



## Press Release

Brussels, 25 June 2014

### Paper recycling in Europe at 71.7%

#### A reliable performance secures access to valuable raw material

*The paper recycling rate in Europe reached **71.7%** in 2013. The total amount of paper collected and recycled in the European paper sector remains stable at just over 57 million tonnes, despite decreasing paper consumption in Europe.*

Recycling has increased by 45% (18 million tonnes) since 1998, the base year for the first voluntary commitment set in the European Declaration on Paper Recycling by the European Recovered Paper Council (ERPC).

The European paper recycling rate is starting to level out and keeping it at a high rate is becoming progressively more challenging. Not only are quantities changing but so are the different paper consumption patterns.

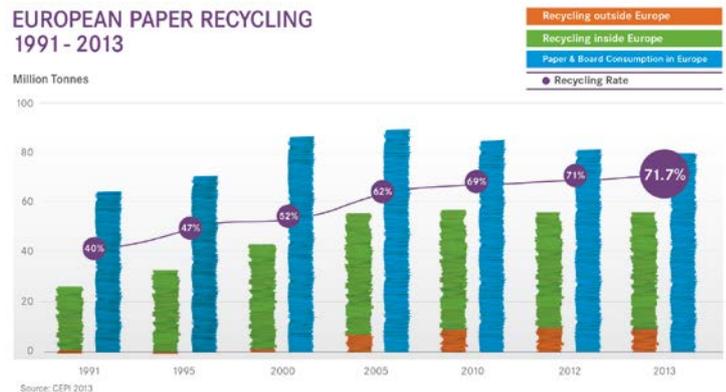
The continuing sharp decline in newspaper consumption will significantly affect overall paper recycling levels, as newspapers are traditionally one of the best recycled paper products along with corrugated boxes. Conversely, tissue and sanitary paper consumption is increasing but cannot be accepted for recycling due to hygiene reasons. Overall, 21% of paper consumption is not recyclable or collectable.

The large majority of the 11 European countries currently still under a 60% recycling rate have reported an improved performance. In parallel, 13 European countries have already exceeded the targeted 70% recycling rate. Paper fibre is now recycled an average of 3.5 times in Europe, far exceeding the world-wide average of 2.4.

“Making recycling easy and simple year after year requires a huge effort by the paper value chain, and we are pleased to report the positive results”, says ERPC chairwoman Beatrice Klose. “Despite challenging circumstances, paper recycling has continued to perform consistently well”, she concludes.

Secure access to raw materials has become an increasingly strategic economic issue in Europe. Paper recycling is truly an industry “made in Europe”. In line with EU policies, this

EUROPEAN PAPER RECYCLING  
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industry should be properly safeguarded to remain so. The paper recycling sector is ready and able to add more green jobs, skills and innovations to the European circular economy.

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For more information, please contact the ERPC Secretariat, Jori Ringman, at +32 2 627 49 19, +32 478 255070 (gsm), [erpc@cepi.org](mailto:erpc@cepi.org) or visit [www.paperforrecycling.eu](http://www.paperforrecycling.eu)

#### Notes to Editor:

- 2013 ERPC Monitoring Report: <http://www.paperforrecycling.eu/publications/erpc-publications>
- The European Recovered Paper Council (ERPC) was set up as an industry self-initiative in November 2000 to monitor progress towards meeting the paper recycling targets set out in the 2000 European Declaration on Paper Recycling. Since then the commitments in the Declaration are renewed every five years.  
In 2011, the ERPC committed itself to meeting and maintaining both a voluntary recycling rate target of 70% in the EU-27 plus Switzerland and Norway by 2015 as well as qualitative targets in areas such as waste prevention, ecodesign, and research and development.
- Members of ERPC are [ACE](#), [CEPI](#), [CITPA](#), [EMFA](#), [ERPA](#), [ETS](#), [INGEDE](#), [INTERGRAF](#), [FEPE](#).. Supporters include the [EuPIA](#), [FINAT](#), [RADTECH Europe](#). The European Commission, DG Environment and DG Enterprise, are permanent observers of the ERPC.