A study commissioned by Sacs Papier de France and PROCELPAC (papier carton d’emballage), revealed that paper bags were better for the environment and existing life cycle analyses (LCA) need to improve their methodology to bring clarity.

Carried out by Ecobilan PricewaterhouseCoopers the environmental impact analysis in the study showed that paper presented the following advantages over plastic shopping bags:

- Less consumption of non-renewable energy (50 to 70% depending on the bags),
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (from 30 to 60%),
- Reduced waste production,
- Reduced photochemical oxidant production and
- Lower environmental risks associated with abandoned bags.

However it also shows that paper shopping bags are weaker on water consumption and eutrophication.

To be fair and avoid the generalization of the conclusions to product categories or materials, the analysis compares bags of similar size and with the same functionalities. Several existing LCAs lack accuracy in the comparison of such functionalities. Furthermore, existing LCAs do not take into account the exhaustion of resources, which would make paper more attractive, nor the fact that a large proportion of the water used in paper production can be returned to its origin for further use i.e. it is only used and not consumed.

The study was conducted with the support of the French environment agency ADEME, CEPI, Eurokraft, ETAPS, Eurosac, PaperPlus and Syndicat des Sylviculteurs du Sud Ouest.
A new website to communicate the benefits of using paper and board for packaging has been launched. It presents the positions of the paper and board packaging sector on the policies affecting it.

For more information, please visit www.renewablepackaging.eu.

Christian Verschueren appointed as new ACE Director General

Last June, Mr Verschueren joined the Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE) with extensive experience in leading business associations involved in environment, agriculture and food policies.

For the past 7 years, Mr Verschueren was Director General of CropLife International, the Global Federation of the Plant Science Industry. Prior to this, he was Secretary General of IFAH, the world Federation of the Veterinary Pharmaceutical Industry, and before that Director, Technical and International Affairs at IFAH Europe.

Paper Packaging Newsletter

The Paper Packaging Newsletter presents news on the whole chain of paper-based packaging. For more information, please visit www.renewablepackaging.eu.