

Press release

International Council of Forest and Paper Associations releases global sustainability progress report

Brussels, 29 April 2021

Today, the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations ([ICFPA](#)) released its biennial [Sustainability Progress Report](#) which demonstrates progress in seven key areas of sustainability.

The ICFPA serves as a forum for global dialogue, coordination and co-operation among 18 pulp, paper, wood and fibre-based associations across 28 countries. Cepi represents the European voice within the ICFPA: Jori Ringman, Cepi Director General, is a member of the ICFPA steering committee.

The 2021 ICFPA Sustainability Progress Report shows progress on nearly all of the sector's performance indicators, using the most recent data available (2018-2019). The 2021 report also highlights the forest products sector's global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The ICFPA sustainability progress report shows that the forest-based industry can make the green transition happen, not only in Europe pushed by the ambitious European Green Deal but also at global level. The European pulp and paper industry's priority throughout the COVID crisis has been to ensure that EU citizens can access the products they need for hygiene, health and food purposes. We offer immediate and affordable solutions to build a climate-friendly and sustainable society," commented Jori Ringman, Cepi Director General.

Key progress on ICFPA's sustainability performance indicators include:

- In 2019, **52.6 percent of procured wood fibre came from third-party certified sustainably-managed forests**, a 41 percentage point increase from the 2000 baseline year.
- **Greenhouse gas emission intensity decreased 21 percent** from the 2004/2005 baseline year.
- The **energy share of biomass and other renewable fuels increased to 64.9 percent**, a 12 percentage point increase since 2004/2005.
- **Sulphur dioxide emission intensity from on-site combustion sources decreased 77 percent** from the 2004/2005 baseline year and 38 percent from the previous report.
- **Water use intensity decreased 12.5 percent** from the baseline year.
- Investment in health and safety interventions yielded a **30 percent reduction in the global recordable incident rate** from the 2006/2007 baseline with the number of recordable incidents falling to 2.88 per 100 employees annually.

- In 2019, **59.1 percent of paper and paperboard consumed globally was used by mills to make new products**, marking a 12.6 percentage point increase in the global recycling rate since the year 2000.

The 2021 ICFPA Sustainability Progress Report also includes the 2021 International Finalists for the prestigious [ICFPA Blue Sky Young Researchers and Innovation Award](#). The theme for the 2020-2021 Blue Sky Awards was “Boosting the Forest Bioeconomy: Nature-Based Solutions Toward a Lower Carbon Economy.”

Every year, Cepi also holds its Blue Sky Young Researchers Award contest, an opportunity for forest sector researchers and professionals to showcase how their game-changing ideas, practices, processes, and technologies are advancing the global bioeconomy while sustaining the natural environment. The European laureates are automatically submitted to the global ICFPA contest.

Note to editor:

For press inquiries, 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 to the environment, in good condition. We are the world champion in recycling at the rate of 72%. 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.