

Guardian Media Group – Paper Policy

The Guardian Media Group (GMG) purchases substantial quantities of paper for printing its publications and also for office use. We recognize the concerns surrounding the sustainability of paper supplies and we are committed to ensuring that our purchasing practices support viable, sustainable forests and promote the efficient use of resources.

The key issues that we are addressing through this policy are:

The sustainability of the fibre that comprises the main ingredient of paper. A high proportion of the fibre for newsprint now comes from recycling used publications, although some 'virgin' fibre is always required to make good losses and to maintain paper quality. This virgin fibre comes from processing trees grown in forests and plantations. Various certification schemes have been developed to ensure that virgin fibre is derived from known, legal sources in well-managed forests and where it is possible to trace fibre from its source through to the final product. We support all certification systems and look to support them all on a path of constant improvement.

EU legislation is also being strengthened to prevent the use of virgin fibre from illegal sources. We recognise however that the coverage of the world's forests by certification schemes is still low, especially in emerging economies, and that the credibility of the various certification schemes is the subject of debate. We also recognise that ancient and endangered forests, forests that are refuges for endangered species, and forests where indigenous peoples have rights, require special protection from exploitation.

Most of GMG's paper is sourced from traditional markets in northern Europe, Scandinavia and North America, where the large majority of forest and plantation operations are well-managed within a mature legal framework. We also try to source a high proportion of recycled paper from mills in the UK to support the national recycling infrastructure.

The consumption of energy and emissions of greenhouse gases. Various stages in the paper life cycle are energy intensive, especially the pulp and paper making processes. Raw materials and finished product may also be transported over long distances.

The conservation of water resources. Well-managed forests play a key role in maintaining water resources by reducing the effects of floods, preventing soil erosion, regulating the water table and ensuring a high quality water supply. Pulp and paper making processes also consume significant quantities of water and have the potential to generate large volumes of effluent.

Pollution control. Pulp and paper making processes should comply with environmental legislation and best practice, minimising releases to the environment and avoiding the use of harmful materials such as chlorine for bleaching.

The sustainability of other paper additives. Certain grades of paper, especially those used in magazines, may use a significant proportion of non-fibre additives to improve gloss, brightness and other properties. Many of these additives are mineral-based and the extraction and processing of the raw materials may have the potential to result in habitat loss and pollution.

Policy

GMG is determined to use its purchasing power to promote sustainability in the paper supply chain. We will seek to achieve all of our policy objectives progressively through defined performance measures that will be reviewed annually and approved by the board of management. We recognise however that individual purchasing decisions will, from time-to-time, involve trade-offs where an improvement in one area, such as increased certified fibre content, can only be achieved at the expense of another, for example an increase in carbon footprint. GMG and its subsidiaries will:

Sustainable raw materials

1. Maintain a dialogue with every supplier about the raw material content of each paper product purchased. This will include the collection of information and, where possible, numerical data about:
 - the content of recycled fibre
 - the content of certified virgin fibre
 - processes and procedures to ensure that any fibre comes from legal and sustainable sources, especially where there is the possibility that ancient and endangered forests¹, refuges for endangered animals and plants, high carbon value forests, or the rights of indigenous peoples might be affected. To implement this commitment if, at any time, we find or are alerted to the fact that our paper comes from ancient and endangered forests, refuges for endangered animals and plants, or illegally logged areas, we will engage with our suppliers to change practices and/or re-evaluate our relationship with them.
 - We will also track and encourage, with the support of NGOs, innovative conservation solutions
 - the content and sourcing of non-fibre additives
 - water use

Energy consumption and greenhouse gases

2. Quantify the energy consumption and emissions of greenhouse gases associated with paper supply.

Pollution control

3. Require each paper supplier to demonstrate that manufacturing operations comply with environmental legislation and good practice.

Continual improvement

4. Use the information obtained from the supply base to bring about lasting improvements in the characteristics of the paper purchased. This means taking buying decisions that optimise the mix of sustainability characteristics for each paper grade. To guide buying decisions, a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be established and reviewed annually covering, as a minimum:
 - recycled fibre content
 - certified virgin fibre content
 - carbon intensity

¹ Ancient and endangered forests include certain Boreal Forests, Coastal Temperate Rainforests of British Columbia, Western U.S. and Chile, the Amazon and the Tropical Rainforests and peatlands of Indonesia.

5. Publish compliance with this policy and performance against KPIs through GMG's on-going social and environmental reporting disclosures.
6. Seek opportunities to highlight and share best practice with industry peers and to improve sector standards on paper sustainability.

Appendix 1 – Key Performance Indicators

These KPIs apply to the total tonnage of paper purchased by Guardian Media Group for all of its subsidiaries and publications.

Sustainable fibre content:

Sustainable fibre content is defined as the sum of a) recycled and b) certified virgin fibre content:

- 1). Newsprint: Sustainable fibre content will be held at not less than 95% of total tonnes of fibre purchased.
[End March 2013 achieved 97.75%]
- 2). Magazine grades: Sustainable fibre content will reach 95% of total tonnes of fibre purchased by the end of March 2016.
[End March 2013 achieved 89.89%]
- 3). Total paper usage: Sustainable fibre content will be held at not less than 95% of total tonnes of fibre purchased.
[End March 2013 achieved 96.81%]

Carbon footprint:

- 1). We will continue to maintain our database of electricity and fossil energy used to manufacture each tonne of paper product supplied to us, and the associated greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2). The average greenhouse gas emissions per tonne of newsprint supplied (based on electricity and fossil energy used to manufacture each tonne of paper) will not exceed 370kg CO₂ equiv.
[End March 2013 achieved 352.05 kg CO₂ equivalent per tonne.]

Environmental management systems:

- 1). We will continue to ensure that at least 95% of the mills that supply paper to GMG are certified to the ISO 14001 environmental management system standard or EMAS.