

# Enhancing the Quality of Paper for Recycling

Press Release 1/2012



## ***EcoPaperLoop: A New Central Europe Project To Improve Collection and Product Design***

Paper is a precious raw material – it shall not be wasted. It comes from renewable resources. But **too much is lost** for different reasons: **Improper collection systems** can drastically reduce the amount of paper being recovered for recycling; and **improper design of a graphic or packaging product** can make it useless or even harmful for the recycling process.

A new report on how EU members manage their municipal waste has alarmed **Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik**: *“Many Member States are still landfilling huge amounts of municipal waste – the worst waste management option – despite better alternatives, and despite structural funds being available to finance better options. Valuable resources are being buried, potential economic benefits are being lost, jobs in the waste management sector are not being created, and human health and the environment suffer. This is hard to defend in our present economic circumstances.”*

### **EcoPaperLoop launched in Milan**

**In Central Europe regions paper for recycling is a major resource.** However, the paper recycling rates are still highly inhomogeneous. Since paper **for recycling** is not only recycled in the country where it is produced, some essential features such as ecodesign and eco-collection concepts must be developed at transnational level to increase the sustainability of the paper loop.

The new project aims at **improving quality of paper for recycling**. “Awareness is the key”, project coordinator Graziano Elegir from Milan’s Innovhub-SSI said on the occasion of the official start of the project, “and we will increase the awareness among all members of the paper chain: Publishers and printers, designers, packaging users and print buyers as well as converters and local public administrations.”

At the first meeting in Milan, the project partners from Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary and Slovenia agreed upon strategies and concepts for the different parts of the projects.

“This has the potential to boost the way we engineer products for easy recycling after collection,” Elegir adds, “and it will on the other hand identify the best collection strategies for given regions.”

EcoPaperLoop contributes to the **Lisbon strategic objective for Sustainable Production and Consumption** (SCP/SIP) by improving end-of-life recycling performances of paper-based products. This will lead to a decrease of energy and water demands for the production of new paper products while guaranteeing organic carbon storage by recycling a renewable material.

The EcoPaperLoop project will run until end of 2014. It is co-funded by the European Union/European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the local project partners.

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This press release can also be found in the internet:

**[www.ecopaperloop.eu](http://www.ecopaperloop.eu)**

More information and links to the relevant documents are available there.

This press release is available in the languages of the project partners as well.