Compromise deal on timber proposal misses the point

Because illegal logging tarnishes the image of the entire forest-based sector and significantly distorts market conditions the European paper industry welcomes any proportionate initiative aiming at combating illegal logging. But CEPI (Confederation of European Paper Industries) is highlighting a loophole within the latest compromise text on the timber proposal from last week, which substantially weakens the value of the draft Regulation.

Indeed, the compromise deal does not include printed products. The EU imports some €3.2 billion’s worth of printed products annually*, and rising. Some 25 percent of this comes from China alone. For example, a quarter of all children’s books sold in Germany are printed in China. And yet, China has been identified by the European Commission itself as a major source of illegal logged wood.

By virtue of being converted into printed products, thousands of tonnes of paper could slip into Europe’s markets under the EU’s regulatory radar – circumventing rules with which papermakers inside the EU must comply. “It is to wonder what levels those imports must reach before Europe takes action!” says Teresa Presas, CEPI Managing Director.

“For years our industry has been advocating legal logging and promoting certification systems, this new compromise proposal will create extra administrative burden on top of our initiatives and ignore a potential big source of illegal fibre”, she adds.

At best the proposed legislation will favour non-European suppliers of printed products. At worst it will, in addition, see products based on illegally-logged sources reaching the European markets – the very situation the proposed legislation seeks to avoid.

Therefore, the industry urges the European Parliament and the European Council to require the European Commission not to wait for five more years before including printed products in the list of timber products subject to the Regulation.

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* Source: Eurostat

Note to the Editor


FSC Certification System: http://www.fsc.org/
PEFC Certification System: http://www.pefc.org/

CEPI aisbl - The Confederation of European Paper Industries.

The Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation regrouping the European pulp and paper industry and championing this industry’s achievements and the benefits of its products. Its mission is to promote the member’s business sector by taking specific actions notably, by monitoring and analysing activities and initiatives in the areas of industry, environment, energy, forestry, recycling, fiscal policies and competitiveness in general. Through CEPI, the paper industry increases its visibility and acts on emerging issues, making expert and constructive contributions on behalf of the industry.

Its collective expertise provides a unique source of information both for and on the industry; coordinating essential exchanges of experience and knowledge among its members, the ability to provide technical assistance to legislators and to identify independent experts on specific issues. Through its 19 member countries (17 European Union members plus Norway and Switzerland) CEPI represents some 760 pulp, paper and board producing companies across Europe, ranging from small and medium sized companies to multi-nationals, and 1080 paper mills. Together they represent 26% of world production.

Website: www.cepi.org