

## THE MYTH

“ Paper **production** uses too much **WATER** ”

## THE REALITY

- Paper production **reuses the water** it takes in.
- The paper industry has steadily **reduced its water usage**.
- The paper industry uses **high end water purification**.

Every paper mill has a unique water profile due to its location and the origins of its water, the destination of its effluent and the origin of its fibrous and non-fibrous raw materials being used.

Nevertheless, the European paper industry is continuously working on reducing its impact on water consumption. In the 1970s producing 1 tonne of pulp required as much as 250m<sup>3</sup> of water – now it only takes 5-50m<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>. The past decade saw water consumption of paper machines being reduced by 1/3 as a result of more efficient water circulation. In 2008, the pulp and paper industry withdrew approximately 4 000 million m<sup>3</sup> of water from surface and ground water sources; of which 92% were returned to surface water supplies<sup>2</sup>.

Water used for the paper production is mostly circulated within the manufacturing system. The water that is discharged is purified in high-end waste water treatment facilities. In fact, water coming out of a paper production mill is cleaner than when it goes in!

The paper industry has become an active partner in the development of water stewardship and water footprinting and is developing comprehensive water reporting guidelines for the sector. It has recently been an active partner in the development of a globally harmonised understanding of water stewardship<sup>3</sup>.

1. Kemira
2. CEPI sustainability report 2011
3. European Water stewardship council