

## PressRelease

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Brussels, 24 April 2012

### Paper-based packaging recycling at 78%

Paper is the most recycled packaging material in the EU with a recycling rate of 78% based on 2010 figures. The rate was announced today by the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI).

This result exceeds the 60% target set in the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, which had been reached in 1997 (European Commission data). In fact, the paper-based packaging recycling rate was already at 73.3% in 2005 up from 63.8% in 2000 (Eurostat).

These outcomes give an additional indication that renewable and recyclable paper packaging contributes positively to the European objective of resource efficiency.

“Through high recycling rates, the European paper industry is a leading example on how sustainability and competitiveness can go hand in hand”, said Teresa Presas, CEPI Director General. “But in the forthcoming revision of the European packaging directive, it will be important to consider the level playing field between different packaging materials. Currently, each material has a different recycling target rate ranging from 15% to 60%”, she reminded. “In addition, it is time to consider the essential role smart packaging plays in a resource efficient Europe. Packaging can prevent waste of goods and spillage of food in particular”, she added.

The flagship ‘Resource Efficient Europe’, promoting a responsible use of resources as part of the EU 2020 Strategy for growth and jobs, is particularly important in the current difficult economic climate, which requires all possible efficiency gains. The European paper industry utilises resources that are constantly renewed and recycled and expects that policies supporting resource efficiency are actually enforced in a harmonised way across Europe.

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## **Note to the editor:**

### **The calculation method and comparison to other materials:**

CEPI calculations take into account the share of paper packaging that arrives in Europe with imported goods. This consumption of packaging is not always included in the calculations of other recycling statistics and can result in recycling rates beyond 100%. CEPI believes its calculation is realistic, conservative and gives a reliable indicator of paper-based packaging performance in this aspect. The figures collected by the European Commission and published by Eurostat are available with a delay of several years. The latest Eurostat figures available are from 2007.

According to the respective European trade associations, paper-based packaging had the best recycling performance of all materials in 2010: aluminium was recycled at the rate of 64%, glass at 68% and steel packaging 71%. Paper had reached such levels more than five years ago and is currently recycled at the rate of 78%.

### **Packaging can have several functions:**

- to protect the product, especially during transit;
- to preserve the product and avoid in particular food waste;
- to contain the product, e.g. in the case of liquids;
- to provide information to the consumer regarding the product and its safety; and
- to market the product.

### **CEPI aisbl - The Confederation of European Paper Industries**

The Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) is a Brussels-based non-profit organisation regrouping the European pulp and paper industry and championing industry's achievements and the benefits of its products. Through its 19 member countries (17 European Union members plus Norway and Switzerland) CEPI represents some 550 pulp, paper and board producing companies across Europe, ranging from small and medium sized companies to multi-nationals, and 1000 paper mills. Together they represent 25% of world production.

Website: <http://www.cepi.org/>



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