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Resource Efficiency: ACE welcomes Commission's flagship Initiative ***First step towards a more coherent policy framework***

The Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE) welcomes today's Commission initiative to make resource efficiency a key pillar of a more sustainable economy as defined in the EU 2020 strategy.

"This initiative", says Christian Verschueren, ACE Director General, "is a much needed first step to create a coherent policy framework that sends businesses like ours a clear signal of support for our goals in this area. The Commission does this while recognising the complexity of the challenges in pursuing resource efficiency sustainably and the trade-offs required. This is a balanced approach we support on the basis of ACE member companies' experience in improving resource efficiency over the life cycle.

Over the last 20 years for example, technology and best practices have made it possible for us to produce 40% more paper board for beverage cartons from the same amount of wood and to take care of our valuable renewable resource base. Forests providing our main raw materials are responsibly managed for continued growth and thus play a supporting role in climate change mitigation. Beverage carton manufacturers are publicly committed to ensure the supply of legal and acceptable sources of wood through traceability and certification systems.

The Commission's emphasis on the role of recycling in achieving a resource efficient economy is a priority we share. In 2009, 340,000 tonnes of beverage cartons were recycled, representing 34% of those put on the market across Europe. Recycling performances could be improved in a number of ways, and the industry will contribute to this effort. Significant, in our view, would be more harmonized implementation of existing EU waste and packaging waste legislation. Meanwhile we are pressing ahead with our own initiatives. For example at a plant in Spain, ACE member company Stora Enso has pioneered a new recycling technology which enables a more efficient recovery of the polymer and aluminum layers of used beverage cartons, in addition to providing quality recycled paper for new packaging.

To realise the full potential of resource efficiency, big challenges lie ahead. Not least is the need to assure sustainable sourcing. Another, more general one, will be for the EU to harness the full range of its policies to support resource efficiency. However, in our view, this Commission initiative has made a useful start in identifying priority resources and corresponding areas for action".

About ACE (www.beveragecarton.eu)

ACE – The Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment – provides a European platform for beverage carton manufacturers and their paperboard suppliers to benchmark and profile cartons as renewable, recyclable and low-carbon packaging solutions. Engaging with stakeholders and partners seeking high environmental stewardship, it contributes expertise to EU policy, legislation, and standard-setting.



ACE members work together to demonstrate that beverage carton packaging is the smart green choice today and in the future.

ACE members include beverage carton producers Tetra Pak, SIG Combibloc and Elopak; they develop, manufacture and market systems for the processing, packaging and distribution of food, and produce packaging material at 20 plants in Europe. About 98% of the paperboard used by ACE members in beverage cartons in Europe is produced by Stora Enso in Skoghall (Sweden) and Imatra (Finland), and Korsnäs in Gävle and Frövi (Sweden), who are also members of ACE. These paper mills and the beverage cartons manufacturers in ACE together employ close to 30,000 people worldwide.

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