Press Release

Brussels, 24 September 2009

World Record Recycling rate Achieved in Europe

Publishing its 2008 Monitoring report today the European Recovered Paper Council announced that it has achieved a world record level of paper recycling in 2008. The rate reached 66.6% which is even higher than the target set for in its Commitment for 2010 of 66%. The total amount recycled in paper mills came to 60.3 million tonnes, an increase of 8.2 million tonnes since 2004, the base year for the target the industry set itself.

“Despite the financial crisis hitting everyone in Europe the recycling rate jumped up, not down. This is a major success for the industry and shows that the infrastructure is in place to effectively collect and recycle paper in Europe.” explained Jori Ringman, Secretary of the ERPC.

“The rate has far exceeded our target and we are extremely pleased but we must also express caution. The recycling rate, which is the ratio between the recycling and consumption of paper, may fall temporarily when the economy recovers but recycling is an intrinsically self-adjusting mechanism which with a short time lag will adapt and allow the industry to continue to deliver steadily increasing recycling rates,” he added;

The 14 members of the Council have also made significant progress in the qualitative targets also laid out in its Commitment particularly with respect to eco-design, improved recyclability of products and in waste prevention. The ground-breaking, science-based work done jointly by the paper value chain has already resulted in guidance and practical tools which ensure that materials and methods can be chosen that do not hamper keeping paper in the recycling loop.

A particularly successful action was the voluntary substitution of the chemical Diisobutyl Phthalate (DIBP) from adhesives used by the industry with safe and cost-effective alternatives that protect food safety. “Over the last year the industry has proved again that it is committed and responsible by responding voluntarily to concerns raised in the field of food safety” Concluded Jori Ringman, Secretary of the ERPC.

For more information, please contact the ERPC Secretariat, Jori Ringman, at +32 2 627 49 19, +32 478 255070 (gsm), erpc@cepi.org or visit www.paperrecovery.eu
Notes to Editor:

- A graph depicting the suitability of various printing methods for removing ink in flotation deinking is attached and can also be found on page 4 of the monitoring report.

- The European Recovered Paper Council (ERPC) was set up after the successful launch of the first ‘European Declaration on Paper Recovery’ as an industry own-initiative in November 2000 with the aim to monitor the progress made towards meeting the targets set out in the European Declaration. In 2006 the industry committed itself to meet a voluntary recycling rate target of 66% in EU 27 plus Switzerland and Norway by 2010, which is higher than in any other region in the world, and qualitative targets in areas such as waste prevention, eco-design, and research and development.

- ERPC monitors the progress of the European Declaration openly and transparently and co-ordinates the joint work to achieve the set targets. Additionally, ERPC
  - coordinates the commitments of all the Signatories and Supporters.
  - takes steps to improve the quality of the information available.
  - discusses all relevant matters regarding the successful operation of the European Declaration.
  - coordinates public information on the achievements of the European Declaration.
  - produces annual reports.

- Members of ERPC are CEPI, CITPA, ERPA, ETS, INGEDE, INTERGRAF, FEPE. Supporters include the EADP, ENPA, EupIA, FAEP, FEICA, FINAT, RADTECH Europe. The European Commission, DG Environment and DG Enterprise, are permanent observers to ERPC.

- The Monitoring Report 2008 can be downloaded from www.paperrecovery.eu or you can request a paper copy by contacting ERPC.