

Standard Products Catalogue ICRC/IFRC

Sustainable information sheet

Product: Tarpaulin 4x6m (Eco-Design Tarpaulin_January 2024)

The below table is based on the Sustainable Criteria list available at:

<https://itemscatalogue.redcross.int/green--2/sustainable-procurement--25/sustainable-criteria--112/information-sheet-sustainable-procurement--SUSTAINABLE.aspx>

Environmental aspects	Achievements
Use long lasting products and materials, to minimize the replacement and allow the second life.	<p>The preceding types of tarpaulins were lasting from few weeks to some months. This tarpaulin last minimum 4 years, as per specification. Experience shows that it last more than 4 years in many cases.</p> <p>The previous types of tarpaulin would very soon require repeat distribution. This is not the case with this tarpaulin.</p> <p>All requirements are described with supporting standard testing procedures, to ensure compliance with required specification. Refer to specification for details (UV, tensile, tear, weight, etc).</p> <p>This improved type of PE tarpaulin is the outcome of an Inter-Agencies R&D Project “Eco-Design Tarpaulin Project 2021-2023)</p>
Long lasting PE details	<p>The preceding types of tarpaulin were made from Polyethylene with low level of UV resistance, and low tensile strength.</p> <p>The Improved Polyethylene does not degrade that fast. It lasts many years even under very strong UV, without recurring to harmful additives. Combined with its high mechanical strength, this allows a very long lifespan, up to 10 years and more (witnessing 14 years old tarpaulin in Ethiopia). The PE sheets will mainly degrade in large torn pieces, that can be collected. The part of PE that reduces into micro-particles is very minimal.</p>
Recycling the raw material of the product	<p>Due to its long lifespan, the Polyethylene sheet can be collected before it degrades into micro particles.</p> <p>The polyethylene sheets can be recycled by the plastic industries. It is pure PE, not mixed with other types of plastics or any other materials, therefore easy to sort out and recycle everywhere in many places.</p>

	<p>This Polyethylene does not contain fire retardant such as bromide compound and antimony, reducing the chemical hazard during its use and its recycling</p> <p>In low tech environment, plastics industries are using PE from waste collection. Even though cleaner industrial practices should be encouraged.</p>
Using recycled or re-used materials to make the product	At manufacturing level, it is encouraged to include recycled PE only when reliable sources are available, ensuring that it will not reduce the lifespan.
Reduced weight and volume compared to equivalent preceding products	<p>From 7kg to 4.8kg in 1995, to 4.6kg in 2009, 4kg in 2024.</p> <p>The new PE tarpaulin is 43% lighter than the old one. Its design also ensures a higher tensile strength.</p>
Seek equipment that is energy efficient	Not applicable. The tarpaulin is not consuming energy as such.
Use materials with reduced effect on environment due to their intrinsic nature	Unique component is Polyethylene.
No (or reduced) polluting with minimum use of toxic chemicals, CFCs ozone and other pollutants	The PE is Fire retardant above the expectation, without using bromide and antimony products.
100% biodegradable material when biodegradability in the environment is foreseen	Not applicable. It is not foreseen that the tarpaulin will degrade in the environment. On the contrary, the very long life span should allow collecting and recycling.
Use of materials and products that can have a second life in a different usage	Due to its long lifespan, the Polyethylene sheet can be reused for making many different items after its primary usage as a shelter. It was observed that the PE sheeting has been used for making car tarpaulins, all kind of waterproof covers, big bags for waste collection, handbags, raincoats, ropes, etc.
Use equipment that have a high rate of reparability when applicable	The tarpaulin can be repaired with specific type of adhesive tapes. It can also be stitched.
When products are made up of several types of material, particularly plastics and metals, the ease of disassembly is taken into consideration. Particularly relevant for electronic and electrical products.	Not applicable. The tarpaulin is 100% made of PE.
Minimum packaging. Reducing the packaging to the minimum although enabling the product to	The tarpaulins are not individually packed anymore, savings 10s of thousands of plastic bags. It is packed into bales of 5 pieces. The bales packaging is made with the

survive poor handling. Optimize palletization and TC loading.	<p>same PE material as the tarpaulins, with the same qualities (no degradation into microplastics).</p> <p>Ready to ship weight/volume ratio is adapted to ISO standard transport containers (TC) (1MT to 3m3)</p>
<p>Manage sourcing in a way that reduces the environmental impact and facilitates the application of social standards</p> <p>Favor manufacturing processes that facilitate pollution control.</p> <p>Proper waste management in the production site</p>	<p>The tarpaulins are produced by large industrial plants where international regulations should apply and social standards are up to the legal requirements or above.</p> <p>Audited by our services.</p> <p>The raw material is produced by large industrial plants where international regulations should apply.</p>

Social aspects	
Ethical standards	
The ICRC/IFRC code of conduct for purchasing strives to ensure the ICRC highest ethical standards and ethical standards from our suppliers too. Each person undertaking any purchasing activity in the ICRC signs this document.	<p>The lead buyers are applying the Codes of Conduct and Ethics, ensuring the ethical standards are respected along the supply chain.</p> <p>Audited by internal services.</p>
The ICRC/IFRC Ethical Purchasing policy is being implemented. Criteria on working conditions, hygiene and security, safety, child labour, and environmental concerns are assessed in the manufacturing units. Position on Ethical Policy for Purchasing (icrc.org)	<p>The Tarpaulins manufacturing plants have been validated, ensuring the ethical standards are respected.</p> <p>Manufacturers are encouraged to implemented progress actions, following recommended international standards.</p> <p>Audited by our services.</p>
Social impact: labour and deontological practices, Health and safety, hardship working conditions, etc.	<p>The Tarpaulins manufacturing plants have been validated, ensuring the social standards are respected.</p> <p>The reinforcement bands of the tarpaulins are being made in automatized process, at the contrary with the previous attachment system with eyelets that were inserted by hand in poor working conditions.</p>

Economic impact, value for money	
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Maximum durability, reparability, reusability, recyclability and upgradeability:	As exposed above, the Tarpaulin is extremely durable. It can be reused for many usages and purposes. Material is reusable and recyclable.
Use long lasting products and materials, to minimize the replacement and allow the second life.	Very durable product providing a long usage without replacement.
Reparability is also considered during the design of the product.	The tarpaulin can be repaired with specific type of adhesive tapes. It can also be stitched.
Seek products that enable updated and improve performance.	Not applicable
Anti-fraud policy: ICRC/IFRC policy to prevent fraud and corruption for all staff members and external partners	The anti-fraud policy guaranties the proper application of the product specification through a well-controlled purchasing process, a transparent and reliable quality control, and tight supervision of the inspection companies in particular during factory visits.