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Press release

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NGOs launch joint paper vision at Paper World

Frankfurt – A coalition of close to 50 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from 21 countries today launched their *Common Vision for Transforming the European Paper Industry*. The launch, coinciding with Paper World, a major industry event, marks the first time that NGOs have joined forces across Europe and beyond on paper-related issues.

The NGOs' long term vision is to see a future Europe that consumes 50% less paper than at present, produced by an industry that is less reliant on virgin tree fibres, makes maximal use of recycled materials, protects biodiversity, respects local people's land rights, provides employment, and has social impacts that are beneficial, conflict-free and fair. The vision states: "We want to see all of Europe's paper being made from responsibly- and sustainably-sourced fibres, using entirely renewable energy, with water that is as clean after paper production as before, producing zero waste and zero emissions." It includes a 10 year-agenda which sets out the minimum requirements NGOs consider necessary to reduce negative environmental and social impacts around the world.

The NGOs are calling on the paper industry to rise up to the challenges set out in the vision document and to commit to urgent actions to reduce consumption and reliance on virgin fibre; ensure social responsibility; source fibre responsibly; and ensure clean production.

The shared vision allows NGOs to reinforce each other's work while respecting individual NGO styles and approaches. The NGOs will work towards the joint goals in the vision in coming years.

The vision highlights the special responsibility of the paper industry to transform its production and consumption patterns towards processes that are ecologically and socially responsible both within Europe and elsewhere. "Europeans use four times more paper than the world average and need to import a huge amount of pulp and paper from endangered forests around the world like Indonesia, Canada, China, Chile and other areas. Europeans have a global responsibility through their paper consumption and production", said Jim Ford, Policy Director of ForestEthics.

"Few natural forests are left in Europe. The industry and governments need to commit to protecting valuable forests when there's still something to save and to manage forests in the most

responsible way, as set out in the vision", said Otto Miettinen, Forest Campaigner of Friends of the Earth Finland.

"The paper industry must act now to address the crisis of over-consumption of resources and irreversible negative impacts on the lives of people all around the world and on our environment", said Lydia Bartz, Urgewald Forest Campaigner.

"Ancient forests are being destroyed to make everyday products such as newspapers, magazines and toilet paper by European paper companies, and sold to an unaware public", said Gavin Edwards, Global Forest Campaign Coordinator of Greenpeace International. "The launch of today's vision represents a call to pulp and paper companies to clean up their act and start providing consumers with products that protect these forests, not ones that destroy them."

"Currently, the global paper industry tends to invest into large scale monoculture tree plantations in the South which often cause massive social and environmental problems. Local People all over the world are fighting against large scale plantations. This is why ROBIN WOOD does not consider them a sustainable fibre source. The paper industry must act responsibly", said Peter Gerhardt, Tropical Forest Campaigner from ROBIN WOOD.

"Forests are of prime importance for WWF's work on biodiversity conservation, and the forest industry has an important role in helping us achieve our aims," said Duncan Pollard, Director of WWF's Global Forests4Life Programme, WWF International. "The paper industry has a history of innovation and has shown in the past that it is able to address issues of importance and concern to society. WWF has been and will continue to work with companies that are prepared to improve their practices and to show corporate leadership on the issues referred to in the vision."

Contacts: Helma Brandlmaier, WWF International +43676842728219; Judy Rodrigues, Greenpeace International, +31 6 4616 6299; Lydia Bartz, Urgewald +49 160-96761436; Peter Gerhard, Robin Wood +49 (0)171 835 95 15; Jim Ford, ForestEthics +44 1223 561 640; Otto Miettinen, Friends of the Earth Finland +358 505514026;

Notes to editors:

The full vision text and list of signatories can be found on www.taigarescue.org/paper