



A Common Vision for Transforming the European Paper Industry

Discussion Document

3 May 2005

Preamble

The purpose of this document is to consult widely throughout Europe and beyond about a vision for the European paper industry. We are aiming for a common vision that expresses the wishes of many different parties with interests in forests and paper. We hope that such a vision statement will help all of us to co-ordinate our work more effectively and present a consistent challenge to industry, consumers and governments.

This consultation process is being led by a steering group of non-governmental organisations, co-ordinated by Taiga Rescue Network. A second draft of this vision will be circulated to all who respond to this consultation. We aim to achieve a consensus and launch the vision at the Forest Movement Europe meeting in Brussels from 29 September 2005.

This vision is intended to express in general terms how we want the paper industry to be transformed in the next 10 years. It will be backed up by detailed best practice guidance, explaining the steps industry and consumers need to take to achieve that transformation and the actions that need to be addressed urgently.

¹ The text is based on *The Common Vision for Transforming the Paper Industry*, which has been ratified by 70 North American NGOs, the *Hamburg Call upon the Paper Trade and the Paper Industry*, which will shortly be launched by 12 German NGOs, and WWF's *Success Criteria for Tissue Paper Companies*.

How to Respond

This document presents a draft vision text¹, with consultation questions in tinted boxes like this one. Please send comments on the text, or answers to the questions, by email, to Mandy Haggith
hag@worldforests.org
by **20 June 2005**.

Q1: Is 10 years an appropriate timescale for this vision?

Q2: What form of best practice guidance should be included as appendices to the vision document?

An Urgent Problem

Europe's production, consumption and waste of pulp and paper causes many negative environmental and social impacts across the planet. The pulp and paper industry is among the world's largest generators of air and water pollutants, waste products and the gases that cause climate change. It is also one of the largest users of raw materials, including fresh water, energy and forest fibres. Forests are essential for clean air and water, wildlife habitat, climate protection, spiritual experience, recreation and indigenous peoples' cultural survival, yet globally many old-growth and other ecologically important forests are being logged for fibre and in many places they are also being cleared for conversion to plantations with limited ecological value, employing toxic chemical herbicides and fertilisers. The pulp and paper industry also has negative impacts on the health, well-being and stability of local communities. In Europe, the majority of waste paper products are buried in landfills or burned in incinerators, resulting in substantial pollution and major climate change impacts.

Industrialised nations, with 20% of the world's population, consume 87% of the world's printing and writing papers.² Global production in the pulp, paper and publishing sector is expected to increase by 77% from 1995 to 2020.³ Although paper products yield many benefits, European society's growing demand for paper leaves an unacceptably large ecological footprint on the planet. It is therefore necessary to transform paper production and consumption towards processes that are ecologically and socially responsible and sustainable.

Goals For Transforming Paper Production and Consumption Toward Environmental and Social Sustainability

We, the undersigned, call upon the paper industry, consumers, governments and non-governmental organisations to adopt the Precautionary Principle with regard to the use of natural resources and chemicals throughout the life-cycle of paper products and to refrain from activities that could potentially cause irreparable harm to human health and the environment. Communities' rights to a healthy environment, workers' rights to beneficial employment and indigenous peoples' rights to control their traditional lands and protect their cultural identity are fundamental. Industry has a responsibility to respect these rights. We are committed to achieving the following goals and call upon pulp and paper manufacturers, suppliers and purchasers, as well as governments, to accomplish these goals in pursuit of an environmentally and socially sustainable paper production and consumption system.

Q3: How can we improve this statement of the problems with Europe's paper industry?

Q4: Are there specific statistics about Europe's paper industry that you want to see included in this statement?

Q5: Do you agree with this preamble to the goals?

² 1 Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme, Keynote Address at UNEP's 7th International High Level Seminar on Cleaner Production, 29-30 April 2002.

³ OECD Environmental Outlook (Paris:OECD, 2001) p.215

Q6: Do these points adequately cover the social and cultural impacts of the paper industry?

Goal 1: Prevent Negative Social Impacts

- Respect the legally- or traditionally-based land rights, the basic political rights⁴ and the original interests of the local population such as the co-determination of land use, in the areas from which raw materials originate.
- Fully comply with all fundamental employment and social standards⁵, as well as the relevant international conventions for the protection of human rights⁶, in the extraction of raw materials and throughout production.

Goal 2: Source Fibre Responsibly

- End sourcing of wood fibre from unknown, illegal or controversial sources, suppliers or operations.
- End the use of wood fibre that threatens the livelihood of local people, violates legally- or traditionally-based local and indigenous land and customary rights, causes social problems associated with wood sourcing, or contributes to local poverty and loss of employment by eliminating other more sustainable uses of forests or land.
- End the use of wood fibre that threatens ancient and high conservation value forests. (Some forests are so rare, threatened or ecologically vulnerable, or are of such global biological or cultural importance that any logging or commercial use could irreparably damage their conservation value⁷.)
- End the conversion of natural forest or other high conservation value ecosystems into plantations for paper fibre.
- Source any remaining virgin wood fibres for paper from forest managers that have credible, independent, third-party certification for employing the most environmentally and socially responsible forest management and restoration practices.(Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is currently the international certification programme that comes closest to meeting this goal.)
- Maximise the use of alternative crops for paper if comprehensive and credible analysis indicates that they are environmentally and socially preferable to other virgin fibre sources.
- Minimise industrial use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers in plantations and fibre production.
- Stop the introduction and use of paper fibre from genetically modified organisms, particularly transgenic trees and plants with genes inserted from other species of animals and plants.

Q7: What words best express the forests and other ecosystems that we do not want to be threatened: natural, endangered, old-growth, frontier, ancient, high conservation value etc?

Q8: How should the vision refer to certification and should the Forest Stewardship Council be recommended?

Q9: What are our objectives for alternative crops?

Q10: Does this vision statement capture our vision for pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers?

Q11: How do we want to cover illegal logging and other controversial fibre sources?

⁴ For example land rights, participation and assembly rights.

⁵ ILO-Fundamental Work Rights: freedom of association, the right to organise and to collective bargaining; the abolition of forced labour, the elimination of child labour; and the prohibition of discrimination in employment and occupation (equality of opportunity and treatment).

⁶ ILO-Convention 169 for the Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, General Declaration of Human Rights (1948), UN Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (1966), International Agreement on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), International Agreement on Civil and Political Rights (1966).

⁷ See 'Wye River' discussion document *Endangered Forests:High Conservation Value Forests Protection – Guidance for Corporate Commitments* for additional details.

Goal 3: Maximise Recycled Content

- Minimise paper manufactured solely from virgin fibre and fundamentally reduce reliance on virgin tree fibres, making optimal and most efficient use of virgin fibre.
- Maximise post-consumer recycled fibre content in paper and paper products.
- Increase the use of other recovered materials (e.g., agricultural residues and pre-consumer recycled) as a fibre source in paper.

Q12: Is this a challenging and specific enough statement for recycled content.

Q13: Should there be recycled fibre in **all** paper products or are some virgin fibre products legitimate?

Q14: What is the **optimal** use of recycled/virgin fibres?

Goal 4: Ensure Clean Production

- Minimise energy consumption and use renewable energy sources.
- Minimise the combined impacts of water, energy, wood and chemical usage, as well as air, water, solid waste and thermal pollution by using the best available technology across the entire paper production system including: fibre sourcing, pulping, production, transportation, use and disposal.
- Eliminate toxic pulp and paper mill discharges and the use of chlorine and chlorine compounds for bleaching.
- Aim to reduce brightness of products and with this reduce levels of bleaching.
- Design production systems to minimise waste by maximising reusability and recyclability of end products.

Q15: Is this a strong enough way of addressing energy use

Q16: Should the vision explicitly address climate change?

Q17: Does the vision need a statement about water?

Q18: How can we characterise the 'best available technology'?

Q19: Are there other associated industry impacts that the vision should address and, if so, how?

Q20: Is this an adequate way of addressing waste management and pollution?

Goal 5: Minimise Paper Consumption

- Eliminate excessive and unnecessary paper consumption.
- Develop systems and technologies that reduce the consumption of fibre and maximise efficiency.

Q21: What systems and technologies are needed for reducing paper and fibre

Goal 6: Ensure Transparency

- Make regular, publicly available, reports on progress towards commitment and performance on forest management, timber and pulp purchasing and trade, level of recycling, resource efficiency, waste and emissions.
- Commit to Corporate Responsibility Reporting and ensure an ethical and open approach to improving social conditions influenced by the paper industry.
- Be able to demonstrate chain of custody for all products.

Q22: Do these points adequately cover the issue of transparency?

Working Together Towards a Solution

We, the undersigned, come together to pursue informed and realistic goals for positively transforming paper production and consumption. We are committed to working together in a variety of ways to achieve this transformation. We recognise the unique and complementary role that each company, organisation, government and individual plays in moving the paper industry towards environmental and social sustainability and we agree to support the collective effort. We agree to work together with manufacturers, governments, suppliers and purchasers to accomplish the above goals for creating a more environmentally and socially responsible system of paper production and consumption.

Q23: Do you agree with this concluding statement?