

Press release

Cepi joins forces with actors across the paper value chain and testing labs to update its European test method for paper recyclability

Brussels, October 7th, 2022

*Cepi has unveiled today the update of its European harmonised recyclability test method, developed in collaboration with actors from the entire paper value chain, including specialised testing laboratories. Essential to the project was the support of 4evergreen members, which over a 9-month period carried out a battery of tests that informed the improvements of the method and the development of three technical annexes. The method is particularly relevant to the paper packaging industry. Many paper packaging solutions already enjoy high recycling rates, but are also increasingly fulfilling new functionalities. These need to be considered by brand owners aiming to reach ever higher performance in terms of circularity and sustainability for their products. Design guidelines and evaluation protocols are developed to support value chain actors in these efforts, with the end **goal to make all paper packaging recyclable by 2025 and reach a recycling rate of 90% by 2030**. The updated Cepi harmonised recyclability test method offers a solid basis for this work and allows paper products across Europe to be tested for their recyclability in identical conditions.*

The testing method allows to emulate in laboratory conditions the processes taking place at industrial scale in paper recycling mills. Its new annexes were **developed through intensive work provided by companies involved in 4evergreen. The workstream established a ‘reality check’ of the method** and informed the efforts of testing institutes. [4evergreen is an alliance](#) bringing together the entire fibre-based packaging value chain, including a number of global blue-chip companies. The three new technical annexes include a detailed work description of the test method, a lab report template and a ‘decision tree’ for the assessment of visual impurities.

4evergreen will soon release a ‘recyclability evaluation protocol’, which will provide packaging developers with 'pass through' criteria based on the updated recyclability testing method. This will further support the industry in producing fibre-based packaging compatible with a low-carbon, climate-neutral society.

Download the [Harmonised European laboratory test method for paper recyclability](#).

Download the [Annexes to the Harmonised European laboratory test method for paper recyclability](#).

Quotes

"To optimise recycling, product design is just as important as the final collection and processing after usage. This is why one needs to be able to involve all value chain actors into the effort of improving recyclability. We hope that this work will support the EU's transition to a resilient, circular economy."

Jori Ringman, Director General – Cepi (Confederation of the European Paper Industries)

"The method developed together by the actors gathered by Cepi and 4evergreen provides a comprehensive toolkit to boost recyclability validation across Europe in a harmonised way."

Hans Wortman, Chair of the 4evergreen Alliance

Notes to editor:

For press inquiries to Cepi, please contact Piotr Pogorzelski, Media Relations Manager, at

E: p.popogorzelski@cepi.org

T: +32.4.95.12.67.88

For more information on Industry commitments, please consult

[Cepi's Sustainable Product Pledge,](#)

[Cepi's Pledge to support the 3 billion trees initiative.](#)

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: 85% of our raw materials are sourced in Europe and certified as sustainable, 92% of the water we use is returned in good condition to the environment. We are the world champion in recycling at the rate of 71.4%. At the forefront of the decarbonisation and industrial transformation of our economy, we embrace digitalisation and bring 21 billion value addition to the European economy and €4.5 billion investments annually. Through its 18 national associations, Cepi gathers 490 companies operating 885 mills across Europe and directly employing more than 179,000 people.

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

About 4evergreen:

4evergreen was formed in 2019 out of a desire to explore various challenges in fibre-based packaging and provide the industry with guidelines and recommendations for sustainability practices. Our goal is to raise the overall recycling rate of fibre-based packaging in Europe to 90% by 2030. Our member companies represent the whole fibre-based packaging value chain and employ 2,6 million people all over the world. All of them have set ambitious targets, clearly showcasing their commitment to addressing the most pressing global challenges.

For more information about 4evergreen please consult: <https://4evergreenforum.eu/>