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SUSTAINABLE USE OF RECOVERED PAPER IN THE ROMANIAN PAPER INDUSTRY. PART II – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

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Abstract

In the last decades, the surface of Romanian forests decreased due to an intensive harvesting and, as a consequence, the price of pulpwood significantly increased. In the same time, the regulations for environmental protection were successively hardened in Romania, so that all chemical pulp mills were closed for economic and environmental reasons. In these circumstances, Romanian paper producers shifted to recovered paper as raw material. This decision is in accordance with trends of European paper sector, where recovered paper continuously strengthened its position as raw material for paper industry. The good-looking price of recovered paper is the main reason for using it in producing paper and board. In addition, paper made from recovered paper reduces the demand of wood, uses less energy, water and chemicals, produces less toxic releases and reduces carbon dioxide emissions.

From the environmental impact point of view, using of recovered paper as raw material represents the best alternative for Romanian paper sector. Romanian paper industry is based almost exclusively on recovered paper and the utilization rate of recovered paper in producing paper and board was 88.4% in 2012. The high utilization rate can be explained by the structure of Romanian paper sector that produces paper grades for corrugated board and sanitary papers. The main goal of this paper is to evaluate the environmental impact of using recovered paper as raw material in Romanian paper industry.

Key words: environmental impact, papermaking, recovered paper, resources

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