

Statement of EuRIC on the publication of the European Declaration on Paper Recycling 2016 - 2020

ERPA – EuRIC Paper Recycling Branch – is a founding Member of the European Recovered Paper Council (ERPC), created in 2000 at a time where the concept of the circular economy had not yet become a major political and economic objective. It has since the outset supported the very objectives of ERPC and promoted the value chain approach that ERPC embodied.

For the first time, EuRIC Paper Recycling Branch decided not to co-sign the new “European Declaration on Paper Recycling” 2016 – 2020. This was not an easy but a needed decision simply because the new Declaration does not take into account the legitimate interests of the supply side of the paper value chain, which provides every day the secondary raw materials needed to manufacture new paper. The new Declaration mostly represents the interests of the demand side of the paper value chain and fails to represent the ones from the supply side. Hence, neither the new Declaration nor the re-branded *European Paper Recycling Council (EPRC)* represents the European paper recycling chain.

Actually, the final version of the Declaration goes a step further in presenting one-sided information as being facts. For example, the new Declaration solely highlights the “negative impact” of paper and board exports but voluntarily omits to mention that are the result of a collection of paper and board which substantially exceeds the consumption of paper and board in Europe and hence contribute to balance this oversupply. This actually undermines one of the key pre-requisite of the circular economy which is to foster mutual understanding of market realities along the value chain in order to bridge sectoral interests.

By turning waste paper into new quality secondary raw materials and re-introducing them within the paper value chain, recycling companies – many of them SMEs – are a crucial partner of the circular economy, stressed Hans van de Nes, President of ERPA Branch. We hope that the conditions for a constructive dialogue will be restored in order to continue exchanging about common issues in a forum that truly represents the interests of the European Paper Recycling Chain, he added.

EuRIC - The European Recycling Industries' Confederation is the umbrella organisation for recycling industries. **ERPA** is a Branch of EuRIC. Through its Member Federations from 20 EU & EFTA countries, EuRIC represents across Europe over:

- 5,500 companies generating an aggregated annual turnover of about 95 billion €, including large companies and SMEs, involved in the recycling and trade of various resource streams;
- 300,000 local jobs which cannot be outsourced to third EU countries;
- An average of 150 million tons of waste recycled per year (paper, metals, glass, plastics and beyond);

Recyclers play a key role in a circular economy. By turning wastes into resources, recycling is the link which reintroduces recycled materials into the value chains again and again

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