Brussels, 10 September 2013

End-of-waste = End of recycling?

European Commission proposes end of recycling

The European Commission proposal on End-of-Waste (EoW) criteria for paper fails to address the objectives of increasing the quality and availability of paper for recycling and will have an adverse impact on making Europe a resource efficient recycling society.

Europeans are champions in paper recycling - but for how long? In 2012, 71.7% of paper consumed in Europe was recycled. Used paper has become the single most important raw material for the European paper industry with some mills being completely reliant on it for their feedstock. The Commission proposal threatens Europe’s ability to maintain its recycling rates for paper, let alone improve them.

The European Commission’s End-of-Waste criteria for paper move the recycling and EoW point from its current location at the paper mill to an earlier stage in the collection. As a result of this move ‘recycled paper’ will be unusable without further reprocessing.

“This is ‘recycled paper’, according to the Commission. CEPI challenges anyone to use it in their printer or to draft a legislative proposal on it”, remarked Jori Ringman, CEPI Recycling and Environment Director.

The Commission cannot demonstrate any environmental benefit for doing this. As a result the European paper industry fears the new legislation risks a lower quality of paper for recycling and poses a threat to current high levels of paper recycling. In fact, as the Waste Shipment Regulation would no longer apply, environmental impact will be negative.

The amount of impurities in the output of end-of-waste would be 15,000 times higher than they are at this moment. Annually this will mean 1 million tonnes of impurities such as plastic bags allowed by the
Commission in Europe. In addition, used paper that is no longer waste, shipped to countries outside of Europe would no longer be subject to equivalent environmental standards in the manufacture of paper products.

"With this proposal, the European Commission will be exporting pollution to the poor and importing unemployment to Europe", said Jori Ringman, CEPI Recycling and Environment Director. "It all works against the idea of the EU becoming a resource efficient recycling society as well as against the re-industrialisation of Europe."

For more information, pictures, video footage and interview requests, please contact Daniela Haiduc at d.haiduc@cepi.org, mobile: +32 473 562 936

Note to the Editor

CEPI news on end-of-waste

Commission proposal for end-of-waste

European Paper Recycling: monitoring report

CEPI aisbl - The Confederation of European Paper Industries
The Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) is a Brussels-based non-profit organisation regrouping the European pulp and paper industry and championing industry’s achievements and the benefits of its products. Through its 18 member countries (17 European Union members plus Norway) CEPI represents some 520 pulp, paper and board producing companies across Europe, ranging from small and medium sized companies to multi-nationals, and 950 paper mills. Together they represent 24% of world production.

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