



Recommendation of the Council on Waste Paper Recovery

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Date(s)

Adopted on 30/01/1980

Background Information

The Recommendation on Waste Paper Recovery was adopted on 30 January 1980 on the proposal of the Environment Committee (now called Environment Policy Committee). The Recommendation advises Adherents to encourage waste paper recovery via instruments to increase both the demand for recycled paper and the supply of waste paper, while taking due account of social costs and benefits.

THE COUNCIL,

HAVING REGARD to Article 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

HAVING REGARD to the Recommendation of the Council of 14 November 1974 on the Implementation of the Polluter-Pays Principle [C(74)223];

CONSIDERING the need for ensuring that the costs of the adverse environmental impacts of the manufacture and discard of paper are effectively and equitably borne by the producers and users of paper;

HAVING REGARD to the Recommendation of the Council of 28 September 1976 on a Comprehensive Waste Management Policy, and, in particular, Principles 3 and 4 thereof calling upon Member countries to develop and implement measures aiming at reducing the generation of waste and promoting recycling, whilst ensuring that these measures do not lead to distortion in international trade [C(76)155(Final)];

CONSIDERING that waste paper accounts for a significant proportion (25 to 50 per cent) of municipal refuse, and that a large part of it is technically recoverable for use in paper and board manufacture;

CONSIDERING that waste paper can also be used profitably for purposes other than the production of paper and board, and that research is underway to develop further such uses;

CONSIDERING that paper and board manufacture through the use of recycled fibres is generally less energy consuming and less polluting than the same manufacture through virgin pulp production;

CONSIDERING that the economics of waste paper recycling for paper and board manufacture are dominated by large fluctuations in waste paper prices;

CONSIDERING that the high costs of collection and sorting often keep the recycling of household waste paper below the level that this would be socially desirable;

CONSIDERING however that any saving in waste disposal costs, resulting from waste paper recycling, must be taken into account when calculating the economic balance of recycling;

HAVING REGARD to the Report by the Environment Committee on waste paper recovery, where practical measures which can be envisaged for implementing this Recommendation are discussed in detail;

On the proposal of the Environment Committee:

I. RECOMMENDS that Member countries define and implement policies designed to increase the use of recycled fibres in paper products and to encourage increased recovery of waste paper for paper and board production as well as for other uses, taking due account of social costs and benefits associated with such actions.

II. INVITES Member countries to consider the advisability of using to this effect practical measures directed towards increasing and matching both the demand for recycled paper products and the supply of secondary fibres, such as:

With regard to demand:

- Encouraging the use of paper with a high content of recycled fibres, in particular by public agencies and those official services which can set an example;
- Altering final product specifications when such specifications discriminate unduly against recycled paper, or when the presence of contaminants make recycling more difficult;

- Promoting the design of printing and copying equipment better suited to the use of paper with a high recycled fibre content;
- Implementing active information and education programmes, directed to consumers, users and manufacturers, to promote paper products made from recycled fibres;
- Promoting upgrading techniques, and in particular de-inking, notably through co-operation among paper manufacturers in order to reduce costs and take full benefit from large scale production;
- Promoting uses for waste paper other than paper and board manufacture, with due care not to destroy the balance between demand and supply of waste paper.

With regard to supply:

- Promoting the collection of high grade waste papers within those organisations which are large consumers of paper products (private and public services, office buildings, etc.);
- Promoting low cost collection methods and encouraging household waste paper collection;
- Encouraging active public participation in waste paper recovery schemes;
- Promoting means of ensuring a sufficient and sustained supply of waste paper to paper and board manufacturers;
- Improving municipal accounting procedures for solid waste collection and disposal, so that all costs and savings are taken into account;
- Studying and experimenting with methods to reduce waste paper market fluctuations.

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