

Press release

Ilkka Härmälä, President and CEO of Metsä Group is the new Chairman of Cepi, the Confederation of the Paper and Pulp Industry

Thursday Nov. 18, 2021-11-16

As of January 2022, Ilkka Härmälä takes over from his predecessor Ignazio Capuano as Chairman of Cepi, one of the leading and most influential trade association representing the forest and bio-based industry sector in Brussels, the capital of the European Union. His mandate will last for two years.

Mr. Härmälä has since 2018 been the President and CEO of Metsä, a forest industry group originated in Finland and operating in about 30 countries. The Group's annual sales is roughly EUR 5.5 billion and it employs some 9,300 people worldwide. Metsä Group's parent company is Metsäliitto Cooperative, which is owned by approximately 100,000 Finnish forest owners representing almost half of Finland's private forests, which are some of the largest in the European Union. During his career, Mr. Härmälä has held various high-level positions within Metsä Group, starting his career in the company in 1988.

The outgoing Chairman Mr. Capuano, a strong supporter of the modernisation of the paper and pulp industry, oversaw during his tenure the alignment of the sector with the objectives of the EU Green Deal, now at the stage of a legislative proposal by the European Commission and the EU's main instrument in reaching the Union's climate objectives. He saw the Green Deal as an opportunity for an industry which everyday products are meant to offer sustainable options and alternatives to more carbon-intensive goods.

Mr. Härmälä will be taking over in what is a challenging global economic and political environment. As the face of an industry which is often seen as a role model for its commitment to sustainability, he will continue the work of his predecessor, working hand-in-hand with EU Institutions in support of the European Green Deal, while ensuring that the industry remains competitive and that a safe regulatory environment enables the investments necessary for it to further transform, innovate and achieve its emission reductions targets, in line with the EU's climate ambitions.

Note to editor:

For press inquiries, please contact Piotr Pogorzelski, Media Relations Manager, at p.pogorzelski@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.