

# EUROPEAN DECLARATION ON PAPER RECYCLING 2016-2020







# A VALUE CHAIN APPROACH TO THE EUROPEAN CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Recycling has formed an increasing part of the paper manufacturing process, linking directly or indirectly to a large number of sectors in the European economy. The voluntary European Declaration of 2000 promoting paper recycling has made a positive contribution to this process. And it all brings us a step closer to the European Commission's goal of Europe as a "circular economy", supporting Europe's sustainable development and long-term, robust growth and employment.

Industry has already increased recycling rates to high levels. However, different patterns in consumption, new technologies and diversifying application of paper-based solutions make it challenging to maintain recycling rates, which are now starting to reach a theoretical maximum.

Even though recycling rates are levelling out, the industry remains committed to continuously improving in an increasingly challenging context.

For example, the demand for complex packaging solutions is expected to increase and there will be more multi-material products on the market. The more complex products become, the more important is a joint approach along the value chain to best address recyclability and recycling. The paper value chain suggests, instead of simply "shrinking consumption", making paper consumption more sustainable. This will preserve the significant contribution of the value chain to green growth and job creation in Europe.

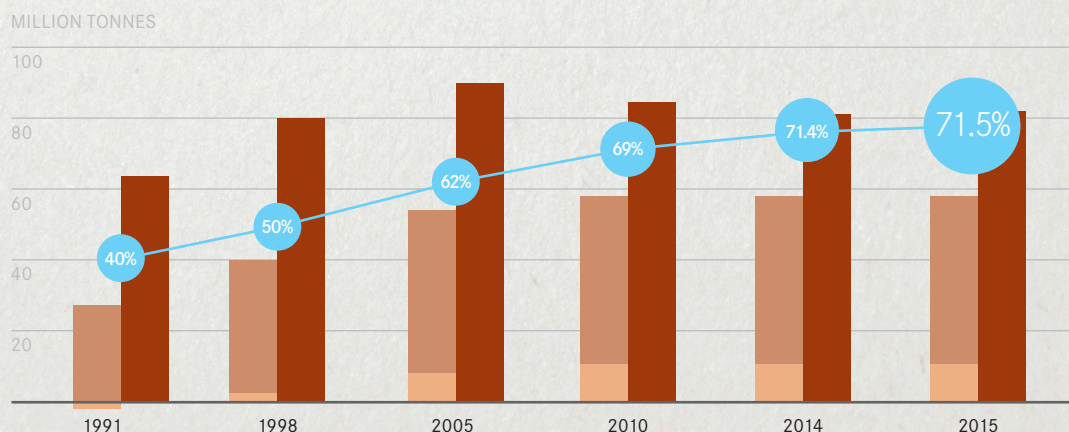
Consequently, all of the Signatories and Supporters of this Declaration are willing to ensure that efficient systems are in place to encourage paper recycling, building on the very positive progress made by the preceding European Declarations on Paper Recovery and Paper Recycling between 2000 and 2015 (see [www.paperforrecycling.eu](http://www.paperforrecycling.eu)).

Together these sectors will continue on a sustainable path in paper recycling, making it possible to reach the new target of a 74% recycling rate by 2020.

## EUROPEAN RECYCLING 1991-2015

Source: CEPI 2016

- Recycling outside Europe
- Recycling inside Europe
- Paper and Board consumption in Europe
- Recycling Rate





# EUROPEAN DECLARATION ON PAPER RECYCLING

# 1

## GENERAL

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### 1.1 OBJECTIVE

The European Declaration on Paper Recycling (the Declaration) will continue to set out measures to optimise the management of paper throughout the value chain from paper and board manufacturing, converting and printing through to the collection, sorting, transportation and recycling of used paper and board products back into the paper loop.

Signatories and Supporters of the Declaration accept voluntarily to undertake a number of complementary actions contributing to this target wherever technically possible and economically reasonable.

Priority is given to the prevention of waste including its environmental impact during the manufacture of paper and board products, through collection and recycling of paper. In exceptional cases where recycling is not possible, other options in the Waste Hierarchy can be considered. These measures ensure that the quantity of used paper-based products destined for final disposal is reduced.

Close attention will also be paid to improving the recyclability of paper products and – where applicable – the deinkability of paper-based products. Combining these goals with continuing efforts to improve the quality of paper for recycling will undoubtedly help to reinforce the character of paper for recycling as a major raw material for the paper industry.

The industry aims to make optimum use of the characteristics inherent in different grades of paper for recycling, matching their properties with the requirements of the end product. At the same time, the drive towards high levels of recycling and recyclability should also take into account the efforts expected from specific industry sectors to meet the requirements of environmental legislation.

### 1.2 PARTIES TO THE DECLARATION

#### 1.2.1 The following European associations are Signatories of the Declaration:

**ACE** – The Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment

**CEPI** – Confederation of European Paper Industries

**CITPA** – International Confederation of Paper and Board Converters in Europe

**EMFA** – European Moulded Fibre Association

**ETS** – European Tissue Symposium

**FEPE** – European Envelope Manufacturers Association

**INGEDE** – International Association of the Deinking Industry

**INTERGRAF** – International Confederation for Printing and Allied Industries

#### 1.2.2 The following European associations are Supporters of the Declaration:

**AFERA** – The European Adhesive Tape Association

**EuPIA** – European Printing Ink Association, a sector of CEPE

**FINAT** – Worldwide Association for Self-Adhesive Labels and Related Products

**RadTech Europe** – European Association for the promotion of UV and EB curing

#### 1.2.3 Observers of the Declaration:

The European Commission is a permanent observer of the Declaration.

### 1.3 ACCESSION OF OTHER PARTIES

The Declaration is open to other European associations whose members are directly or indirectly involved in the paper value chain.

### 1.4 SCOPE – COVERAGE

The Declaration covers all paper and board products.

It applies without prejudice to relevant European Union and national legislation, which currently covers a number of issues related to the production, utilisation, recovery and recycling of paper and board.

The Declaration covers 30 countries: the 28 European Union Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland. In the event of any countries joining the EU before 2020, they will be included in the Declaration's scope and their paper consumption and recycling statistics will be included in the annual reporting. If countries leave the EU before 2020, their data will continue to be included.

All commitments are fixed at a European level as defined by this Declaration. The integration and cooperation between all the parties to the Declaration aim to guarantee that the commitments are met at European level. Therefore, none of the commitments are intended to apply only to single countries, individual organisations or individual companies.

The Declaration aims to provide complementary measures designed to ensure an environmentally sustainable paper value chain and good communication between the relevant stakeholders. The Declaration does not attempt to harmonise national systems or prejudice national-level producer responsibility agreements or legislation.

### 1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

An agreed terminology is needed to provide a broad and common understanding of this Declaration in Europe. This has been partly drawn from pre-existing definitions in European Union legislation and partly based on terms used in industrial and commercial activities within the European paper value chain. The full list of definitions making up this agreed terminology can be found in the Glossary at the end of this document.

# ENABLING CONDITIONS

# 2

Achieving the targets and commitments set out in this Declaration is conditional to meeting enabling conditions beyond the control of parties to the Declaration. These enabling conditions cover areas such as waste targets, collection systems, energy policy and policies impacting on recyclability. These areas may be addressed in the Circular Economy package to be discussed between the EU institutions and the Member States. The creation of sectoral dialogues would also be beneficial to achieving the targets and objectives outlined in this Declaration.

## 2.1 WASTE TARGETS

There should be a more consequent phasing out of the landfilling of recyclable waste, including recyclable paper.

→ *There should be a landfill ban for recyclable paper by 2020.*

Material recycling is a priority over energy recovery. Energy policies including the promotion of energy from waste and use of renewable energy should be aligned with the Waste Hierarchy. The incineration of unsorted waste should be strongly restricted to minimise the conversion of recyclables into energy instead of recycling.

→ *The Waste Hierarchy must be implemented, including in energy and renewable energy policy.*

## 2.2 SEPARATE COLLECTION OF PAPER<sup>1</sup>

The Waste Directive (2008/98/EC)<sup>2</sup> stipulates that by 2015 paper should be collected separately. This target has not been reached, as we still have commingled collection<sup>3</sup> in some Member States. Commingled collection must not spread further in Europe and must be phased out where it already exists. Commingled collection has proved to be less efficient in terms of quality and cost of the complete paper recycling process compared to separate collection of paper. It risks deviating paper to recovery options lower in the waste hierarchy.

→ *The European Commission should take action against countries where commingled collection continues to exist.*

## 2.3 TRADE OF PAPER FOR RECYCLING

The net export of paper for recycling<sup>4</sup> was 9.4 million tonnes in 2015, mainly due to exports by Asian buyers, particularly China. In 2015, China imported 29.3 million tonnes of used paper, mainly from Europe and North America.

Imbalanced imports of paper and board by companies outside Europe have a negative impact on the paper recycling value chain in Europe, putting at risk the achievement of the target for European recycling rates.

The Commission Communication on Raw Materials (COM(2011)25 final) highlights the importance of the enforcement of the Waste Shipment Regulation and further actions to prevent illegal exports and ensure environmentally-sound treatment of wastes. All parties to this Declaration support Commission Communication on Raw Materials (COM(2011)25 final) and commit to increasing the collection of paper for recycling to maintain volumes at higher levels.

→ *The increase in the collection of paper must be higher than the increase in the net trade of paper for recycling.*

## 2.4 RECYCLABILITY

Product-related policies should ensure paper can be recycled into a high quality secondary fibre-based paper or board at the end of its life cycle.

The paper value chain has already made significant progress on the recyclability of paper products. In some cases, European and/or national legislation has objectives that conflict with the aim of improving recyclability.

→ *Conflicting policies and legislation preventing paper products from being recycled should be reviewed.*

## 2.5 HARMONISED CALCULATION METHODOLOGY

A harmonised calculation methodology is important to compare performance between materials, sectors and countries. For the purpose of this Declaration, the calculation methodology for the paper recycling rate will remain as follows: The Recycling Rate is the ratio between the recycling of used paper, including the net trade of paper for recycling, and paper and board consumption (see Glossary).

→ *Member States should have aligned calculation methods for the recycling rates and use the method by the European Declaration on Paper Recycling as an example.*

1 Separate collection of paper: paper and board are collected separately at source from other recyclable materials, such as plastic, metals and glass. The more separation at source takes place, the better it is for the loop. This includes selective collection of graphic and packaging papers.

2 Directive 2008/98/EC, Article 11: Member States shall take measures to promote high quality recycling and, to this end, shall set up separate collections of waste where technically, environmentally and economically practicable and appropriate to meet the necessary quality standards for the relevant recycling sectors. Subject to Article 10(2), by 2015 separate collection shall be set up for at least the following: paper, metal, plastic and glass.

3 Commingled collection: paper collected together with other recyclables.

4 The net trade of paper for recycling is included in the European paper recycling rate (71.5% in 2015). The recycling rate is defined as the ratio between used paper recycling including net trade of paper for recycling, and paper and board consumption. Without considering the net trade of paper imported by third countries for recycling outside Europe, the European paper recycling rate 2015 would have been 60.1% in 2015.

# ACTIVITIES

## 3.1 ENSURING QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF PAPER FOR RECYCLING IN THE VALUE CHAIN

### 3.1.1 Collection – CEPI

CEPI will continue to promote the collection of paper and board separately from other recyclables and from residual waste in order to reach the targeted recycling rate at EU level. This is particularly valid for countries where separate collection remains to be developed and countries where household waste is predominantly collected through commingled collection.

The member companies active in the collection of paper for recycling will continue to commit themselves to maintaining high collection rates. Paper companies represented by CEPI will continue to work together with their suppliers to increase the collection and quality of paper for recycling in Europe.

### 3.1.2 Final Recycling – CEPI

The European paper industry, together with all concerned parties to the Declaration, and subject to the development of international market conditions, will endeavour to take the necessary measures to achieve a 74% recycling rate by 2020 for the paper and board products consumed in Europe.

#### Challenges:

This target is to be set against the fact that the share of non-collectable and/or non-recyclable paper and board products such as hygiene papers and coffee filters has increased significantly over recent years.

Due to these non-collectable non-recyclable paper products, the current theoretical maximum paper recycling rate is not 100%, but in fact only 78%.

There are also paper products which are collected after use, but then used as material in applications outside the paper recycling loop, such as insulation materials. In addition, consumption patterns develop in a way that some products that are recycled at a high rate such as newspapers are used less. In contrast, complex packaging solutions and other technical papers, which are more difficult to recycle will increase in market share.

Due to these expectations about market developments and consumption patterns, it is necessary to factor in a margin of  $\pm 1.5\%$ <sup>1</sup> in the target recycling rate for 2020.

### 3.1.3 Recyclability/Ecodesign:

- When correctly used for their intended purpose, printing inks do not place workers or consumers at risk. All EuPIA members are committed to compliance with the EuPIA Exclusion Policy for Printing Inks and Related Products stating that toxic raw materials by default are not used, including raw materials known to be carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction. Where appropriate, EuPIA will provide advice as to the suitability of recycled material for relevant applications.

- Removability of adhesive applications: AFERA, CEPI, CITPA, EADP, FEPE, FINAT, INGEDE, INTERGRAF. The above associations promote the use of the scorecard of removability of adhesive applications<sup>2</sup> and commit to updating it when necessary.

- Deinkability: CEPI, EADP, EuPIA, FEPE, INGEDE, INTERGRAF, RadTech. These associations promote the use of the deinkability scorecard<sup>3</sup> and commit to updating it when necessary.

In addition to specific guidance, recyclability requires that sufficient information is exchanged for appropriate risk management and safe re-use of fibres. To this end, all parties to the Declaration will promote availability and facilitate exchange of information concerning their respective sectors.

### 3.1.4 Matters of common concern

All parties to the Declaration covered under Sections 1.2.1 to 1.2.3 commit to ongoing discussion and collaboration on matters of common concern (printability and other fitness for purpose, recyclability, deinkability) with regard to used paper and board and paper and board products. All parties to the Declaration will strive for a mutual understanding concerning justified sectoral interests and common obligations.

## 3.2 NOTION OF COOPERATION

This Declaration aims to enable collaborative life cycle thinking along the value chain in a systemic way without prejudice to the legal obligations of all parties to the Declaration. The Declaration does not create additional liabilities for the sectors and companies represented by the parties to the Declaration beyond their own legal obligations.

## 3.3 PREVENTION OF WASTE

The parties to the Declaration will endeavour to reduce the generation and environmental impact of waste during manufacturing, converting/printing and recycling processes to ensure the optimal and environmentally-sound recycling of used paper and board products.

In general, the Declaration follows the Waste Directive definition of prevention meaning measures taken before a substance, material or product has become waste, that reduce:

- a. the quantity of waste, including through the re-use of products or the extension of the life span of products;
- b. the adverse impacts of the generated waste on the environment and human health; or
- c. the content of harmful substances in materials and products where harmful means substances which, if they are inhaled or ingested or if they penetrate the skin, may involve limited health risks.

1 72.5% - 75.5%

2 [www.paperforrecycling.eu/publications](http://www.paperforrecycling.eu/publications)

3 [www.paperforrecycling.eu/publications](http://www.paperforrecycling.eu/publications)

### 3.4 RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

The parties to the Declaration will endeavour to increase resource efficiency during manufacturing, converting/ printing and recycling processes, in particular where there are interdependencies affecting resource efficiency along the value chain, to ensure the optimal and environmentally-sound recycling of used paper and board products.

### 3.5 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

To further improve the recyclability and deinkability of paper and board products, the parties to the Declaration will encourage and promote research and development in areas such as:

- paper and board manufacturing processes, along with raw and auxiliary materials and converting/printing technology
- processing technology regarding paper for recycling
- management and recycling of residues as a means of increasing the eco-efficiency of recycling and reducing environmental impacts. Information on these areas will be made suitably available.

### 3.6 EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

The parties to the Declaration concerned will take action to provide information to help educate and raise awareness of consumers and public bodies about their respective roles in completing the paper loop.

A common communication strategy will be considered and coordinated by the European Paper Recycling Council.

# EUROPEAN PAPER RECYCLING COUNCIL (EPRC)

# 4

## 4.1 The parties to the Declaration constitute the EPRC

Details of the individual roles of these parties are stated in the By-laws which form an integral part of this Declaration.

### 4.1.1 The EPRC has the following tasks:

- to coordinate the commitments of all the parties to the Declaration
- to take steps to improve the quality of the information available
- to discuss all relevant matters regarding the successful operation of the Declaration
- to coordinate public information on the achievements of the Declaration
- to produce annual reports

### 4.1.2 All the parties to the Declaration should collect the relevant information required on an annual basis.

The EPRC will compile and produce a joint report from this data. The report will include measures taken, progress achieved (with specific quantification when applicable) and verifiable information on the fulfilment of the commitments.

### 4.1.3 Representatives of the EU institutions will be invited to attend the EPRC gatherings as Observers.

### 4.1.4 Relevant stakeholders in the field of paper collection, recycling and recyclability will be regularly invited to attend EPRC gatherings on an ad-hoc basis.

## 4.2. DURATION AND REVISION

The Declaration is valid for an unlimited period.

Reviews of this Declaration were based on the quantified recycling commitment for the years 2005, 2010 and 2015. A further review will be based on the outcome of the recycling commitment for the year 2020 and a decision on a possible revision will be made accordingly.

# GLOSSARY

TERMINOLOGY	DEFINITION
Collection (of paper and board)	Separate collection of paper and paper products from industrial and commercial outlets, from households and offices for → <b>Recycling</b> . Collection includes transport to the sorting/processing or recycling plant/paper mill.
Collector	One who separately collects used paper and board; he may also have processing (sorting, handling) transport or trade activities.
Consumer	Industrial, commercial or private end-user.
Consumption (apparent)	Internal deliveries into the defined countries (see 1.4) plus imports from countries outside this coverage.
Converter	Processor of paper or board as a raw material (such as packaging, printing).
Deinkability	Removability of ink and/or toner from a printed product to a high extent by means of a deinking process. This shall restore as well as possible the optical properties of the unprinted product.
Distribution (of paper and board)	Wholesale and retail trade of paper and paper material and products ensuring the link between the producer/converter or importer and the final consumer.
Final disposal	Definitive deposit of waste to landfill or incineration without energy recovery
Manufacturer	Producer of paper and/or board.
Merchant	One who primarily buys, processes and sells paper for recycling; he may be actively involved in its collection.
Packer/filler	User of packaging material to distribute a product into marketable units.
Paper	Term used to cover all grades of paper and board.
Paper for recycling	Used paper and board separately collected and in general pre-processed according to the European Standard List of Grades of Paper and Board for Recycling (EN 643).

TERMINOLOGY	DEFINITION
Paper product	General term used to cover all paper and board-based converted products.
Paper value chain	All parties, linked directly or indirectly, from paper and board manufacturing to the collector/merchant of used paper and board products.
Printer	Manufacturer of printed products using paper or board as printing surface (→ <b>Converter</b> ).
Publisher	One who publishes (owns and brings to the market) products which are printed on paper.
Recovered paper	Outdated term used for → <b>Paper for recycling</b> .
Recyclability	Design, manufacturing and converting of paper-based products in such a way as to enable a high quality recycling of fibres and other materials in a manufacturing process in compliance – where appropriate – with current standards in the European Union: as a minimum, recyclability requires that sufficient information is exchanged for appropriate risk management and safe re-use of fibres.
Recyclable paper	Paper and paper products designed, manufactured and converted respecting → <b>Recyclability</b> , which can be collected and sorted into grades of paper for recycling according to the European Standard List of Grades of Paper and Board for Recycling (EN 643).
Recycling	Reprocessing of used paper in a production process into new paper and board.
Recycling rate	The ratio between used paper → <b>Recycling</b> including net trade of paper for recycling, and paper and board consumption.
Trader	One who buys and sells paper for recycling without any operational collection or processing activity.
Waste	Any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard.

## Signatories



[www.cepi.org](http://www.cepi.org)



[www.citpa-europe.org](http://www.citpa-europe.org)



[www.emfa.eu](http://www.emfa.eu)



[www.europeantissue.com](http://www.europeantissue.com)



EUROPEAN ENVELOPE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION

[www.fepe.org](http://www.fepe.org)



[www.ingede.org](http://www.ingede.org)



[www.intergraf.eu](http://www.intergraf.eu)



[www.beveragecarton.eu](http://www.beveragecarton.eu)

## Supporters



[www.afera.com](http://www.afera.com)



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[www.eupia.org](http://www.eupia.org)



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[www.radtech-europe.com](http://www.radtech-europe.com)



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