
Press release

Combined positive impact of European forests and the EU forest-based sectors for climate neutrality:

the CO₂ mitigation effect corresponds to about 20% of the EU's annual emissions

Brussels, 4 March 2020

Cepi, the Confederation of European Paper Industries, welcomes the new European Climate Law launched today by the European Commission as a key step forward in our common efforts to respond to global warming.

“Our industry is committed to doing its part: we have already achieved a 27% reduction of carbon emission from 2005 to date, a leading performance amongst the ETS sectors. With a supportive and stable regulatory framework, we plan to continue and improve progress, as stated in [Cepi CEO initiative](#). We aim to be the most competitive and sustainable provider of solutions for a climate-neutral Europe in 2050” said Jori Ringman, Director General at Cepi, the Confederation of European Paper Industries.

The transition towards a carbon-neutral economy will have to build on strong European industrial value-chains. The European paper industry has already identified [a joint vision](#) for the Forest-based industrial value-chain, published in November, and is working to make the vision a reality.

According to our soon to be published study, **the combined positive climate impact of European forest (forest sink) and forest-based sector's net substitution effect (forest industry and forest products) reaches a total of more than -806 million tonnes of CO_{2e} every year, which corresponds to about 20% of the EU's annual emissions.**

One of the main contributions of forest-based industries is to valorise and ensure healthy forests by fostering their ability to absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere and enhance carbon storage. Likewise, almost as big as the forest sink in Europe, the contribution of the sectors' low-carbon products is significant.

“Our study shows that informed consumer choices, moving from high-carbon products to low-carbon products, have an immediate and important impact on Europe's goal to become carbon neutral”, Ringman says.

Cepi calls for an improved market access for recyclable and bio-based products, through a coherent product policy framework that allows for sustainable consumer choices.

This should go hand-in-hand with a policy framework that enables availability and access to responsibly sourced bio-based raw materials, through more support to sustainable forest management and high quality recycling in the paper industry.

Furthermore, reaching completely fossil-free value chains would require a plan for innovative solutions, with clear milestones for a timely and cost-efficient decarbonisation of the European energy system. *“Advancing promptly in affordable supply of clean energy, in particular for gas, is an obvious prerequisite for achieving the new ambitious target set for 2030. We need the EU to plan energy transition with milestones matching today’s targets”*, says Ringman.

These elements should be an integral part of European and national measures aimed at making the European Climate Law a reality.

Note to editor:

For more information about Cepi or its position on the European Climate Law, please contact Claire Couet, Public Affairs & Communications Director, at c.couet@cepi.org.

About CEPI:

Cepi is the European association representing the paper industry.

We offer a wide range of renewable and recyclable wood-based fibre solutions to EU citizens: from packaging to textile, hygiene and tissue products, printing and graphic papers as well as speciality papers, but also bio-chemicals for food and pharmaceuticals, bio-composites and bioenergy.

We are a responsible industry: 92% of our raw materials are sourced in Europe and certified as sustainable, 91% of the water we use is returned in good condition to the environment. We are the world champion in recycling at the rate of 71,6%. At the forefront of the decarbonisation and industrial transformation of our economy, we embrace digitalisation and bring 20 billion value addition to the European economy and €5.5 billion investments annually.

Through its 18 national associations, Cepi gathers 500 companies operating 895 mills across Europe and directly employing more than 180,000 people.