

Media release

Domestically-produced paper is more sustainable

Perlen Papier, a company of the CPH Group, continues to ensure the recycling of recovered paper and the production of newsprint in Switzerland during the corona crisis, too. Having consistently reduced its emissions, Perlen Papier now has a carbon footprint which is 75% smaller than those of its European competitors. Newspapers and magazines that are printed on Perlen Papier paper are ecofriendly and sustainable.

Perlen, 8 September 2020 – Perlen Papier, which has been Switzerland’s sole manufacturer of graphic papers since 2018, recycles some 500 000 tonnes of recovered paper a year. The company has also steadily replaced fossil fuels in its production since 2013, reducing its carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 87%. Last year, its Perlen factory emitted just 19 kilos of CO₂ per tonne of paper produced – a level sixteen times lower than the emission targets agreed with the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment.

The paper products manufactured in Perlen are 88% made from recovered wood-based paper, which is supplemented with fibres from waste sawmill wood. This, together with water and energy, produces new paper. Waste paper can always be collected and reprocessed into new paper, making it the ideal recycling material. “Perlen Papier utilizes surplus wood from sawmills and forest thinning operations,” says Peter Schildknecht, CEO of the CPH Group. “And, in doing so, it makes a major contribution to protecting and preserving Swiss forests.”

Carbon footprint reduced

According to the Ten Toes Model of the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI), the carbon footprint of Perlen Papier’s operations measures 144 kilos of CO₂ per tonne of paper produced. This is one quarter of the average emissions of the company’s European competitors. As well as direct emissions at the manufacturing site, this carbon footprint also includes indirect emissions produced through the provision of the energy required and through the processes upstream and downstream of the actual paper production.

Many Swiss publishing houses are committed today to maintaining sustainable supply and production chains. Their endeavours here also include minimizing the transport journeys

involved. “From an environmental perspective,” says Peter Schildknecht, “it makes no sense at all that we are producing tens of thousands of tonnes of paper here in Switzerland and exporting it abroad while, at the same time, Swiss-based publishers are importing tens of thousands of tonnes of paper from other countries.”

It makes equally little sense to export waste paper that has been recovered in Switzerland to neighbouring countries when it could easily be recycled domestically into new paper products. “Yet we are currently seeing higher exports of recovered paper and massive increases in imported finished paper volumes: between 2017 and 2019, the proportion of the finished paper used in Switzerland that had been imported from abroad rose from 21 to 50%,” says Peter Schildknecht. “In Perlen we are almost carbon-neutral in our paper production. But it’s only by having short delivery journeys that we can minimize our carbon emissions on the transport front.”

The corona crisis has shown how vital it is to have key raw materials close at hand: materials such as recovered paper that can be used to produce the newsprint which publishing houses need to keep populations informed. “These publishing houses need to rethink their strategies towards a sustainable and reliable domestic manufacturing chain,” observes Peter Schaub, Chairman of the Board of Directors of CPH Chemie + Papier Holding AG. “Only if the publishers live up to their responsibilities and commit to paper that is produced with a small carbon footprint will we really be able to protect the environment effectively together.”

Print is more sustainable than online

The demand for newsprint has been declining for years, primarily as a result of changed consumer needs and the growing importance of digital information channels. What many people don’t know, however, is that paper publications boast excellent ecological credentials compared to the consumption of news online.

In spring 2020, some 78% of all internet access in Switzerland was from a mobile device. And when viewed over the entire production cycle, reading an online newspaper from a mobile device has a far greater adverse impact on the environment than a printed newspaper does, as a study by the Institute for Further Studies and Technology Assessment (IZT) has confirmed.

The reasons for this lie in the high volumes of energy that are required to store data and transmit them to mobile devices, and in the energy and other resources required to manufacture such

devices and dispose of them after use. In many cases, the IZT study confirms, print newspapers are also easier on the environment than reading the news from a computer screen. “A print newspaper will be more ecofriendly than an online newspaper if it is read for more than 26.5 minutes or by at least 3.2 readers,” the study concludes.

Contacts:

Dr. Peter Schildknecht, CEO, +41 41 455 8757

Christian Weber, Head of Corporate Communications, +41 41 455 8751, medien@cph.ch

About CPH

CPH is an internationally active and diversified industrial group which is headquartered in Switzerland. The CPH Group develops, manufactures and distributes chemical products, wood-based paper and pharmaceutical packaging films. The Group and its subsidiaries maintain production facilities in Switzerland, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the USA, Brazil and China. The shares of its holding company CPH Chemie + Papier Holding AG (ticker: CPHN) are listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange.

This media release contains future-oriented statements about the CPH Group that are subject to risk and uncertainties. These statements reflect the management’s opinions at the time of the release’s compilation, but they may deviate from actual future events.