



THE MYTH

“Paper production is bad for the CLIMATE”

THE REALITY

- The European Council has recognized wood products as **climate friendly**.
- The paper industry has steadily reduced its carbon dioxide emissions.
- All human activities have an **environmental impact**.
- Sustainable forest management helps reduce worldwide carbon dioxide emissions.

The main source of raw material for paper - trees - is a vast carbon store and the prime absorber of CO₂ from the atmosphere. Young trees are much more efficient at absorbing carbon than old trees. Mature trees absorb carbon slower the older they get. To maximize the carbon storage the trees can provide we need young healthy forests where trees are regularly harvested and re-grown.

But the benefit does not stop there as paper also continues to store carbon throughout its lifetime. Around 160 kg of CO₂ are emitted during the production of 200kg of paper¹ - the average European per capita consumption - equivalent to the amount emitted by a typical family car over 1,000 km. The current climate discussion frequently refers to the “carbon footprint” of products as a mean for expressing the emission of climate-relevant gases by a process or through the manufacture of a product. In fact, pretty much

everything has a carbon footprint. For example, producing half a pound of hamburger for someone's lunch releases as much greenhouse gas into the atmosphere as driving a 3,000-pound car nearly 16 kilometres², while the carbon footprint of a book is equivalent to the greenhouse gas emissions of a journey of about 7 kilometres by car³.

For economic and environmental reasons the paper industry works continuously to optimise its processes. The European pulp and paper industry decreased their CO₂ emissions per tonne of paper produced by 42% since 1990⁴.

1. Paper & the environment, ATS consulting August 2007, Myths and Realities brochure, p.6
2. FAO 2006 Report
3. Print products only account for approximately 1% of the climate impacts of consumption by households
4. CEPI sustainability report 2009