

PAPER PACKAGING TO FIGHT WASTE

THE ITALIAN PAPER INDUSTRY IS A POSITIVE EXAMPLE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY. COMIECO IS A CONSORTIUM COMMITTEED TO FURTHER IMPROVING THE USE OF PACKAGING, WITH THE GOAL TO REDUCE WASTE AND LANDFILLING

The circular economy is based on the re-use and recycling of energy and materials to avoid waste and landfilling. The Italian paper industry is a positive example of circular economy, as 55% of its raw materials consist of secondary fibres. As for packaging, 80% of cellulose packaging used for consumption is recycled, which by far exceeds the minimum goal set by the legislation in force (60%) and the goal set for 2025 (75%).

Comieco is working in close collaboration with universities and research institutes to show the quantifiable benefits of an increasingly circular approach, with the aim to foster the involvement of packaging manufacturers, users and consumers. In one of the latest research works promoted by Comieco, Milan's Bocconi University analysed paper and organic

waste recycling and showed that the introduction of compostable cellulose packaging in the food & beverage industry to replace traditional packaging could reduce the waste of resources and waste sent to landfill. In addition to extending product shelf life, such innovations could decrease foreign materials in the separate collection of paper and organic waste, leading to significant disposal cost savings (€ 22 m for paper and up to € 56 m for organic waste). Through its *Paper and Paperboard Club*, Comieco will provide precious information to all the strategic players of the packaging industry, with particular reference to the companies using paper and paperboard to package and handle their products

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GOOD PRACTICES

RECYCLED PAPER BAGS TO BE USED FOR SEPARATE COLLECTION OF PAPER IN A PILOT PROJECT

Separate collection will be fully based on paper, starting from waste bags. From now on, all the Italian municipalities joining the new project launched by Comieco and Sumus Italia will use 100% recycled paper waste collection bags. They will replace traditional plastic bags, which are often forgotten in dustbins and become impurities, thus jeopardising paper and paperboard collection in terms of quality and quantity and frustrating waste sorting efforts. This is a new collaboration initiative between Comieco and Sumus Italia Srl, a company specialized in the production of separate collection bags made out of Italian post-consumer recycled paper.

This new agreement perfectly meets Comieco's goal to increase the quantity and quality of paper and paperboard collection in line with the guidelines provided in the Technical Annex on Paper of the Anci-Conai Agreement, whereby waste collection bags should be made of 100% paper. The municipalities working with Comieco and joining the pilot project will receive a free test kit by Sumus with collection bags made of 100% recycled paper for the disposal of cellulose-based waste. All the instructions for proper paper and paperboard collection will be written on the dustbins to provide simple and practical information and help citizens avoid mistakes.

The first pilot phase was launched by two municipalities, Vico Equense and Meta. In southern Italy they have already set an example in the separate collection of paper and paperboard, so much so that they have become Eco-champions after the excellent results achieved in the last few years.

Overall, 750 users will be involved in the two municipalities in the province of Naples, the lead partner whose good example should be followed. Under the agreement between Comieco and Sumus Italia, free training workshops will be organized for public institutions and service companies on the operating procedures outlined in the *Green Public Procurement National Action Plan*.

