

THE INTERNATIONAL EPD COOPERATION (IEC)



## **PCR BASIC MODULE**

CPC Division 68:  
Postal and courier services

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## HOW TO USE PCR BASIC MODULES BASED ON THE UN CPC STRUCTURE

CPC is a complete product classification scheme covering goods and services. It is based on the physical characteristics of goods or on the nature of the services rendered. Each type of good or service distinguished in the CPC is defined in such a way that it is normally produced by only one activity as defined in the International Standard Industrial Classification of all economic activities (ISIC Rev. 3).

The use of the CPC system leads to a structure for PCR documents in two dimensions:

- a “horizontal” dimension describing the product’s value chain divided according to business sectors, i.e. building on CPC-coded information modules, and
- a “vertical” dimension defining each information module (with a further delineation of each such section into subclasses).

The CPC concept forms the basis for a PCR structure to:

- provide a structure for industry specific PCR core modules, or rather the PCR core module and up-streams modules as well as down-streams modules within the product group system boundary, and
- open up for differentiated, but defined levels of requirements in the PCR document, i.e. part of the requirements may be applicable on a generic product group level, part of the requirements may be limited to selected individual products.

PCR Basic Modules make use of this option provided by the CPC concept, and are close to ready-made draft PCR documents with some information still lacking, but the lacking information is identified in the document.

The PCR Basic Module document includes:

1. Text which is common for all full PCR documents regardless of product group, e.g. the introduction section
2. Text including requirements which are common for all products which belong to the specified product group on UN CPC code two digit level, e.g. CPC Division 68: Postal and courier services. PCR requirements valid on two digit level are specified (marked with CPC XX).
3. Identified specific requirements or information, written in *italic*, which must be decided upon on a more detailed level than the CPC Division level. In the final PCR document this detailed level could be anything from CPC three digit level to five digit level dependent on the level of the final PCR document. Thus, the information requested in *italic* shall be replaced by the relevant text, e.g. instead of the text “product group” in the PCR Basic Module document the final PCR document may read “transformers” in a PCR for transformers

The PCR Basic Module document provides a close to ready-made PCR document. Just decide upon and add the relevant information requested in *italic*

## DIVISION: 68 - POSTAL AND COURIER SERVICES

[681](#) - Postal and courier services

[6811](#) - Postal services

[68111](#) - Postal services related to letters

[68112](#) - Postal services related to parcels

[68113](#) - Post office counter services

[68119](#) - Other postal services

[6812](#) - Courier services

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

*(This section shall be included in all PCR- documents)*

The international EPD® system is based on a hierarchic approach following the international standards ISO 9001 (**Quality management systems**), ISO 14001 (**Environmental management systems**), ISO 14040 (**LCA - Principles and procedures**), ISO 14044 (**LCA - Requirements and guidelines**), ISO 14025 (**Type III environmental declaration**s) and ISO 21930 (**Environmental declaration of building products**) upon which the General Programme Instructions are based, as well as instructions for developing Product Category Rules (PCR).

The documentation to the International EPD® system includes three separate parts ([www.environdec.com](http://www.environdec.com)):

**Introduction, intended uses and key programme elements**  
**General Programme Instructions**  
**Supporting annexes**

This PCR-document specifies further and additional minimum requirements on EPDs of the product group defined below complementary to the above mentioned general requirement documents.

Principle programme elements concerning the Product Category Rules (PCR) included in International EPD® system are presented below.

Purpose	Element identification and principal approach
Complying with principles set in ISO 14025 on modularity and comparability	1. "Book-keeping LCA approach" 2. A Polluter-Pays (PP) allocation method
Simplifying work to develop Product Category Rules (PCR)	3. PCR Module Initiative (PMI) in order to structure PCR in modules according to international classification 4. PCR moderator for leadership and support of the PCR work
Secure international participation in PCR work	5. Global PCR Forum for open and transparent EPD stakeholder consultation
Facilitating, identification and collection of LCA-based information	6. Selective data quality approach for specific and generic data

Product Category Rules (PCR) are specified for specified information modules "gate-to-gate", so called core modules. The structure and aggregation level of the core modules is defined by the United Nation Statistics Division - Classification Registry CPC codes (<http://unstats.un.org>). The PCR also provides rules for which methodology and data to use in the full LCA, i.e. life cycle parts up-streams and down-streams the core module. The PCR

also has requirements on the information given in the EPD, e.g. additional environmental information. A general requirement on the information in the EPD is that all information given in the EPD, mandatory and voluntary, shall be verifiable.

In the EPD, the environmental performance associated with each of the three life-cycle stages mentioned above are reported separately:

## 1 GENERAL INFORMATION

*(This section shall after editing be included in all PCR document)*

This document provides Product Category Rules (PCR) for the assessment of the environmental performance of UN CPC 68XXX *product group* and the declaration of this performance by an EPD.

This PCR document was developed by *names of companies*.

The appointed PCR moderator is *name, e-mail address*

The PCR document was subject to an open consultation on the Global PCR Forum ([www.environdec.com](http://www.environdec.com)) from *date* until *date*.

*Date of approval and version number of the PCR shall be documented on the front page*

This PCR document is valid for *geographical representativeness* until *date*. Any comments to this PCR document may be given on the Global PCR Forum or directly to the PCR moderator during the period of validity.

The PCR document is a living document. If relevant changes in the LCA methodology or in the technology for the product category occur, the document will be revised and any changes will be published on the international website: [www.environdec.com](http://www.environdec.com). The EPD shall refer to a specific PCR version number. The production of new PCR versions does not affect the EPD certification period.

## 2 DEFINITION OF THE PRODUCT GROUP

*The services included in the product group shall be described. Examples on services included and not included may be given for assistance to the EPD developer.*

The product group and CPC code shall be specified in the EPD. (CPC 68)

### 2.1 SPECIFICATION OF SERVICE COMPANY

*The PCR shall specify the information on the manufacturing/producing company that is required in the EPD, separated into mandatory and voluntary information.*

Example:

Mandatory information	Example of voluntary information
Name of the company	Specific aspects regarding the production
Production site(s)	Environmental policy
Issuer and Contacts	
Information on environmental management system	

## 2.2 SPECIFICATION OF THE SERVICE

*The PCR is a template for one of the services in the product group, including postal and courier services. Type of service shall be specified at a more detailed CPC level.*

*The PCR shall specify the information on the product required in the EPD.*

## 3 FUNCTIONAL UNIT

The functional unit shall be delivery of one average gram of a letters, parcels or other delivery with the *specified postal and courier service*. (CPC 68)

*If relevant the functional unit shall be defined at a more detailed CPC level.*

The functional unit shall be declared in the EPD. The environmental impact shall be given per functional unit.

## 4 UNITS AND QUANTITIES

Following units shall be used (CPC 68):

- SI units
- Preferred power and energy units
  - kW (MW) for power
  - kWh (MWh) for energy

A maximum of three value numbers shall be used when reporting LCA results

*Other units may be regulated on a more detailed CPC level, if relevant.*

## 5 GENERAL SYSTEM BOUNDARIES

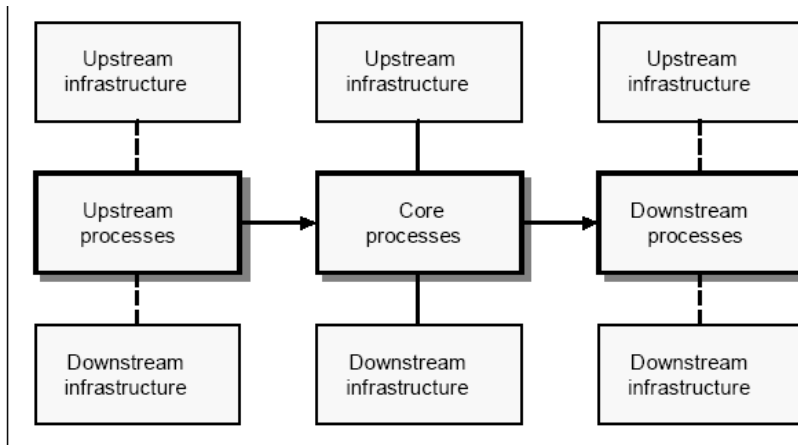


Figure 1. Presentation of Core Module (core process) and upstream and downstream processes

### 5.1 UPSTREAM PROCESSES

The upstream processes shall include production of fuel, heat and electricity supply. Production of envelope, letter or packaging and production of the transported/distributed product are voluntary to include.

### 5.2 CORE PROCESSES

The core processes includes the distribution phase:

- Sorting
- Storage
- Transportation
- Transits of e.g. non delivered mails, letters and parcels
- Maintenance of the vehicles

### 5.3 DOWNSTREAM PROCESSES

The following downstream processes are voluntary to include:

- Recycling or handling of packaging envelope/letter or packaging waste/materials after use
- The customer or consumer use of the delivery

In the EPD, the environmental performance associated with each of the life cycle stages: upstream, core and if included downstream processes, shall be reported separately.



## 6 CORE MODULE

### 6.1 SYSTEM BOUNDARIES

#### 6.1.1 7.1.1 TECHNICAL SYSTEM

The processes listed below for the postal and courier service shall be included.

**Processes which are mandatory to include:**

*xxx*

*yyy*

*Etc.*

Waste that is deposited in landfill shall not be included in the system boundaries. (CPC 68)

Waste that is deposited in landfill shall be declared as kg of waste (and kg of hazardous waste). (CPC 68)

The manufacturing of equipment with an expected lifetime over three years, vehicle, buildings and infrastructure shall not be included (CPC 68).

The maintenance of vehicles shall be included (CPC 68).

Business travel of personnel shall be included (CPC 68). Travel to and from work by personnel should not be included (CPC 68).

*Research and development activities may be included if relevant. This should be regulated on more detailed CPC levels.*

#### 6.1.2 GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

The data for the core module shall be representative for the actual site/region where the respective process is taking place. (CPC 68)

#### 6.1.3 TIME BOUNDARIES

The data shall be representative for the year/time frame for which the EPD is valid. (CPC 68)

#### 6.1.4 BOUNDARIES TO NATURE

Boundaries to nature are defined as flows of material and energy resources from nature into the system. Emissions to air, water and soil cross the system boundary when they are

emitted from or leaving the product system. Non hazardous waste shall be declared without assigning the system environmental impact. (CPC 68)

### 6.1.5 BOUNDARIES TO OTHER PRODUCT LIFE CYCLES

If there is an inflow of recycled material to the production system in the production/manufacturing phase, the recycling process and the transportation from the recycling process to where the material is used shall be included. If there is an outflow of material to recycling, the transportation of the material to the recycling process shall be included. The material going to recycling is then an outflow from the production system. (CPC 68) (See supporting annex A)

## 6.2 CUT OFF RULES

The general cut off criteria according to the supporting annex A applies, why Life Cycle Inventory data for a minimum of 99 % of the respective environmental category impact of the core module shall be included. Processes/ activities not included in the LCA shall be documented in the EPD. (CPC 68)

## 6.3 ALLOCATION RULES

Allocation shall follow the guidelines in supporting annex A (CPC 68).

When sorting and storage parcels and/or addressed and/or non addressed letters are carried out in the same buildings the environmental impact allocation shall be based on the production cost relating to the different services or evenly allocated by the area of the building used for relevant services.

When sorting and storage of letter services are carried out in the same buildings the environmental impact allocation shall be based on the mass of the letters/non-addressed letters. When sorting and storage of different parcel services are carried out in the same buildings the environmental impact allocation shall be based on volume.

When the letters/parcels/non addressed mails or other products are mixed in the same vehicles the environmental impact allocation shall firstly be evenly allocated by volume of the vehicles used for the relevant services and secondly be based on the production cost relating to the different services.

Environmental allocation for letters/non addressed mails mixed in the same vehicles shall be based on the mass of the letters/non-addressed letters.

Environmental allocation for parcels mixed in the same vehicles shall be based on volume-weight or volume-volume ratio.

*As an alternative, allocation rules may be given at a more detailed level. The choice of functional unit may provide guidance.*

## 6.4 DATA QUALITY RULES

Specific data (often called site specific data) shall be used for the Core Module (CPC 68).

Specific data are gathered from the sites where specific processes are carried out.

The requirement for specific data also includes actual product weights, amounts of raw materials used and amounts of waste etc.

Specific data for the generation of electricity bought shall be used if possible. The data should be verifiable by invoice or similar.

If specific data are not available or if the electricity bought is not specified for parts of the Core Module, the electricity mix used in those parts shall be approximated as the official electricity mix in the country of manufacture. The mix of energy shall be documented (CPC 68).

## 7 UPSTREAM MODULE

### 7.1 SYSTEM BOUNDARIES

All elementary flows for production of fuel, heat and electricity supply shall be included, except for the flows that fall under the general 1% cut off rule. Production of goods or letter and production of packaging material/envelope may be included (see also paragraph 5.1).

### 7.2 DATA QUALITY RULES

Selected generic data shall be used if specific data are unavailable, e. g. data from commonly available data sources such as commercial databases and free databases, describing specific raw materials or processes usually referring to the system under study or to other systems equivalent from a technical point of view.

For allowing the use of selected generic data, a number of pre-set characteristics must be fulfilled and demonstrated:

- *Representativeness of the geographical area* should adhere to “Data deriving from areas with the same legislative framework and the same energetic mix”,
- *Technological equivalence* adhere to “Data deriving from the same chemical and physical processes or at least the same technology coverage (nature of the technology mix, e.g. weighted average of the actual process mix, best available technology or worst operating unit)”,

- *Boundaries towards nature* adhere to “Data shall report all the quantitative information (resources, solid, liquid, gaseous emissions; etc.) necessary for the EPD”, and
- *Boundaries towards technical systems* adhere to “The boundaries of the considered life cycle stage shall be equivalent”.

*Recommendations for certain databases for selected generic data which describe material flows connected to a number of input materials may also be used. If recommendations are given to use such selected generic data, such data sources shall be listed in a table in the PCR document.*

### 7.3 RULES FOR GENERIC DATA

If these data sources do not supply the necessary data, other generic data may be used and documented. The environmental impact of the processes where the other generic data are used must not exceed 10% of the overall environmental impact from the product system. (CPC 68)

### 7.4 OTHER CALCULATION RULES

*Calculation specific rules for respective service shall be given at a more detailed CPC level.*

## 8 DOWNSTREAM MODULE

### 8.1 RECYCLING DECLARATION AND WASTE TREATMENT

*Recommendations for recycling of packaging materials shall be given, as well as recommendations for other waste treatment of product parts if relevant. The potential environmental impact and benefit of recycling and waste treatment shall be presented in the EPD.*

## 9 ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE RELATED INFORMATION

### 9.1 USE OF RESOURCES

The consumption of natural resources and resources per functional unit shall be reported in the EPD, divided into core, upstream and, if relevant, downstream module.

Input parameters, extracted resources:

- Non-renewable resources
  - Material resources
  - Energy resources (used for energy conversion purposes)
- Renewable resources
  - Material resources
  - Energy resources (used for energy conversion purposes)
- Water use
- Electricity consumption (electricity consumption during manufacturing).

## 9.2 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The environmental impact per functional unit for the following environmental impact categories shall be reported in the EPD, divided into core, upstream and, if relevant, downstream module:

- The emissions of greenhouse gases (expressed in global warming potential, GWP, in 100 year perspective)
- Emission of ozone-depleting gases (expressed as the sum of ozone-depleting potential in CFC 11-equivalents, 20 years)
- Emission of acidification gases (expressed as the sum of acidification potential expresses in SO<sub>2</sub>-eq. )
- Emissions of gases that contribute to the creation of ground level ozone (expressed as the sum of ozone-creating potential, ethene-equivalents)
- Emission of substances to water contributing to oxygen depletion (expressed as PO<sub>4</sub>-eq.).

The tables from the annex shall be used.

## 9.3 OTHER INDICATORS

The following indicators shall be reported in the EPD, also per functional unit and divided into the two or three modules:

- Material subject for recycling
- (Hazardous waste, kg (as defined by regional directives))
- Other waste, kg
- (Toxic emissions: to be decided in more detailed PCRs)

## 9.4 OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

*The other environmental information shall be specified at a more detailed CPC level. , e.g. field of application, impact on health, technical life length, maintenance, the final use of product, fire risks, risks at fire*

Information about biogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is not necessary. If reported the biogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions shall be separated from the other greenhouse gases (expressed in global warming potential, GWP, in 100 year perspective)

## 10 CONTENT OF THE EPD (CPC 68)

### PROGRAMME RELATED INFORMATION

The programme related part of the EPD shall include:

- Name of the programme and programme operator
- The reference PCR document
- Registration number
- Date of publication and validity
- Geographical scope of application of EPD
- Information about the year or reference period of the underlying data to the EPD
- Reference to the homepage – [www.environdec.com](http://www.environdec.com) – for more information

### PRODUCT RELATED INFORMATION

Specification of the manufacturing company

See 2.1

Specification of the product

See 2.2

Functional unit

See 3

Content of materials and chemical substances

See 4

Comparisons of EPDs within this product category

*To be able to compare EPDs within this product category, they have to be based on this particular PCR. The user of the EPD information should be made aware of this by the inclusion of this statement in the EPD:*

“EPDs from different programmes may not be comparable”

### VALIDITY OF THE EPD

The validity of the EPD shall be reported in the EPD.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE-RELATED INFORMATION

### ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE DECLARATION - MINIMUM SET OF PARAMETERS FROM THE LCA STUDY, REPORTED PER FUNCTIONAL UNIT

Upstream module, Core module and downstream module shall be reported separately for the resource use, potential environmental impact and other indicators such as waste.

#### Use of Resources

In this category the consumption of natural resources and resources per functional unit shall be reported

See 10.1

#### Potential Environmental impact

In this category the potential environmental impact per functional unit shall be reported.

See 10.2

#### Other indicators

In this category relevant indicators shall be reported per functional unit.

See 10.3

### OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

See 10.4

### DIFFERENCES VERSUS PREVIOUS VERSIONS OF THE EPD

The main causes for changes in environmental performance in comparison with previous EPD versions shall be described shortly.

### REFERENCES

The EPD shall, if relevant, refer to (CPC 68):

- The underlying LCA
- The PCRs used
- Other documents that verify and complement the EPD
- Instruction for recycling
- Programme instructions

## 11 VALIDITY OF THE EPD

If changes in any of the environmental impacts are larger than +- 5% the EPD shall be adjusted (CPC 68). Regardless, the EPD shall be reviewed every three years.