

CREATING PAPER BY SAVING TREES

By Ivan Lawrence White

The paper industry is one of the most polluting and resource intensive industries in the world. It is responsible for over a third of worldwide timber harvest.



Environmental Paper Network (EPN) began in 2002 as an alliance of organizations with very diverse approaches to addressing the challenges and opportunities for social justice and conservation presented by the expanding forest, pulp and paper industry. Today, EPN is a network of over 100 organizations working in alignment towards a common Global Paper Vision of a forest, pulp and paper industry that contributes to a clean, healthy, just and sustainable future for all life on earth.

The EPN network of non-profit organizations is empowering and motivating consumers, corporations, organizations and governments to protect forests, climate, air, water and communities through more sustainable production and consumption of pulp and paper.



EPN's unification of the many environmental organizations working to transform the paper industry has helped to catalyze significant market shifts. Tangible evidence of this shift includes the legal protection of millions of acres of Endangered Forests; significant increases in the number of paper-related certifications and forest acres certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); the growing number of large companies developing environmental paper policies; the rapidly growing availability of genuine environmental papers to purchasers; decreases over-consumption; and increased demand for, and use of, recovered fiber.



This achievement is also reached through the development and implementation of several projects amongst which the *Indonesian Forest Project* which provides international support for local community efforts to protect community rights and to end deforestation for pulp and paper production in the region; The *What's in Your Paper?* campaign to accelerate the development of environmental leadership papers and increase the environmental accountability of paper suppliers to their customers; The Pulpwatch.org which is a tool for monitoring risks in the pulp market supply chain with ratings assigned using criteria in accordance with the EPN's Vision and the *ShrinkPaper* that is a project of the European EPN to address the overconsumption of paper in Europe and the lack of fair access to paper in developing countries.



Other very impacting forest and pulp free practices derive from the recycling of paper fibers from agro-industrial scraps and post-consumer papers. These practices arise from an environmentalist vocation of paper mills associated with some interesting processes of research on the most effective methodologies and technologies that allow to produce paper by using scraps otherwise non usable.

Paper at [Costa Rica Natural](#), for example, is composed of both 100% recycled post-consumer paper and agro-industrial waste, gathered by a special collector team. The post consumer paper is obtained from offices, tetra pack containers, magazines and newspapers, sending it back to the mill. The team then goes to collect the agricultural waste from banana, coffee, lemon, mango, and tobacco plantations. The scraps from the trees and left over fruits are first ground down until they resemble sawdust, turning into pure agro-industrial fibers. The fiber is washed to remove natural resins. The collected paper is then thrown into the pulper along with water. The two are squashed and churned until the paper dissolves into the water. The process is called pulping and produces what is called the vehicle which means it is the base fiber in the paper for the agro-industrial fiber to be added.

Similarly, the [Papyrus Australia Ltd](#) is the developer of a world-first technology that converts the waste trunk of the banana palm into alternatives to forest wood products to be used in the paper production. The Papyrus process is fully sustainable, does not contribute to the destruction of natural or purpose-planted forests and does not consume any chemicals or water during manufacture. The process is also much more environmentally-friendly and has significantly lower production costs when compared to comparable products.

The American [Green Field Paper](#) offers both handmade paper and machine made hemp paper. The name Green Field Paper Company refers to the non-wood recycled ingredients with which it produces all of its recycled paper and Wedding Paper.

The dissemination of these companies' practices of innovative paper production in different countries and at different levels of industrialization will definitely make a great contribution so that everyone can dispose of a primary good like paper without contributing to the planet's deforestation.

To know more

www.environmentalpaper.org

[pulpwathc.org website](http://pulpwathc.org)

[Visionpaper company website](#)

[GMUND company website](#)

[Islandnet company website](#)

[NewLeafPaper website](#)

