European paper industry calls for wood supply in line with EU policies

“Use of wood must have the same criteria of sustainability and efficiency whether it is used for paper manufacturing, furniture or energy,” stated Teresa Presas, CEPI Managing Director, at the Forest Protection Conference of the EU Presidency in Spain that closed today. “Forest protection, including biodiversity, must take into account on the one hand a EU raw material policy and external economic policy, and, on the other hand, environmental policy and energy policy,” she concluded.

When assessing environmentally harmful subsidies, the financial support to the use of biomass for renewable energy must be analysed in the light of its energy efficiency and the sustainability of its production and procurement. Wood for manufacturing is crossing the oceans into Europe because European wood is being burnt for energy.

CEPI – the Confederation of European Paper Industries - is very keen in contributing to a dialogue where all these complex aspects would be clearly laid out. Positive things are happening in the sector, but the industry needs clarity and consistency, it needs reconciling different policies related to forests and wood.

Already in 2007, a McKinsey study revealed that the implementation of the 20% target for renewable energy in 2020 will potentially generate a gap of wood supply of 200 - 250 million cubic meters. This is equivalent to the annual amount of wood needed for the whole European paper and wood working industries.

At this very day wood and paper mills had to stop production for lack of raw material, mainly due to absence of EU action on raw materials or conflicting policies. The future of the European paper chain is at risk.

The Green Paper on forest protection recently published by the European Commission and presented at the conference states clearly the need to optimise a sustainable wood supply, and proposes the development of new internal sources of wood. Making more wood available in a sustainable way is the only way to ensure there is enough raw material to keep industry running. The European paper industry is an expert in sourcing wood responsibly and in a sustainable manner.

Europe is expecting the EU2020 strategy as the direction for the next 10 years. The way forward must use an integrated approach of different policies and different needs, in order to secure our raw materials and to take Europe into a smart, sustainable, and inclusive economy.

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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