Environmental Policy

IMO is committed to creating timeless, versatile and affordable products that endure changes in tastes and trends. We believe in taking genuine and lasting steps to improve our design solutions, policies, processes and practices to become more environmentally aware and achieve a higher standard of sustainability.

We strive to reduce the negative impact of everyday living on the environment and create awareness to empower our Staff, Suppliers and Clients so they take responsibility for environmental issues both at home and in the workplace.

Most of the environmental impact from the building and furniture industries is caused by material production. However, when the lifespan of a building is taken into account over a long period of time, the embodied energy from the frequent replacement of furniture accounts for a considerably high percentage of life cycle energy.

Hence the environmental performance of a product needs to address its entire life cycle starting from its development, to manufacture, delivery, use and retirement.

Keep It Local

We pride ourselves on being 100% designed and manufactured in New Zealand with the final point of Assembly in Auckland, New Zealand. Our component parts are sourced within a small area, then assembled and dispatched from one place. In this way we reduce the consumption of energy in transporting various parts around the world, and we support our local economy.

Against Throwawayism

At the heart of the environmental crisis is our consumer society. In today's global culture of disposable mass-consumerism, the value of long-lasting design is essential. We make every effort to educate our Clients so they are able to make better, more informed decisions when choosing products and encourage people to think about the life cycle of the products they choose.

Our Products have a 7 Year Warranty with a Life Expectancy of at least 20 Years. For us the proof of good design is to stand the test of everyday use. Our objects must withstand daily wear and tear, but they must also survive changes in tastes and trends to remain relevant and cherished so that they pass from generation to generation rather than ending up in landfill.

Even after many years of service when your furniture might be looking forward to a quiet retirement, it can be refinished or parts replaced to give it a new lease of life.

Living Building Challenge

The Living Building Challenge (LBC) is a philosophy, certification, and advocacy tool for projects to move beyond merely being less bad and to become truly regenerative. The LBC Red List is a list of chemicals representing the "worst in class" substances prevalent in the building industry that pose serious risks to human health and the environment. A2, Baker, Fiord, Kase Storage, Kase Tables and KXN are all compliant with the Living Building Challenge Criteria and are free of Red List materials.

Aluminium

We use a significant number of die cast parts in our Products as they offer high precision, high strength and high production efficiency. Die casting improves the utilisation rate of metals and reduces the amount of processing equipment and labour. Any surplus alloy that comes out of the die casting process is re-melted in-house – this secondary aluminium requires 5% of the energy used to make the original product. Any defects picked up post production are returned to the supplier for re-melting.

Aluminium extrusions are supplied pre-cut to a standard size with minimal post-processing. Off-cuts are stored for re-use or sold to aluminium recyclers.

Steel

Up to 30% of the Galvanised Steel (Square Hollow SHS, Round Tube and 1.2mm Sheet) used in the manufacture of Kase, KXN and Baker is recycled. Steel is supplied pre-cut to specified sizes which eliminates wastage for most of the components. Any scrap metal from this process is sold for recycling or returned to steel merchants for reuse (re-smelted). The reduction of steel material is achieved by using thinner sheets where strength will not be compromised.

New Zealand Steel's hot-dipped Galvanised Steel is Red List Free and Living Building Challenge compliant. Iron makes up approximately 90% of the total composition of steel (CAS # 7439-89-6) with the balance made up of other metals all under 1% including Aluminium (7429-90-5), Carbon (7440-44-0), Copper(7440-50-8), Chromium(7440-47-3), Manganese (7439-96-5) and Nickel (7440-02-2). Lead (CAS # 7439-92-1) and Cadmium (CAS # 7440-43-9) occur in trace amounts as they are a natural impurity in Zinc.

Powder Coating

The environmental impact of powder coating is less than a solvent based coating, with powder coating scoring significantly less with respect to global warming, acidification, eutrophication and carcinogens. In addition, cumulative energy demand, water use and solid waste are less than half of other coating systems.

Our Dulux powder contains no solvents or solvent emissions and is TGIC free. It is not formulated with VOCs and has no VOCs added. Powder coated surfaces are manufactured from 100% solid powder coating material - no solvents or water are used in the paint material or powder coating process. This means that they contain zero or negligible Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's). Any waste of the powder paint material during the coating process is minimized through a cyclonic recycling system and up to 95% of raw powder paint material is reuseable during production. Refer attached Datasheet.

Powder coatings contain up to 5% recycled material and within the factory, a significant amount (15 to 20%) of powder is recovered from the spray booths to be blended with virgin powder or used as recycled powder for the painting of less critical surfaces such as inside panels.

Laminate & Edge Tape

We limit the number of laminate colours and thicknesses we offer so we can nest component parts from across our product ranges at time of purchase. This allows us to achieve little to no wastage on the sheet during production which stops off cuts from ending up in landfill.

Made from Bestwood Melamine or Laminex Melteca on E0 Substrate, our Laminates carry an Environmental Choice certification for EC-32-17 Furniture. All MDF substrate is manufactured using 100% plantation grown pine chip and wood waste and is sourced only from plantation grown radiata pine forests in New Zealand. Heavy metals are not present in the inks.

We have been working hard on development the last few years with a goal to remove all Laminate material from our KXN Kitchen by the end of 2024. With only one component left to convert we look forward to making this final step.

We use Proadec ABS Edge Tape on our laminate panels which is highly resistant to impact, abrasion, chemicals and UV light ensuring longevity in a variety of interior environments. They are free of plasticisers and lead and are produced using an environment-friendly, chlorine free, VOC free, UV paint technology and are UV and scratch resistant. It can be removed from the front at end of life and is 100% recyclable. ABS edgings are 100% recyclable and thermo-disposable. https://www.proadec.com/en/carbon-neutral/

Timber

We love using timber for its durability and longevity. It is a renewable resource, recyclable and biodegradable. Our local and imported timber products are sourced from well managed, sustainable forests. We do not use timber from intact natural forests or those with high conservation value.

Using natural wood veneer is a highly efficient way of conserving valuable timber. One block of 50mm solid timber can be sliced into 70 leaves of veneer, offering an excellent resource advantage compared to solid timber and helping preserve natural forest resources. We recommend the use of Reconstituted Veneer which has been sourced from sustainable managed forest environments.

We use water based two pack polyurethane and nontoxic oil finishes on our solid timber and veneer products. Our Osmo oil is solvent and lead-free and low in VOC's which meets or exceeds the most stringent U.S. Green Building Council standards for volatile organic compounds.

Foam

We use Dunlop Enduro Foam which is manufactured with air emissions below EPA approved levels and with no CFC emissions. Pieces are cut to size in the factory to eliminate waste. We also use Bonded Chip Foam to utilise the off cuts from the factory floor.

Textiles

We offer a range of fabrics and leathers from manufacturers with environmental certification. Leathers are recommended from tanning facilities that only use organic compounds and dyes, without the use of chromium, solvents, pentachlorophenol (PCP) or formaldehyde.

Repair and Reuse

The majority of the environmental impact of furniture is caused during the manufacture and disposal stages. It has been suggested that the sustainability of an item of furniture depends as much on the environmental impacts of its production as it does on the length of its service life. The service life depends on many factors including planning, product design, choice of materials, quality and use.

Our products are designed to last a lifetime, however, wants and needs can change over time. Our products are made from components that easily come apart so they can be refinished or parts replaced to give the product a new lease of life. The Kase Storage system is designed to adapt to change in the workplace and home – units can be expanded, retrofitted with accessories or disassembled and reconfigured. We have completed many retrofits for our Clients over the decades in both commercial and residential environments, further details can be provided if required.

If you no longer have a need for your Product, you will find a good resale market on second-hand goods platforms such as Trade Me where they retain their design value.

Recycling

The use of non-permanent fittings in our products enables the complete dissociation of the product into its basic components so they are easily separated from other components and can be refinished or parts replaced.

All steel components are recyclable and aluminium components can be scrapped for smelting where powder coated material is pyrolylised in the smelting process and aids in the heating process. Powder coated parts are placed in a furnace and baked to remove the coating, returning the components to their natural and raw state. Components can be then repurposed or recycled as they no longer contain contaminants. Fillers and clays contained in the powder coat material are extracted during the smelting process. Aluminium can be re-melted into billets and used as feedstock for new aluminium products. Up to 85% can be incorporated into new extrusions.

All cardboard packaging material is reused or recycled.

We believe in taking small, genuine steps to achieve our goal of becoming more sustainable. We still have a long way to go.