Press release

European Forest-Based Industries team up to empower consumers for a carbon-neutral European society

Brussels, 18 November

In light of the climate crisis, the European Forest-Based Industries, including the pulp, paper and other fibre-based product industries, the woodworking industries, the producers of furniture, the bio-energy sector and the printing industry, have come together to present their vision of the European society in 2050 and the essential role that they can play, delivering on the carbon neutrality goal.

The Forest-Based Industries (FBI) will provide the most competitive and sustainable net-zero carbon solutions. They will do that by:

- substituting CO2-intensive raw materials and fossil energy with forest-based alternatives
- eradicating waste and boosting recycling with a sector target of at least 90% material collection and 70% recycling rate for all wood-based products
- driving resource efficiency and enhancing productivity in all areas including materials, manufacturing and logistics

“Our solutions are made of a material that comes from a renewable and natural resource – European forests. The EU’s sustainably-managed forests produce today an overall climate mitigation impact amounting to 13% of European greenhouse gas emissions and keep absorbing CO2” said Jori Ringman, Director General of Cepi.

We will maximise the use of recycled fibres. Our paper products are easily recyclable and effectively recycled across Europe; the recycling rate of paper is already 71.6% today!

“We see the FBI industry commitment as a good way to empower consumers, providing them with more options to choose climate-friendly products. Wood-based solutions enable already today many sectors to reduce their environmental footprint, including construction” said Patrizio Antonicoli, Secretary-General of CEI-Bois.

As we can meet the society’s current and future needs with non-fossil materials, we anticipate a growing demand for wood and wood-based products that we expect to be translated into FBI market growth of 3% annually.

Our vision is also supported by the European forest owners, farmers, parquet industries and agricultural contractors.

While the implementation of this pioneering vision needs to overcome some hurdles, such as the need for accepted recyclability protocols at European level, new technological solutions that will radically change production processes, and a shortage of skilled workforce or market distortions, we plan to deepen our existing partnerships.
We will boost innovation through applied research and innovation programmes such as the Forest-based sector Technology Platform, and engage in market development, to ensure our innovative solutions are attainable for consumers in their daily lives.

Note to editor:
For more information about the Forest-Based Industries’ vision 2050, please contact Claire Couet, CEPI Public Affairs & Communications Director, at c.couet@cepi.org.

About CEPI:
CEPI is the pan-European association representing the forest fibre and paper industry. Through its 18 national associations CEPI gathers 495 companies operating more than 900 pulp and paper mills across Europe producing paper, cardboard, pulp and other bio-based products. CEPI represents 22% of world production, €82 billion of annual turnover to the European economy and directly employs more than 177,000 people. From forest fibre technology to advance paper design the industry currently invests 5.5 billion annually and is a leader of the low carbon circular bioeconomy transition. CEPI’s 2050 ‘Investment Roadmap’ outlines the industry’s vision to advance this transformation in Europe through value creation and decarbonisation.