

BRUSSELS

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## Resources Unlimited?

*Vested interests, consumer behaviour, lack of cohesive leadership, absence of robust data – these are among the key challenges facing a resource-efficient economy, according to participants at a conference held in Brussels on 11 October.*

“In these times of economic turmoil and financial instability, thinking about the environment is considered by many as a luxury we cannot afford. But the opposite is true: not thinking about the environment is a luxury we cannot afford!” said Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment at the opening of the conference ‘Resources Unlimited? – Moving to a resource-efficient economy’, jointly organised by WWF, ACE, the European Commission, and the OECD.

ACE co-sponsored the conference to enable key stakeholders from the policy, NGO and business worlds to discuss how to move towards a sustainable global economy. A consensus emerged on the need for concerted action to maximise the potential of best practices in individual sectors. A specific focus on how to achieve resource efficiency was in the forestry sector.

“Responsible use of forest products is the first step in our life-cycle approach to managing the beverage carton on a resource-efficient basis”, said Katarina Molin, Director General of ACE. “For example, over the last 20 years, technology and best practices have made it possible to produce 40% more cartons from the same amount of wood. With ACE carton manufacturers using around 2.5 million tonnes of wood fibres annually, this has meant a significant resource saving. It also helps decouple environmental impact from economic growth. Worth noting too is that the European forest industry does not even use the annual growth of forests, a renewable natural resource”.

““Doing more with less””, said Erika Mink, ACE President, “means using renewable materials and further increases in recycling”. However, she added, “our efforts, particularly on recycling, can only be achieved with supportive regulation”.

In addition, said Mink, “there is potential for packaging, in particular food packaging, to play a broader role in the stewardship of resources. Food security and surging food prices are creating a new focus on food losses and on the means to prevent the wastage of this vital resource. Packaging, particularly in developing countries, might help solve this problem”.

Conference brochure is available at: <http://www.beveragecarton.eu/en/media-hub/upcoming-events>

### Note to Editors

ACE 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 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 carton manufacturers in ACE together employ close to 30,000 people worldwide.

**For further information please visit the ACE website or contact:**

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