

PRESS RELEASE

European Pulp and Paper Industry welcomes the signing of the EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement and urges EU Parliament for a Swift Ratification

Brussels, 17 January 2026

The Confederation of European Paper Industries (Cepi) calls on the European Parliament to ratify of the EU-Mercosur Partnership Agreement (EMPA), emphasising its potential to eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers and foster growth for European pulp and paper companies, which are some of the strongest exporters amongst EU manufacturing sectors.

The proposed agreement aims to remove tariffs on over 90% of goods exchanged between the EU and Mercosur countries, including **the elimination of tariffs on 85% of pulp and 90% of EU paper and board exports to Mercosur. This move opens new markets for European producers which have been in an imbalanced trade relationship with their South American counterparts.** Since 2004, the EU has maintained zero import tariffs on pulp, paper, board, and related products, including those from Mercosur nations. In contrast, Mercosur countries have imposed high tariffs on European exports, creating an uneven competitive landscape. Given that the EU has already removed its tariffs for more than twenty years, the agreement should not lead to any significant surge in pulp and paper imports from Mercosur countries.

While commercial ties between the EU and the United States have become tensed, **EU-Mercosur exchanges of pulp and paper remain particularly interdependent.** Europe is a net exporter of high-quality paper and board products globally, but it is also a significant importer of market pulp from the Mercosur, an important raw material in papermaking.

The agreement includes a strengthened Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) chapter with a legally binding annex. This annex sets clear commitments to halt deforestation and enhances cooperation on sustainable supply chain development. It marks **the first instance where countries involved in such an agreement have made individual legal commitments on deforestation, subject to dispute settlement.** Cepi underscores the importance of strict implementation and enforcement of the TSD chapter to ensure that environmental and labour standards are upheld. Both Europe's pulp and paper industry and the Brazilian forest industry have already [committed to preventing illegal logging and deforestation](#).

The 'Mercosur agreement' represents the EU's largest formal trade deal to date, aiming to deepen trade relations at a time when both Europe and Mercosur countries both need to diversify their partnerships. **Cepi urges the European Parliament to ratify the agreement promptly, enabling it to enter into force and open new horizons for the EU.**

Quotes from Jori Ringman, Cepi Director General

"The European pulp and paper industry believes in free trade and fair competition principles, but not only. We do not compromise on our sustainability principles and prefer to trade and compete with players who abide by the same climate, environmental and social rules that we do."

"Europe's pulp and paper sector remains a strong exporter. We advocate for rules-based trade and reliable partnerships to remain the standard in the dynamic and fast-moving global trade landscape."

Notes to editor:

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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](#)

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 specialty papers, but also bio-chemicals for food and pharmaceuticals, bio-composites and bioenergy.

We are a responsible industry: 91% of our raw materials are sourced in European Union 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 75.1%. 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 19 national associations, Cepi gathers 470 companies operating 842 mills across Europe and directly employing more than 174,000 people.

More information about the [European pulp and paper sector sustainability performance](#).