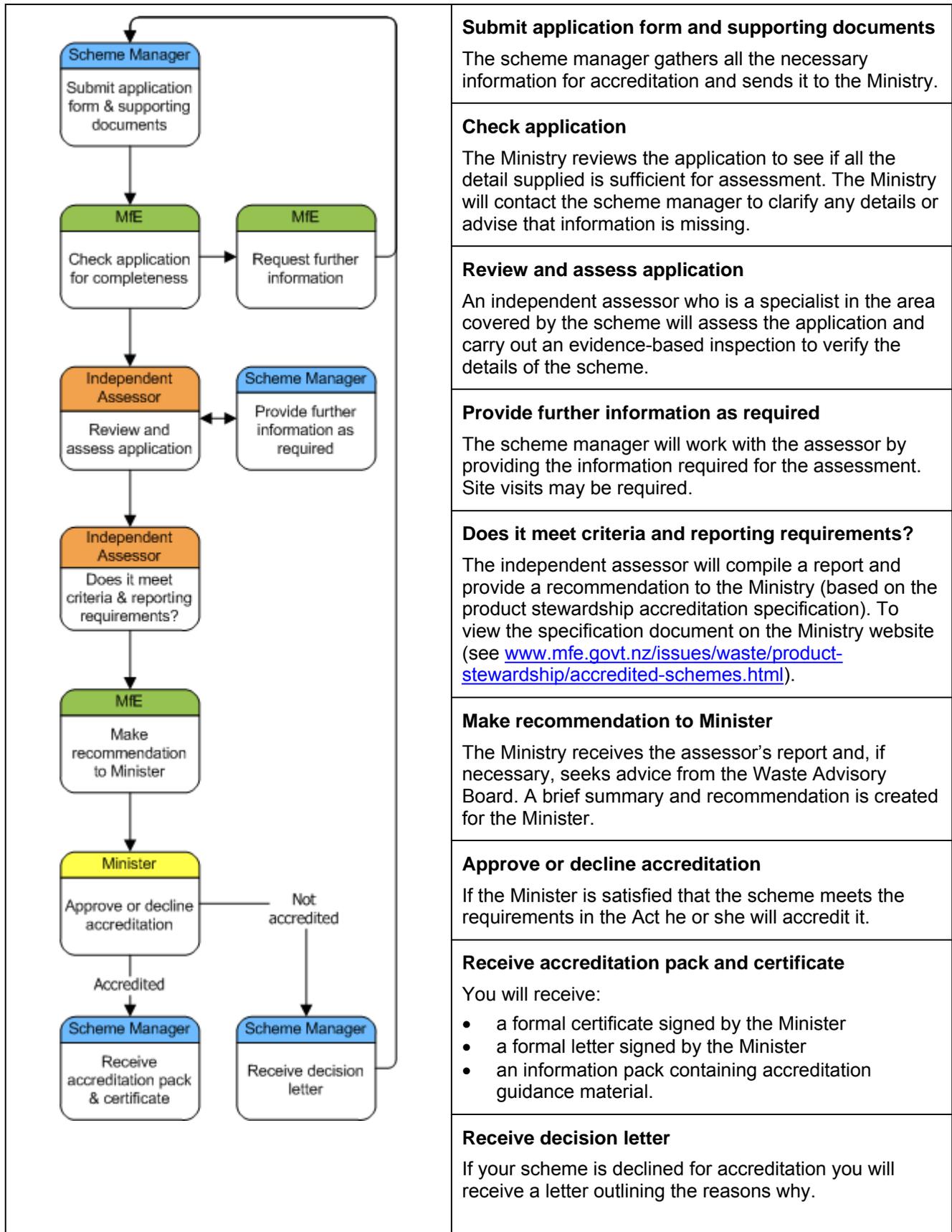
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The accreditation application process

The figure below illustrates the product stewardship accreditation process.



Submit application form and supporting documents

The scheme manager gathers all the necessary information for accreditation and sends it to the Ministry.

Check application

The Ministry reviews the application to see if all the detail supplied is sufficient for assessment. The Ministry will contact the scheme manager to clarify any details or advise that information is missing.

Review and assess application

An independent assessor who is a specialist in the area covered by the scheme will assess the application and carry out an evidence-based inspection to verify the details of the scheme.

Provide further information as required

The scheme manager will work with the assessor by providing the information required for the assessment. Site visits may be required.

Does it meet criteria and reporting requirements?

The independent assessor will compile a report and provide a recommendation to the Ministry (based on the product stewardship accreditation specification). To view the specification document on the Ministry website (see www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/product-stewardship/accredited-schemes.html).

Make recommendation to Minister

The Ministry receives the assessor's report and, if necessary, seeks advice from the Waste Advisory Board. A brief summary and recommendation is created for the Minister.

Approve or decline accreditation

If the Minister is satisfied that the scheme meets the requirements in the Act he or she will accredit it.

Receive accreditation pack and certificate

You will receive:

- a formal certificate signed by the Minister
- a formal letter signed by the Minister
- an information pack containing accreditation guidance material.

Receive decision letter

If your scheme is declined for accreditation you will receive a letter outlining the reasons why.

Before you begin

Before you begin ensure you are familiar with the application requirements. An application must:

- be made by the scheme manager using the *Application Form for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme*
- include the information requirements as shown in sections 13 and 14 of the Waste Minimisation Act 2008
- include evidence of the agreement of each of the participants in the scheme (eg, a signed declaration from each participant is acceptable)

An application may also declare and provide evidence if the product already has an Environmental Choice licence.

Any costs associated with preparing the application and all ongoing costs of administering and operating the scheme are the responsibility of the scheme manager.

Completing the application

Accessing the application form

The application form is available from the Ministry website in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word 2008 (DOC) document
- Rich Text Formatted (RTF) document, which is suitable for most word processing software
- Portable Document Format (PDF) document, which is suitable to print and complete manually. Once you have completed the form, scan and email or post it to the Ministry for the Environment.

We prefer you to apply via email using the electronic (RTF or Word) form. This electronic format allows you to download a copy to your computer, then complete and save your answers as you go. (See www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/product-stewardship/accredited-schemes.html).

You can:

- withdraw from the accreditation process at any stage
- reapply for accreditation at any time.

Sending in your application

Send your completed application to:

<mailto:psaccreditation@mfe.govt.nz>

or

Product Stewardship Accreditation
Ministry for the Environment
Environment House
23 Kate Sheppard Place
PO Box 10362
WELLINGTON 6143

Application form question help

This section provides question-by-question help for completing the *Application Form for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme*.

SECTION 1: Company name and scheme manager

1. Scheme manager (section 14(a))

Include the name of the

- individual(s), company or organisation responsible for the management of the scheme
- scheme.

The scheme manager will be the entity responsible for ensuring that the proposed scheme is working effectively and that all monitoring or other information required on the performance of the scheme is provided to the Ministry for the Environment.

If a company is named as the scheme manager, then provide a contact person within that company.

SECTION 2: The Scheme

2. Description of scheme (section 14(b))

Describe what the scheme does, for example collection and recycling of end-of-life computers, tyres or unwanted paint and how the scheme promotes waste minimisation or achieves a reduction in environmental harm from disposal of the product or both.

3. Will the scheme require regulations? (section 13(1)(e))

Consider if your scheme requires regulations in order to be implemented. Select Yes if the only way to implement the scheme is to enact regulations. If your scheme requires regulation, describe in detail what is required.

Notes:

- Regulations are made by Cabinet and there is no guarantee of timely or successful resolution. It may be that the Minister is unable to accredit a scheme if a request for regulations is not supported. The Minister is not required to enact regulations to implement the scheme.
- Before selecting Yes contact the Ministry to discuss the full implication of requesting regulations.

4. Scope of scheme (section 14(b))

State the product(s) and/or brand(s) included in the scheme and the geographical coverage of the scheme. It is also helpful if you explain how you will manage any 'like products' (similar products by other manufacturers) that may be presented for collection, recovery, reuse, recycling, treatment and/or disposal.

State specifically which part(s) of the product life cycle your scheme covers.

The 'product' may be a specific brand or a more generic description (glass bottles, scrap metal etc).

Note: Assessment and accreditation is limited to the scope of the scheme as defined in the application form.

SECTION 3: Background

5. Current waste generation volumes
(section 14(c))

To assess the effectiveness of the scheme, information must be provided on the quantities of waste currently generated that the scheme is seeking to reduce.

Show the current levels of waste generated by the scheme and state if the figures quoted are estimates or measured data.

Measurements of waste may be by weight, litres or by number of units.

6. Current waste generation measurement methodology
(section 14(c))

Show how current waste generation volumes have been measured. This will form the basis of future measurements of achievement as part of monitoring the scheme. If the volumes are estimated then please include assumptions and methodology for calculating the estimates.

Monitoring of scheme performance will be based on these figures, therefore we expect consistency of methodology.

SECTION 4: Objectives and targets

7. Measurable targets and time frame
(section 14(c))

Objectives should be high level and related to the identified waste minimisation scheme. List the specific and measurable targets to meet each objective. Also include the anticipated time frame to achieve those targets. For reference, check that the targets are SMART:

1. Specific – Targets should specify what you want to achieve.
2. Measurable – You should be able to measure whether you are meeting the targets or not.
3. Achievable – Are the targets you set, achievable and attainable?
4. Realistic – Can you realistically achieve the targets with the resources you have?
5. Timely – When do you want to achieve the set targets?

Notes:

- An objective may apply over the life time of the scheme with different targets for different reporting years.
- Effectiveness will be assessed using these objectives and targets.
- The scheme should demonstrate a commitment to minimising waste beyond 'business as usual'.
- When determining objectives and targets you should consider the implications of section 16 of the Act which relates to variation of an accredited scheme. If a change adversely affects the scheme's ability to meet its objectives within the time frames set re-accreditation will need to be considered.

8. Scenario if the scheme did not continue or exist

Describe what would occur if the scheme did not continue or exist.

For example, this may show the amounts of waste that would otherwise go to landfill or contribute to environmental harm.

9. Monitoring of targets
(section 14(c))

Describe the methodology for measuring and monitoring the stated waste minimisation targets.

If:

- the proposed method for monitoring targets is different from the methodology used in question 6 then provide an explanation why this is necessary or better
- estimates were used in the methodology for measuring current waste volumes then describe how future data collection and monitoring will be improved to provide more accurate volumes of waste generated.

The methodology should be specific and be consistent with how current volumes of waste are measured.

You could show the amounts of waste that would otherwise go to landfill or contribute to environmental harm.

SECTION 5: Groups and participants

10. Details of classes of persons, groups or organisations affected by the scheme
(section 14(d))

List the classes of persons, groups or organisations affected in the implementation of the scheme. People or groups can include those involved in design, manufacture, sale, use, servicing, collection, recovery, recycling, treatment and/or disposal.

These people or groups have not “signed-up” to the scheme, but their involvement is a key contributor in the scheme’s success.

The following should be included in the list if they are part of the scheme targets:

- general public
- generic type of business or activity such as tyre dealers for car tyres, IT businesses for electronic waste etc.

11. Details of participants in the scheme
(section 14(e))

List the individuals or organisations who have accepted a responsibility to participate in the scheme and therefore assist in meeting its objectives and/or requirements.

Include the participants address.

Evidence must be provided of agreements with partners and contractors that must be involved for the scheme to operate.

Examples of agreements could be a:

- declaration signed by the person or company officer
- contract or service level agreement
- voluntary accord
- memorandum of understanding.

Note: If the participants change then it is likely that the objectives will be affected. It may be necessary for agreements or contracts to have a minimum notice period.

SECTION 6: Governance

12. Organisation structure and governance of the scheme
(section 14(f))

Provide details of the organisation structure and governance of the scheme.

Identify:

- what kind of legal structure is in place (eg, company, trust, partnership)
- who is responsible for making decisions under the scheme
- who is responsible for the control and overall operation of the scheme
- who is responsible for keeping records and making reports under the scheme
- who is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the scheme
- how information will be stored.

Attach and reference an organisational chart if appropriate.

The identification of persons and entities should generally follow the detail set out under question 11. Where specific individuals are named, any changes must be notified in writing to the Minister.

SECTION 7: Compliance and performance

13. Scheme's expiry date
(section 14(g))

State the scheme's expiry date.

The accreditation of a product stewardship scheme expires on the earlier of the following dates:

- the date specified in the scheme as its expiry date, or
- seven years after the date that the Minister provides written notification of accreditation to the scheme manager.

Note: The expiry date must not be longer than seven years from the date that the Minister for the Environment accredits the scheme.

14. Identify the processes for compliance and enforcement of any agreements between participants to the scheme
(section 14(h))

Reference may be made to the participants listed in question 11. This requirement may be met through the provision of written evidence, in the form of contracts or agreements, from those who are party to the scheme.

You should show:

- the processes for ensuring adherence to the scheme, which may include guidelines and business process monitoring
- how these processes are managed by your organisation such as details of the mechanisms in place to audit and ensure compliance by participants, (eg, protocols, terms of reference, memoranda of understanding, contracts)
- details of any enforcement procedures that are in place in the event of non-compliance by a participant.

The government does not intend to be involved in the internal enforcement of schemes unless it is enforcement against parties who breach regulations under section 22 or 23. Enforcement of these breaches is the responsibility of the government or local authorities.

15. Reporting on scheme performance
(sections 14(i) and 20(a))

The scheme's performance will be regularly assessed and its performance reported to the Minister, therefore we require regular reports and updates.

Note: Frequency of reporting must be at least annual.

The following types of reports are suggestions of what you may provide:

- ongoing financial status of the scheme
- the number of collection outlets provided
- the amount and type of media coverage of the scheme
- public surveys on knowledge or scheme satisfaction
- design improvements made
- progress towards meeting targets, including figures showing trends etc
- cross stakeholder workshops or other events held
- examples of publication material, including new web content
- feedback from scheme participants
- expenditure that relates to meeting scheme objectives
- material produced or recovered
- provision of summary information able to be made public.

SECTION 8: Communication

16. Set out a communications strategy for publication and raising awareness of the scheme
(section 14(j))

Include:

- all groups identified in questions 10 and 11
- what information needs to be available to each group
- how information will be made available to each group
- when and how often it will be available.

You could consider including a communications plan to describe this.

17. Explain how information about the scheme will be provided to purchasers, users and handlers of the product to which the scheme relates
(section 14(k))

Show how the information that each group requires to understand the scheme, and to participate in the scheme, will be provided.

SECTION 9: Funding

18. Outline how the scheme will be funded
(sections 14(l) and 15(1)(b))

Schemes require funding in five main areas which are:

- setting up infrastructure
- administration (including governance, monitoring, publicity and reporting)
- recovery or disposal operations
- research and design for environmental issues, particularly in relation to waste reduction
- communications and publicity.

Include details of both income and expenditure such as:

- operating costs
- income sources
- capital investment required to operate the scheme and how the capital will be provided.

You do not have to provide answers to the questions in sections 10 and 11 but this information may be required by the Minister so that he or she is satisfied that the scheme is likely to promote waste minimisation or reduce the environmental harm from disposing of the product (section 15(1)(c)). Therefore, if you do not provide it and it is relevant to your scheme there may be a delay in deciding on accreditation of your scheme while the information is obtained.

SECTION 10: International obligations

19. Is the scheme consistent with New Zealand's international obligations?
(section 15(1)(d))

Provide details and supporting evidence of how the scheme meets any relevant international obligations relating to the environment, trade and human rights.

Examples of key international obligations are:

- The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
- The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (1989).

For more information on New Zealand's international environmental obligations, please refer to the following websites:

- www.mfe.govt.nz/laws/meas/meas-in-force.html
- www.med.govt.nz/templates/StandardSummary_19.aspx
- mfat.govt.nz/Treaties-and-International-Law/index.php.

SECTION 11: Environmental impacts

20. Life cycle environmental impact of the scheme (section 15(1)(c))

To meet the requirements of section 15(1)(c) of the Act, the Minister must be satisfied that the scheme is likely to promote waste minimisation or reduce the environmental harm from disposing of the product to which the scheme relates without, in either case, causing greater harm over the life cycle of the product.

If the product already holds an Environmental Choice licence then the license number can be stated here. This will support the life cycle impact assessment of the scheme.

If you do not have an Environmental Choice licence you could provide a brief outline of the environmental effects of the product concerned to enable the assessor to determine the life cycle impact of your scheme.

Life cycle includes:

- from manufacture to the point in the life cycle where the scheme begins
- any process operations which form part of the scheme.

The following life cycle environmental impacts should be considered (whether in New Zealand or not):

- greenhouse gas emissions
- ozone depleting substances/emissions
- hazardous waste (as defined in the Basel Convention) discharged into the environment
- fresh-water consumed
- energy consumed (including transport energy)
- air emissions of any kind which would require a specific consent under the Resource Management Act 1991
- discharges to water of any kind which would require a specific consent under the Resource Management Act 1991
- any use of hazardous substances with eco-toxic properties
- any reduction of biodiversity which could result from the production of the product or the scheme's processing of it
- any other environmental effects.

The description should be sufficient for an assessor to provide a non-quantified summary of the significance of any 'upstream' or 'downstream' negative effects arising from the proposed scheme.

Please reference relevant research, life cycle assessments or other reports that support your application. **Do not** send the reports with your application.

Further information about life cycle environmental impacts that may affect your scheme can be found in the specification document *Assessors' Specification Guidelines for Accreditation of a Product Stewardship Scheme* (see www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/waste/product-stewardship/accredited-schemes.html).

Any documents referenced in this answer could be examined as part of your assessment for accreditation.

Note: It is your responsibility to ensure your scheme is compliant with any other enactments, regulations or by-laws (section 19).

21. Describe any potential risks that may affect the performance of the scheme and what actions you intend to take to manage those risks

Although this is not a requirement of the Act, it would be helpful to advise the Minister of any risks foreseen with the operation of the scheme and how these risks are being managed.

You may provide a risk assessment or risk management plan to support your application, if appropriate.

22. Describe or provide any codes of practice or duty of care processes that apply to the scheme

Although this is not a requirement of the Act, it would be helpful to advise the Minister of any codes of practice or duty of care processes that are applicable to the scheme.

SECTION 12: Supporting information

23. Additional information

List and reference any supporting documentation that you are including with your application.

Clearly show to which questions any supporting documentation relates.

Ensure any additional information is included with your application when it is submitted and is clearly referenced to the section/answer being supported.

If your supporting information is contained within a large document such as a company prospectus, please extract or clearly mark the relevant pages.

Assessment checklist

Use this checklist to make sure you have included all the necessary information.

SECTION 13: Declaration

If you are sending in the application:

- electronically, you do not have to sign it, but the name of the scheme manager should be included in the declaration section
- by post, sign it and send it to the address below.

What happens next?

Send your completed application to:

psaccreditation@mfe.govt.nz

or

Product Stewardship Accreditation
Ministry for the Environment
Environment House
23 Kate Sheppard Place
PO Box 10362
WELLINGTON 6143

After you've sent in the application

You will receive acknowledgement of your application from the Ministry.