Press release

Sustainable future of paper-based products:
First European recyclability guidelines for optimal packaging design

Brussels, 4 December

The use of paper for packaging purposes is growing every year, due to its excellent environmental performance but also to the increasing demand related to e-commerce and delivery services. There is a strong expectation from consumers, brands and retailers to have recyclable packaging material. A packaging recycling rate of 85% is already achieved today and the paper value chain continues to improve.

In order to achieve even higher recycling targets while expanding the functionality of paper based packaging, it is important to start from the design-phase, considering both the intended purpose as well as the end-of-life. The recyclability guidelines - developed by Cepi, CITPA, ACE and FEFCO, – give concrete guidance for designers to make sure functionality goes hand in hand with recyclability.

“Retailers and brand-owners exploring new fibre based solutions want to see their packaging back in the loop after use. With these guidelines the paper and board value chain gives the answer what this means and requires in practice. In this spirit Cepi co-launched the new alliance 4evergreen, together with more than 30 companies on 20 November. The aim of the alliance is to boost the contribution of fibre-based packaging in a circular and sustainable economy that minimises climate and environmental impact” said Ulrich Leberle, Raw Materials Director at Cepi.

In this context, the new European guidelines intend to become the go-to document to learn more about the implications of certain converting steps on the recyclability of used paper-based packaging. The signatories of the document hope they act as a source of inspiration for innovation and the introduction of new techniques. They are convinced that a widespread awareness among the value chain (including retailers and brand owners) can truly improve the recyclability of products. They are also convinced the guidelines will help meet national protocols and requirements and further close the circularity of our industry.
You can download a copy of the guidelines [here](#).

**Note to editor:**

For more information about CEPI or its vision for a climate-neutral Europe by 2050, please contact Claire Couet, CEPI Public Affairs & Communications Director, at c.couet@cepi.org.

**About CEPI:**

CEPI is the European association representing the paper industry. We offer a wide range of renewable and recyclable wood-based fibre solutions to EU citizens: from packaging to textile, hygiene and tissue products, printing and graphic papers as well as specialty papers, but also bio-chemicals for food and pharmaceuticals, bio-composites and bioenergy.

We are a responsible industry: 92% of our raw materials are sourced in Europe and certified as sustainable, 91% of the water we use is returned in good condition to the environment. We are the world champion in recycling at the rate of 71,6%. At the forefront of the decarbonisation and industrial transformation of our economy, we embrace digitalisation and bring 20 billion value addition to the European economy and €5.5 billion investments annually.

Through its 18 national associations, CEPI gathers 500 companies operating 895 mills across Europe and directly employing more than 180,000 people.