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145 Organisations Jointly Release *The State of the Global Paper Industry 2018* Report shows risks of a dangerously expanding global paper industry

26 April 2018 – A new [report](#) from the Environmental Paper Network reveals the social and environmental developments in an industry that is expanding to produce new products – such as tissue disposables, food service and e-commerce packaging – and into new markets, as global consumption dangerously grows.

This is the Environmental Paper Network’s third edition of *The State of the Paper Industry* and for the first time the assessment takes a global perspective. *Shifting Seas: Challenges and Opportunities for Forests, People and the Climate* is the latest in this report series from a world-wide coalition of 145 organisations in 36 countries, and it tracks the progress and challenges of the pulp and paper industry over the past five years and beyond. It highlights the landscape of risks and the opportunities for leadership in a resource-dependent industry that is expanding within a climate constrained world.

“This report shows that all stakeholders must increase efforts and provide real leadership in order to reduce paper’s impacts on communities, forests, biodiversity and the climate” said Joshua Martin, Director of Environmental Paper Network-North America. “Many in the paper industry aggressively promote the idea that all paper is produced and consumed sustainably, but increasingly consumers and industry leaders know that the landscape is much more complex. This is an industry that is growing, migrating and changing, so that means all hands-on deck to collectively solve these challenges and realise our vision for a paper industry that contributes to a healthy, just and sustainable future.”

Zhang Huiying, Coordinator of Environmental Paper Network-China, said, “It is clear from our report that right now is a pivotal moment for China and other Asian countries to be innovative and careful to balance rising consumption and production of paper with environmental responsibility.”

Regarding consumption trends, Mandy Haggith, Coordinator of Environmental Paper Network-International and lead author of the report’s chapter on paper consumption, stated that “In Europe and North America we consume far more than our fair share of the world’s paper. More than half of all paper is used for packaging and other throwaway products, and it is the biggest component of waste streams, so it should be easy for us to use less. We must reduce so that people in other regions can get access to the benefits of paper without causing further increases in global production. This report makes clear that the social and environmental impacts of current global production are unsustainable.”

From fibre sourcing to energy consumption to waste, the industry has a massive global footprint. *Shifting Seas* documents the industry’s impacts on people and planet, including our ability to achieve international climate targets. While many companies are engaging in responsible supply chain efforts to address these impacts, not all paper is created equal.

The 2018 report is structured according to the goals of the Environmental Paper Network’s [Global Paper Vision](#) with insights and trends on the topics of consumption, recycled content, social responsibility,

responsible virgin fibre sourcing, greenhouse gas emissions, clean production and transparency. Through these seven lenses the new report highlights key trends and challenges including:

- paper consumption is at unsustainable levels and globally it is steadily increasing, particularly in Asia, while remaining at unequal levels of access in some parts of the world, particularly Africa.
- increasing production in response to new market demand is driving development of new virgin-fibre pulp mills, especially in Asia, Africa and South America. A new [live online map](#) is revealed as a resource to help track the expansion and the proximity of mills to Intact Forest Landscapes.
- expansion is resulting in numerous social conflicts in many nations including Brazil, Indonesia, Canada, India, Chile and Mozambique.
- the industry has substantial climate change impacts and critical opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through better land management and fibre choices need to be seized, urgently.
- corporate social responsibility commitments and purchasing policies have continued to proliferate and have helped to drive some specific social and environmental improvements ‘on-the-ground,’ but execution, transparency and progress on many voluntary commitments is lagging.
- there are significant gaps in data availability globally, between regions, and across topics, and challenges in comparing data due to lack of standardisation.

The NGO members of the Environmental Paper Network are experts across a wide range of topics regarding paper sustainability issues, including biodiversity, pollution, forestry and recycling. *The State of the Paper Industry* series is a comprehensive resource for conservation organisations, decision-makers, researchers, journalists, investors, educators and the industry to track performance, progress and global trends. It is a critical tool in understanding the global paper industry and identifying the essential opportunities for social and environmental improvement.

To learn more, download the full report or executive summary at <http://www.environmentalpaper.org/stateoftheindustry2018>

The Environmental Paper Network is an international collaborative project of 145 organisations in 36 countries who share a common vision of a forest, pulp and paper industry that contributes to a healthy, just and sustainable future for all life on earth.

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