
Press release

European Commission proposal on packaging and packaging waste could build a world class circularity model where reuse and recycling are complementary

Brussels, 30 November 2022

A [proposal for a revised Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation](#), tabled today by the European Commission, builds on the performance of the EU industry's recycling model for paper and board packaging. The paper industry now calls for a science-based evaluation of recyclable and reusable options.

Recycling is today the first source of fibres for the pulp and paper sector and 'circularity' is part of a business model that places [Europe as the global recycling champion](#). In the EU, paper and board packaging is recycled more than all other materials combined. Paper and board also already far exceeds legal recycling targets set for 2025, which are the most stringent amongst all materials. Nevertheless, **paper producers and recyclers have pledged to reach a 90% recycling rate by 2030, which is higher than the current legal requirement of 85%**. To achieve this, one prerequisite would be to improve the separate collection of paper and board throughout Europe.

The paper and board industry recognises that recyclable and reusable options are complementary, and that the EU could also achieve higher circularity by supplementing its successful recycling model with reuse systems. But the performance of reuse systems will now have to match that of the paper and board industry's recycling model. Notably, targets set in the new proposal should concentrate on markets where circularity performance needs to be improved, and **decisions to go for either recyclable or reusable packaging should be based on independent science-based proof of their respective environmental benefits**.

Quotes

"It is important to understand that we are not against reuse. Independent environmental impact evaluation, as established in the Waste Framework Directive, should be how we decide to go for recycling or reuse. Neither recyclers or 're-users' would want to bear responsibility for a failing environmental model."

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

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For more information on Industry commitments, please consult

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

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

[The 4evergreen cross-industry alliance](#).

For our latest industry statistics, please refer to

[Cepi Key Statistics 2021](#)

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](#).