
Press release

Paper industry presents main decarbonisation pathways to 2030 during annual conference Paper & Beyond

Brussels, 17 November 2020

2030 is a pivotal year for the decarbonisation of Europe. It is the year by which the European Union must have significantly reduced its emissions, by 40% as a minimum, and even up to 55% if the more ambitious target proposed is to be adopted.

For any industrial sector, reaching these figures, particularly after the economic crisis deriving from the pandemic, requires significant investments towards clean and efficient energy sources, as well as a renewed policy framework opening the market to sustainable products made from renewable materials.

“The European paper industry has a unique role to play in the fight against climate change by offering immediate and affordable solutions. We have a vision on how we can contribute, and we could do even more with the right regulatory environment. Our 2030 Industry Manifesto published today maps out the ways in which we can deliver potential for carbon reduction. With substantial and targeted support from the EU as part of its Green Deal legislative package, these factors can play an essential role in reducing carbon emissions, potentially exceeding the already ambitious targets.” commented Ignazio Capuano, Cepi chairman, in occasion of the Manifesto’s launch during the 2020 edition of Cepi’s annual conference, [Paper and Beyond](#).

Our manifesto identifies the three main catalysts for our decarbonisation effort:

Product substitution: Our industry can provide climate-friendly substitutes to fossil-based, carbon-intensive products currently on the market, potentially creating a multiplier effect through our expertise in the circular economy.

The European Union should help create new markets for renewable bio-based products and ensure there is a steady supply of recyclable raw materials, like high quality virgin fibre. Furthermore, recycling could be further enhanced through improvement and harmonisation of the European waste collection systems.

Sustainable forest management: Forests are essential in our fight against climate change. They support biodiversity and act as a carbon sink. Our industry, together with our forest-based industrial partners, contributes to their active and timely management, leading to effective reforestation, regeneration of harvested areas and safeguarding biodiversity. A strategic EU-wide framework for forest management would significantly boost and support our work. The framework would need to look at data-based socio-economic indicators for biodiversity to determine the availability of forests, help support their regeneration and ensure the application of our industry standards in other sectors and regions of the world.

Emission reduction in production processes: We have already achieved significant results in our decarbonisation efforts. The emissions still present are almost entirely due to energy consumption. While increasing energy costs would simply make the European industry less competitive, we do believe more can be achieved through a renewed European industrial strategy aimed at promoting carbon-neutral production in Europe.

This strategy should support and reward investments in reducing emissions through energy efficiency, CO₂ avoidance and renewables. It should pave the way for broader availability for carbon-neutral energy sources, and secure effective protection for our sector against the risk of carbon leakage.

“The Green Deal is not just a political programme by Ursula von der Leyen: it is a tsunami of policy and legislation that will profoundly change businesses and industry – ours included. It is now that our future is being decided! Our industry in Europe has already moved very far in its effort towards decarbonization and sustainability, in spite of the difference between companies in processes and products and even in access to resources due to different geographical locations. We are now ready to move to the next steps and we are sure the European Union can see the unique added-value we can bring” said Jori Ringman, Cepi’s Director General.

Note to editor:

For press inquiries, please contact **Claire Couet, Cepi 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 to the environment, in good condition. 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.

More information about our sustainability performance [here](#).

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