

## Introduction



**Paper has been around for almost 2000 years, and during this time it has undoubtedly established itself as the most effective and versatile means of communication.**

Even in today's digital age with the availability of alternative media, paper's unique practical and aesthetic qualities simply can't be achieved by using electronic alternatives. That's not to say that one is less suitable than the other. Both paper-based & electronic communication have a role to play and can compliment each other.

In recent years, however, paper has been the target of negative and often misinformed environmental criticism. Listening to some people, its benefits are outweighed by the mass of misleading environmental disadvantages; shrinking forests, excessive energy consumption, and overflowing landfill sites. So as far as the environment is concerned, paper appears bad.

It isn't and paper doesn't have to cost the earth. While paper does use trees, its production does consume energy and too often, waste paper ends up in landfill sites, it is also one of the few truly renewable and recyclable raw materials we have.

As an industry, we have generally responded to accusations in a reactive & uncoordinated way. And yet we have one of the strongest stories to tell. Wood fibre has the opportunity to renew itself naturally and be reused often, so despite the barrage of criticism, there are two sides to paper and it does have a strong environmental story to tell.

In response, the NAPM has launched 'Two Sides', an industry-wide initiative to address these criticisms, to educate the paper-buying public of the true facts so they can make informed choices, while at the same time, promote responsible paper use. The key focus is to encourage people to question and challenge their existing wisdom about paper, to counteract the impact of the current environmental lobby against the paper industry, and arrest the guilt surrounding the use of paper.

However, changing public perception will take time and effort, so for 'Two Sides' to be successful, the print and paper industries need to speak with a common voice to dispel the myths and present the real facts.

**THE MYTH:  
MAKING PAPER  
DESTROYS FORESTS.**

**THE FACT:  
NO, IN FACT,  
THE OPPOSITE  
IS TRUE.**



The main constituent of paper is cellulose fibre which generally comes from trees, but this doesn't automatically equate to the destruction of forests. Papermaking and other industries that depend on trees need thriving forests. It's in their interest.

**'Almost half of the timber harvested from the world's forests is used to make paper products, so the paper industry has a huge opportunity to make sure that those forests are responsibly managed and will be here for generations to come'**

FSC

In managed forests, for every tree cut down, three to four are replanted in its place. It's estimated that there are 25% more trees in the developed world today than there were in 1901, and in Europe alone, forests are increasing annually by an area equivalent to more than 1.5 million football pitches.

Deforestation is generally occurring in the tropics but for a variety of reasons. The main cause of deforestation is either for agriculture or for domestic fuel requirements, which between them, account for almost half of the trees cut down worldwide.

There have been, and continue to be in some tropical countries, issues over land rights and natural forest conversion to industrial plantations which are cause for concern to the paper industry, NGOs and consumers alike.

In northern Europe, where almost all ancient forests are protected, paper comes from managed semi-natural forests where the cycle of planting, growing and logging is carefully controlled. Even in countries where natural forests are used, like Russia and Canada, logging accounts for only a tiny share of the annual tree growth.

**'Forestry, paper and packaging are among the most sustainable industries in existence'**

CEO Perspectives 2008, Price Waterhouse Coopers

One of the many unique things about paper is that its main raw material, is renewable. Combined with the sustainable way that European forests are managed, this means that 33% more new trees grow in Europe each year than are felled.

**THE MYTH:  
PAPER IS BAD FOR  
THE ENVIRONMENT.**

**THE FACT:  
NO, PAPER IS  
ONE OF THE FEW  
TRULY SUSTAINABLE  
PRODUCTS.**



**For every tree that is logged in managed forests, three to four trees are replanted. And as young trees grow, they absorb CO2 from the atmosphere. Furthermore, as a wood product, paper also continues to store carbon throughout its lifetime.**

Fortunately, the paper industry has a number of respected certification schemes ensuring the paper you use has come from a sustainable forest source. There are some 30 schemes in existence, but the two main auditable certifications that have emerged are the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).

At the moment too few of the world's forests are formally certified but the NAPM actively supports certification programmes and believe these provide consumers with reassurance.

**The amount of carbon stored in products is increasing by about 540 million tons of CO2 per year'**

NCASI Special Report 07-02

**FSC** (Forest Stewardship Council)

FSC provides global standards for forest management which cover a balance of environmental, social and economic aspects. The wellbeing of forest communities and ecosystems is as important as replacing trees in ensuring the future of the world's forests. The FSC system also provides a way of tracking forest products through independently verified Chain of Custody certification. This has to cover every stage in processing, conversion, distribution and printing before the final product can carry the FSC label.

**PEFC**

The PEFC Council (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, founded in 1999 which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification.

The PEFC provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that they are promoting the sustainable management of forests.

- **Paper production is not a major cause of deforestation**

- **Industrial wood, pulp and paper production saves forests**

- **Paper is a fully renewable, sustainable resource**

- **For every tree logged in managed forests, 3-4 are replanted**

- **Forest certification promotes wood from managed forests**

- **We plant more trees than we harvest for making paper**

- **The annual increase of forest cover in Europe is equivalent to more than 1.5million football pitches**

**THE MYTH:  
THE PAPER I USE  
CONSUMES A  
VAST AMOUNT  
OF ENERGY.**

**THE FACT:  
IT DOESN'T.**

People mistakenly think paper making is a voracious energy consumer. But look more closely and you'll discover some surprisingly small statistics about paper and energy...

As industries go, paper making is a large scale undertaking and you'd expect it to generate some frightening statistics. It doesn't. On average it takes 500 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity to produce 200kg of paper, the average amount of paper that each of us consume each year.

**' The European pulp and paper industry is strongly in favour of renewable energy and has declared an intent that commits the industry to increase the share of biomass-based energy in its total primary energy consumption from 49% in 2001 to 56% in 2010'**

CEPI

**Does 500 kilowatt-hours sound a lot?**

**It's the equivalent to:**

- Powering one computer continuously for five months
- Burning a 60w light bulb continuously for one year
- The energy consumed by a typical household leaving its electronic equipment on stand-by for a year.

Paper & the Environment, ATS Consulting August 2007



**THE MYTH:**  
**RECYCLED PAPER IS ALWAYS BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT THAN VIRGIN PAPER.**

**THE FACT:**  
**NOT NECESSARILY.**



**According to a survey of professional media buyers, 70% of respondents perceived recycled paper to be better for the environment than virgin paper.**

It isn't as straightforward as you might think. While recycled paper does reduce waste paper going to landfill, you must also consider paper's full life cycle and not just the fibre source. Modern paper mills producing virgin fibre paper, whose energy source is nuclear, hydro or internally bio-fuelled, may well have a lower carbon footprint than a mill making recycled paper, powered by fossil fuels. And it's important to remember that virgin fibre is always required to make recycled paper possible in the first place. For these reasons, it is very difficult to directly compare the environmental impact of recycled and virgin fibre paper.

**The paper industry has eight representatives in the UN's list of the world's 100 most sustainable companies, more than any other industry'**

Promotion of Paper

Australian Paper Industry Association, 2008

Both virgin and recycled paper products can therefore have an equally strong environmental argument. Forests are part of the cycle that helps remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. This extends from trees to wood and paper products, which continue to store the carbon and help to reduce climate change. The fact that paper products are recyclable and renewable means that their lifecycle can be extended, prolonging this benefit and reducing waste into the bargain.

Like so many stories, there are two sides to the story of paper, but the more you know, the better placed you are to make the right decision.

- The paper industry is one of the biggest users of renewable, low carbon energy
- Half the energy used to make paper in Europe comes from renewable sources
- Very often, the water used to make paper is cleaner when it comes out of the mill than when it goes in
- Growing forests absorb carbon dioxide helping to counter the Greenhouse Effect

**THE MYTH:  
PAPER CONTRIBUTES  
SIGNIFICANTLY TO  
LANDFILL.**

**THE FACT:  
WHILE PAPER STILL  
DOES CONTRIBUTE  
TO LANDFILL,  
THE AMOUNT IS  
REDUCING  
DRAMATICALLY.**

**The paper industry is Europe's largest recycler and is one of the greatest environmental success stories of recent years.**

Today, the average recycling rate across European countries is over 62%, representing more than 50 million tonnes of used paper collected each year.

Paper fibres can be recycled up to six times, and recycling is certainly the best way to keep waste paper out of landfill. Where the UK is unable to use all the waste fibre collected, the material is exported, thus reducing the worldwide need for virgin fibre.

So paper has excellent credentials as a renewable, sustainable and recyclable product, and managed paper production has a positive environmental impact. At the same time, a responsible use of paper and attitude to recycling will have an even greater environmental benefit.

**'When people use more paper, suppliers plant more trees. If we want bigger commercial forests, then we should use more paper not less. Our policies should directly protect important wildlife habitats, not try to reduce our demand for paper.'**

Edward L. Glaeser,

Professor of Economics at Harvard University

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- Paper fibres can be recycled up to six times
- Paper is truly sustainable, with waste fully recoverable ready for recycling into new paper
- Since 2001, there has been a 60% increase in the amount of household waste paper and card collected for recycling
- The UK exports over 5 million tonnes of waste paper for re-processing



As you have now read, there are two sides to paper and you should now feel confident about using it. Paper is renewable, recyclable and produced by an environmentally-conscious industry whose future depends on planting more trees than it consumes and which is progressively improving standards in the whole supply chain.

**‘There aren’t many industries around that can aspire to becoming genuinely sustainable. The paper industry, however, is one of them; it is inherently sustainable.’**

**Jonathan Porritt, Chairman UK Sustainability Development Commission & Founder Forum for the Future**