Secure future for industry needs action now

European Paper industry calls on European Commission to take leadership or risk jeopardising industry’s future

European leaders of the pulp and paper industry today launched its manifesto for competitiveness and employment during a meeting with the European Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry, Günther Verheugen, in Brussels. They sounded a stark warning that unless solutions are found quickly to respond to the economic crisis and that a more rational policy making approach is introduced the competitive transformation of their industry, and indeed all European industry, will be not be sustained.

Following the meeting with Commissioner Verheugen, Magnus Hall, CEO of Holmen and Chairman of the CEPI said: “The European Union cannot afford to let the pulp and paper sector and its related value chain slide into crisis. We must work together with the European Commission to identify the causes of the current problems, ensure that nothing is done to make a bad situation worse and build solutions together that deal with the real issues.”

Commenting on the manifesto Teresa Presas, Managing Director of CEPI said: “We have presented a clear list of areas where we believe the Commission can be forward thinking and provide the stimulus that industry needs. It must walk the talk and be consistent with the goals it has set for Europe”.

The key areas where the industry urges the European Commission to act include:

- Ensuring a better balance in policymaking between advocates of environmental, competitiveness and employment interests.
- Allowing Europe to compete with lower energy cost competitors
- Creating winners not victims in the EU Emissions Trading System
- Boosting the availability of raw materials and market access
- Applying flexibility to competition rules to facilitate restructuring
- Fighting protectionism in competing countries
- Turning innovation into a reality

More than ever, Europe needs to reconcile competitiveness and sustainability for its industry to thrive in a global market. For the European pulp and paper industry competitiveness is economics. Meeting this challenge depends largely on policy makers.

The pulp and paper industry is an example to others in its responses to the current challenges we face, not least in mitigating climate change. Its success is based on sustainability. We practice sustainable forest management, pursue security of energy supply through renewable energy, and optimise resources through the highest recycling rates. It is
a significant provider of employment, and adds economic value through the constant harnessing and updating of new technologies.

Unless fundamental support in policy making is forthcoming the unique achievements made by the industry in both sustainable production and consumption and the full potential to move forward will be lost and society as a whole will lose.

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Notes to the Editor

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.

Through its 18 member countries (16 European Union members plus Norway and Switzerland) CEPI represents some 800 pulp, paper and board producing companies across Europe, ranging from small and medium sized companies to multi-nationals, and 1200 paper mills. Together they represent 27% of world production.