

# UP (Understanding Packaging) Scorecard

The UP Scorecard looks at six separate impact areas when assessing the human and environmental **impacts of foodware and food packaging products**. Learn more about each of these six areas below, and find more detailed information in the published methodology document.

<https://upscorecard.org/methodology/>

## Plastic Pollution

The proliferation of plastic pollution has emerged as one of the greatest environmental threats of our time with troubling implications for food systems, fisheries, human health and the climate. By preventing unnecessary plastic use, we measurably reduce the cascade of ecological risks created when this material enters the environment. The UP Scorecard will show how foodware choices contribute to plastic pollution. **Indicator: grams of plastic leakage to the environment**

## Chemicals of Concern

The presence of toxic chemicals in food packaging associated with harm to humans and the environment is well documented. Hundreds of different harmful substances can be present in the various types of materials used in food packaging and can leach out in different amounts and at different rates depending on many factors. The UP Scorecard helps to guide users in avoiding the most concerning substances in food packaging and moving towards healthier materials. **Indicator: scale based on chemicals of concern present, material inertness, and food interaction with material**

## Climate

The carbon footprint from plastic manufacturing is expected to become increasingly important as this sector expands. But replacement materials often have larger greenhouse emissions. The UP Scorecard enables carbon-conscious consumers and professionals with the information they need to make informed product choices.

## Water Use

Nearly one in five major cities around the world faces a high to very high risk of drought. While many of us are increasingly focused on water conservation, it's not obvious to all that washing reusable containers usually saves water compared to using single-use container options. The UP Scorecard will show you which container system uses the least amount of water, even compared with washing reusables.

## Sustainable Sourcing

Increasing the post-consumer recycled content in packaging materials avoids the need to extract virgin natural resources and also creates urgently needed market demand for recycling. For containers made from plant-based materials, the sustainability of the agricultural or forestry practices used to grow the plants have a huge impact on the overall sustainability of the container. The UP Scorecard combines these two critical issues into one Sustainable Sourcing metric. **Indicator: scale based on the percentage of post-consumer recycled content and certification for sustainable sourcing practices**

## Recoverability

Waste is no longer a luxury we can afford on an ever-crowded, natural resource-constrained planet. We must retool our food system to reduce reliance on disposable and hard-to-recycle products and encourage packaging solutions with circularity in mind: Packaging that can be reused or truly recycled or composted to provide sustainable feedstock for future products or degrade safely into the natural environment. The UP Scorecard provides a recoverability ranking to demonstrate the circularity potential of each foodware product. **Indicator: scale based on the potential of a product to be recovered**