

PAPER  
RECYCLING



European Declaration  
on Paper Recycling  
2011 - 2015

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### DECLARATION FULLY IN LINE WITH THE EUROPEAN “CIRCULAR ECONOMY” – Statement of Commissioner Potočnik

Improving resource efficiency is one of my main priorities as European Commissioner for Environment. More efficient use of resources is essential to achieve our environment protection goals, but it is also one of the building blocks of our strategy to boost economic growth in Europe. Getting more out of less, and ensuring safe and reliable access to those raw materials that we do need is essential for our future competitiveness.

The tasks ahead of us are challenging: Today the European Union imports six times more materials and resources than it exports, and the demand of raw materials is expected to increase dramatically in the coming years. World population as well as consumption from emerging worldwide middle classes will continue to grow.

Global extraction of resources is expected to increase by around 75% in the coming 25 years.

In order to meet this challenging situation, new initiatives involving all actors will be necessary. All have to play their part: consumers, industry, NGOs and public authorities, from the local to the European level. In that sense, the present Declaration represents a noteworthy example of what can be done in practice to improve resource efficiency at all stages of the paper life cycle.

Since its adoption in 2000, the European Declaration on Paper Recycling has made a decisive contribution to achieving higher recovery and recycling rates. From many aspects the Declaration is remarkable: the approach is voluntary, yet since 2000 it has helped accomplish tangible progress in terms of recycling rates and in terms of prevention.

The Declaration has fostered dialogue between all actors implied along the whole value chain. It represents an integrated approach from meeting concrete results to developing ad hoc research and development activities.

The Declaration is fully in line with the European objective to build a "circular economy" aiming at using waste as resource. I am therefore happy to support the approach taken by the sector and to wish a long and successful life to this Declaration!



Janez Potočnik  
European Commissioner for Environment 2010-2014  
Brussels, September 2011



# Introduction

## Towards a common goal of sustainability - the European Declaration on Paper Recycling

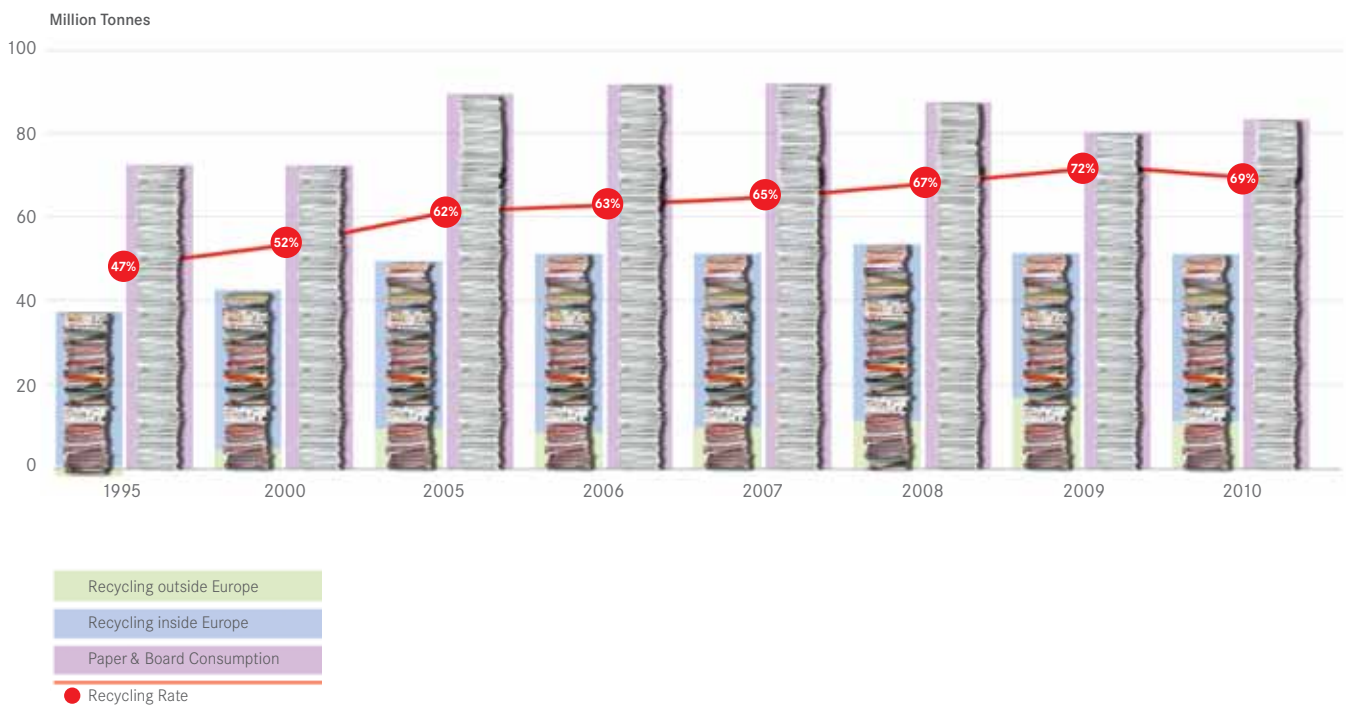
Recycling has formed an increasing part of the paper manufacturing process, linking directly or indirectly to a large number of sectors in the European economy. The voluntary European Declaration of 2000 promoting paper recycling has made a positive contribution to this process. It all brings us a step closer to the European Commission's goal of Europe as a 'circular economy', supporting Europe's sustainable development and long-term, robust growth and employment.

Paper is already one of the best managed raw materials, boasting high recovery and recycling rates. Even so, the industry commits to continuously improve. The paper value chain suggests, instead of simply "shrinking consumption", making paper consumption more sustainable, preserving the valuable contribution of the value chain to green growth and job creation in Europe.

Consequently, all of the Signatories and Supporters of this Declaration are willing to ensure that correct systems are in place to encourage paper recycling, building on the very positive progress made by the first European Declaration on Paper Recovery 2000 to 2005 and the European Declaration on Paper Recycling 2006 to 2010 (see [www.paperforrecycling.eu](http://www.paperforrecycling.eu)).

Together these sectors will continue on a sustainable path in paper recycling, making it possible to reach the new target of a 70% recycling rate by 2015.

### European Paper Recycling 1995-2010



# European Declaration on Paper Recycling

Paper is already one of the best managed raw materials, boasting high recovery and recycling rates. Even so, the industry strives to do better.



## GENERAL

### 1.1. OBJECTIVE

The European Declaration on Paper Recycling (the Declaration) will continue to set out measures to optimise the management of paper throughout the value chain from paper and board manufacturing, converting and printing through to the collection, sorting, transportation and recycling of used paper and board products back into the paper loop.

Signatories and Supporters of the Declaration accept voluntarily to undertake a number of complementary actions contributing to this target wherever technically possible and economically reasonable.

Priority is given to the prevention of waste including its environmental impact during the manufacture of paper and board products, through collection and recycling of paper. In exceptional cases where recycling is not possible, other options in the Waste Hierarchy can be considered.

These measures ensure that the quantity of used paper-based products destined for final disposal is reduced.

Close attention is also being paid to improving the recyclability and - where applicable - the deinkability of paper-based products. Combining these goals with continuing efforts to improve the quality of paper for recycling will undoubtedly help to reinforce its character as a major raw material for the paper industry. The industry aims to make optimum use of the characteristics inherent in different grades of paper for recycling, matching their properties with the requirements of the end product.

At the same time, the drive towards high levels of recyclability should also take into account the efforts expected from specific industry sectors to meet the requirements of environmental legislation.

### 1.2 PARTIES TO THE DECLARATION

#### 1.2.1 The following European associations are Signatories of the Declaration:

**CEPI** – Confederation of European Paper Industries

**CITPA** – International Confederation of Paper and Board Converters in Europe

**ERPA** – European Recovered Paper Association

**ETS** – European Tissue Symposium

**FEPE** – European Envelope Manufacturers Association

**INGEDE** – International Association of the Deinking Industry

**INTERGRAF** – International Confederation for Printing and Allied Industries

#### 1.2.2 The following European associations are Supporters of the Declaration:

**EADP** – European Association of Directory and Database Publishers

**EuPIA** – European Printing Ink Association, a sector of CEPE

**FEICA** – Association of the European Adhesive and Sealant Industry

**FINAT** – Worldwide Association for Self-Adhesive Labels and Related Products

**RadTech Europe** – European Association for the promotion of UV and EB curing

#### 1.2.3 Observers

The EU Commission is a permanent observer to the Declaration

### 1.3 ACCESSION OF OTHER PARTIES

The Declaration is open to other European associations, whose members are involved directly or indirectly in the paper value chain.

### 1.4 SCOPE - COVERAGE

The Declaration shall cover all paper and board products. It shall apply without prejudice to relevant European Community legislation and national legislation, which currently covers a number of issues related to the production, utilisation, recovery and recycling of paper and board.

The Declaration covers 29 countries: the 27 Member States of the European Union, as well as Norway and Switzerland. Countries like Croatia and Iceland may join the EU before 2015. In that case, these countries will be included in the Declaration scope and their paper consumption and recycling statistics will be included in the annual reporting.

All commitments are fixed at a European level as defined by this Declaration and the integration and cooperation between all the Parties to the Declaration should guarantee that the commitments are met at European level. Thus, none of the commitments are intended to apply to single countries or individual organisations or individual companies.

The Declaration attempts to provide complementary measures designed to ensure an environmentally sustainable paper value chain and good communication between the relevant stakeholders. The Declaration does not attempt to harmonise national systems or prejudice producer responsibility agreements or legislation at national level.

### 1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

To provide a broad and common understanding of this Declaration in Europe, an agreed terminology is necessary.

This is partly drawn from definitions that already exist in European Community legislation and partly based upon terms used in industrial and commercial activities within the European paper value chain.

These definitions are listed in the Glossary.



## REQUIRED POLICY CONDITIONS

Achieving the targets and commitments set out in this Declaration is conditional to meeting enabling conditions beyond the control of Parties to the Declaration.

Such enabling conditions cover areas such as renewable energy policy, collection systems decided by local or national authorities, global economy and policies impeding recyclability.

### 2.1 RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICY

Paper is based on wood, a renewable resource. It is therefore considered as biomass. Subsidies for renewable energy production allocated in the framework of feed-in tariffs or green certificates must not favour energy recovery of used paper above material recycling. Renewable energy policies must implement the Waste Hierarchy whereby material recycling is a priority over energy recovery. Paper fibres should only be used for energy generation at the end of its lifecycle when it can no longer be recycled into new paper.

**Support schemes for the use of renewable energy sources must not lead to the burning of paper.**

### 2.2 COLLECTION OF PAPER

Paper collection must at least remain at current high levels in countries where it already reached levels of above 70% and should still increase in countries where it is below 60%. Countries should develop appropriate and efficient collection systems.

To secure used paper collected in Europe can be recycled in the paper industry, multi-material collection schemes (“co-mingled collection”) where all recyclable materials are collected in one stream must not spread further in Europe and must be phased out where it already exists. Co-mingled collection leads to contact with organic materials, a higher share of unusable materials and refuse and is therefore less resource efficient and more costly. Countries where co-mingled collection is predominant today must make significant progress towards the targets on separate collection set out by the Waste Directive.

The Waste Directive (2008/98/EC) stipulates that with the view of facilitating or improving recovery - which will have to respect the Waste Hierarchy and environmental protection principles - and in order to “promote high quality recycling, waste shall be collected separately if technically,

environmentally and economically practicable and appropriate to meet the necessary quality standards for the relevant recycling sector”. If this is the case, “waste shall not be mixed with other waste or other material with different properties”.

**The provisions of the Waste Directive with respect to separate collection must be implemented and enforced throughout Europe.**

### 2.3 TRADE OF PAPER FOR RECYCLING

Paper for recycling is a global commodity which is traded internationally according to supply and demand. The net trade of paper for recycling was 8.4 million tonnes in 2010, mainly due to exports by Asian buyers, particularly China. In 2010, China imported 24.4 million tonnes of paper for recycling, mainly from Europe and North America.

The paper recycling chain in the EU can face problems because of exports of unprocessed waste paper by organisations which are not part of the recycling sector and by non-European trading companies installed in the EU.

Further increase of exports needs to be readdressed to ensure a safe, environmentally-friendly and reliable access to raw material for the existing and new recycling capacity in Europe and to maintain the competitiveness of the European paper recycling chain. The Commission Communication on Raw Materials (COM(2011)25 final) highlights the importance of the enforcement of the Waste Shipment Regulation and further actions to ensure environmentally-sound management in recycling facilities. All parties support this statement and commit to continue increasing the collection of paper for recycling and to maintain the collected volumes at high levels in Europe for further recycling.

**The increase in the collection of paper must be higher than the increase in the net trade of paper for recycling.**

### 2.4 RECYCLABILITY

Product-related policies should ensure that paper can be recycled at the end of its life cycle. The paper value chain has already made significant progress on recyclability of paper products. In some cases, European or national legislation may have objectives that conflict with the aim to improve recyclability.

**Conflicting policies and legislation preventing paper products from being recycled should be reviewed.**



## ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF PAPER FOR RECYCLING

#### 3.1.1 Collection for recycling - ERPA

The national associations and their member companies which are parties to the Declaration through ERPA will continue to commit themselves to maintaining high collection rates in order to reach the targeted recycling rate at EU level. More particularly, countries with less developed collection systems will commit themselves to continuously improve their collection systems and increase collected volumes.

#### 3.1.2 Recycling - CEPI

The European paper industry, the recycling sector, together with all concerned parties to the Declaration - and subject to the development of international market conditions - will endeavour to take the necessary measures that by the year 2015 70% of the paper and board products consumed in Europe are recycled.

This target is to be seen against the fact that 19% of paper and board products, on average, are not collectable (e.g. libraries, archives) or recyclable (e.g. hygiene papers, coffee filters).

#### 3.1.3 Recyclability:

- When correctly used for their intended purpose, printing inks and adhesive applications do not place workers or consumers at risk. All EuPIA members are committed to compliance with the EuPIA Exclusion List for Printing Inks and Related Products stating that toxic raw materials are not used at all, including raw materials known to be carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction.
- Where appropriate, EuPIA and FEICA will provide advice as to the suitability of recycled material for certain applications.

- Removability of adhesive applications – CEPI, CITPA, EADP, FEPE, FEICA, FINAT, INGEDE, INTERGRAF;  
The above associations promote the use of the scorecard of removability of adhesive applications<sup>1</sup> and commit to up-dating it when necessary.

- Deinkability – CEPI, EADP, EuPIA, FEPE, INGEDE, INTERGRAF, RadTech;  
The above associations promote the use of the de-inkability scorecard<sup>2</sup> and commit to up-dating it when necessary.

In addition to specific guidance, recyclability requires that sufficient information is exchanged for appropriate risk management and safe re-use of fibres. To that end, all parties to the Declaration will promote availability and facilitate exchange of information concerning their respective sector.

#### 3.1.4 Matters of common concern

All the Parties to the Declaration covered under sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.3 commit to ongoing discussion and collaboration on matters of common concern (printability and other fitness for purpose, recyclability, deinkability) with regard to used paper and board and paper and board products.

The participants shall strive for a mutual understanding concerning justified sectoral interests and common obligations.

### 3.2 NOTION OF COOPERATION

The aim of this Declaration is to enable collaborative life cycle thinking along the value chain in a systemic way without prejudice to the legal obligations of all the Parties to the Declaration. The Declaration does not create additional liabilities for the sectors and companies represented by the Parties to the Declaration beyond their own legal obligations.

### 3.3 PREVENTION OF WASTE

All the Parties to the Declaration shall endeavour to reduce the generation and environmental impact of waste during manufacturing, converting/printing and recycling processes to ensure the optimal and environmentally sound recycling of used paper and board products.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.paperrecovery.org/uploads/Modules/Publications/Removability%20Adhesive%20Applicationsfinal.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.paperrecovery.org/uploads/Modules/Publications/ERPC-005-09-115018A.pdf>

In general, the Declaration follows the Waste Directive definition of prevention meaning measures taken before a substance, material or product has become waste, that reduce:

- (a) the quantity of waste, including through the re-use of products or the extension of the life span of products;
- (b) the adverse impacts of the generated waste on the environment and human health; or
- (c) the content of harmful substances in materials and products where harmful means substances which, if they are inhaled or ingested or if they penetrate the skin, may involve limited health risks.

### 3.4 RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

All the Parties to the Declaration shall endeavour to increase the resource efficiency during manufacturing, converting/printing and recycling processes, in particular where there are interdependencies affecting resource efficiency along the value chain, to ensure the optimal and environmentally sound recycling of used paper and board products.

### 3.5 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

To further improve the recyclability and deinkability of paper and board products, all the Parties to the Declaration shall encourage and promote research and development in areas such as:

- paper and board manufacturing processes, along with raw and auxiliary materials and converting/printing technology
- processing technology regarding paper for recycling
- management and recycling of residues as means of increasing the eco-efficiency of recycling and reducing environmental impacts.

Information on these areas shall be made adequately available.

### 3.6 EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

All the Parties to the Declaration concerned shall take action to provide information that will help educate and raise the awareness of consumers and public bodies about their respective roles in completing the paper loop.

A common communication strategy will be considered and coordinated by the European Recovered Paper Council.



## EUROPEAN RECOVERED PAPER COUNCIL (ERPC)

### 4.1 THE PARTIES TO THE DECLARATION CONSTITUTE THE EUROPEAN RECOVERED PAPER COUNCIL

Details of the individual roles of these parties are stated in the By-laws which form an integral part of this Declaration.

4.1.1 The European Recovered Paper Council has the following tasks:

- to coordinate the commitments of all the Parties to the Declaration
- to take steps to improve the quality of the information available
- to discuss all relevant matters regarding the successful operation of the European Declaration
- to coordinate public information on the achievements of the European Declaration
- to produce annual reports

4.1.2 All the parties to the Declaration should collect the relevant information required on an annual basis.

The ERPC will compile and produce a joint report from this data. The report will include measures taken, progress achieved (with specific quantification when applicable) and verifiable information on the fulfilment of the commitments.

4.1.3 Representatives of the EU Institutions will be invited to attend the ERPC gatherings as observers.

### 4.2 DURATION AND REVISION

The Declaration will be valid for an unlimited period.

Reviews of this Declaration were based on the quantified recycling commitment for the years 2005 and 2010.

A further review will be based on the outcome of the recycling commitment for the year 2015 and a decision on a possible revision will be made accordingly.

# Glossary

TERMINOLOGY	DEFINITION
<b>Collection (of paper and board)</b>	Separate collection of paper and paper products from industrial and commercial outlets, from households and offices for → Recycling. (Collection includes transport to the sorting/processing or recycling plant/paper mill).
<b>Collector</b>	One who separately collects used paper and board; he may also have pre-processing (sorting, handling) transport or trade activities.
<b>Consumer</b>	Industrial, commercial or private end-user.
<b>Consumption (apparent)</b>	Internal deliveries into the defined countries (see 1.4) plus imports from countries outside this coverage.
<b>Converter</b>	Processor of paper or board as a raw material (such as packaging, printing).
<b>Deinkability</b>	Removal of ink and/or toner from a printed product to a high extent by means of a deinking process. This shall restore as good as possible the optical properties of the unprinted product.
<b>Distribution (of paper and board)</b>	Wholesale and retail trade of paper and paper material and products ensuring the link between the producer/converter or importer and the final consumer.
<b>Final disposal</b>	Definitive deposit of waste to landfill or incineration without energy recovery.
<b>Manufacturer</b>	Producer of paper and/or board.
<b>Merchant</b>	One who primarily buys, processes and sells paper for recycling; he may be actively involved in its collection.
<b>Packer/filler</b>	User of packaging material to distribute a product into marketable units.
<b>Paper</b>	Term used to cover all grades of paper and board.
<b>Paper for recycling</b>	Used paper and board separately collected and in general pre-processed according to the European Standard List of Recovered Paper and Board Grades (EN 643).
<b>Paper product</b>	General term used to cover all paper and board-based converted products.
<b>Paper value chain</b>	All parties, linked directly or indirectly in value creation, from paper and board manufacturer to collector/merchant of used paper and board products.
<b>Printer</b>	Manufacturer of printed products using paper or board as a printing surface (→ Converter).
<b>Publisher</b>	One who publishes (owns and brings to the market) products which are printed on paper.
<b>Recovered paper</b>	Outdated term used for → Paper for recycling.
<b>Recyclability</b>	Design, manufacturing and converting of paper-based products in such a way as to enable a high quality recycling of fibres and other materials in a manufacturing process in compliance – where appropriate – with current standards in the Community: as a minimum, recyclability requires that sufficient information is exchanged for appropriate risk management and safe re-use of fibres.
<b>Recycling</b>	Reprocessing of used paper in a production process into new paper and board.
<b>Recycling rate</b>	The ratio between recycling of used paper, including net trade of paper for recycling, and paper and board consumption.
<b>Trader</b>	One who buys and sells paper for recycling without any operational collection or processing activity.
<b>Waste</b>	Any substance or object which holder discards or intends or is required to discard.

## NOTE:

The new Directive 2008/98/EC on waste entered into force in December 2008 and will be implemented throughout the years covered by this Declaration. Specific implementation measures are expected. Most importantly, an end-of-waste for paper measure was being prepared by the European Commission during the adoption of this Declaration by the Parties to the Declaration. The Declaration is not expected to conflict with these legal measures but they may bring about additional changes and offer new opportunities not subsumed in this Declaration. To that end, the Declaration, as a voluntary measure, is flexible enough to respond to any changes in the legal framework.

## Signatories



[www.cepi.org](http://www.cepi.org)



[www.citpa-europe.org](http://www.citpa-europe.org)



[www.erpa.info](http://www.erpa.info)



[www.europeantissue.com](http://www.europeantissue.com)



[www.ingede.org](http://www.ingede.org)



[www.intergraf.org](http://www.intergraf.org)



[www.fepe.org](http://www.fepe.org)

## Supporters



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[www.finat.com](http://www.finat.com)



[www.radtech-europe.com](http://www.radtech-europe.com)



[www.eupia.org](http://www.eupia.org)

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