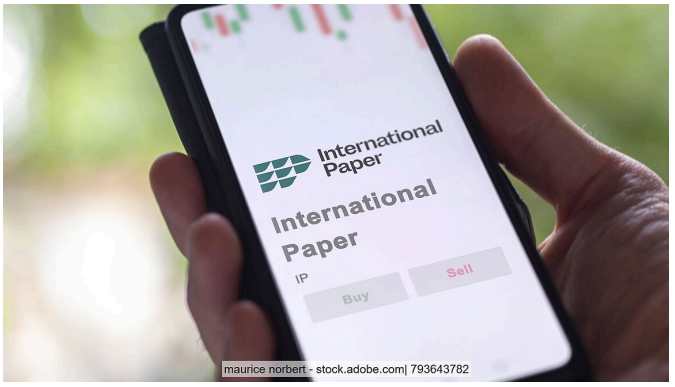
International Paper confirms talks on sale of EMEA Packaging

16 October 2026Published in issue 43/2026

International Paper (IP) is considering the potential sale its packaging business in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA Packaging) as an alternative to the planned spin-off and stock market listing. The group has confirmed talks with potential bidders, but no decision has yet been made. Both options are being pursued in parallel.



In a statement dated 15 October, the group confirmed that it had received “unsolicited inbound inquiries” and was in discussions with potential bidders. IP said it had issued the statement in response to recent movements in its share price and press speculation.

The sale discussions were at an early stage, the US papaer and packaging group said. There could be no certainty that a transaction would be agreed or completed.

Meanwhile, IP is progressing the previously announced spin-off of EMEA Packaging, with a listing in London and an additional listing through American Depositary Receipts (ADRs) in New York.

Following completion of the spin-off, the independent company will be known as DS Smith plc. IP has provided no firm details on the final timing or structure of the separation.

In connection with the planned spin-off, the group will host a “DS Smith – Capital Markets Day” on 3 November.

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Future of Metsä Fibre's Joutseno NBSK pulp mill remains uncertain

EUWID + 16 October 2026 Karolina Utracki | Published in issue 43/2026

A restart of Metsä Fibres Joutseno pulp mill in Finland, which has been idle since late March, is currently not in sight. Given current conditions in the wood and pulp markets, the company sees no basis for a restart in the near term, Senior Vice President Timo Ahonen told EUWID. It is currently impossible to predict when conditions might allow production to resume. Metsä Fibre therefore cannot give a date for restarting NBSK production.



Metsä Fibre's Joutseno NBSK pulp mill has been idle since late March, with much speculation surrounding the site's future.

Negotiations launched in calendar week 37 over a possible extension of temporary layoffs have now concluded. However, a final decision by the employer is still pending, according to the company. Metsä Fibre said the negotiations had been held in preparation for a possible extension of the production stoppage. The company continued to monitor market conditions closely and would base its restart decision on its assessment of the market, Mr Ahonen explained.

According to Finnish media reports, the negotiations concerned possible temporary layoffs for an indefinite period. Previous measures had been limited to a maximum of 90 days. Employee representatives voiced concern over the impact of a prolonged stoppage on the workforce. Most of the mill's approximately 160 employees have taken on other duties within the group during the downtime. Work to keep the site secure and maintain equipment continues.

Group CEO addresses closure concerns

Finnish media have also raised the possibility of a permanent closure. Asked about Joutseno's future in September, Metsä Group President and CEO Jussi Vanhanen said: "If there were no hope at all, we would of course say so. We do not know yet." Vanhanen also pointed to mill closures and difficulties at competitors that were affecting market conditions.

Joutseno is among the softwood pulp mills in Europe subject to industry speculation about potential closures. Given the high costs, experts expect some pulp mills in Finland to be forced to close in the coming years.

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In response to EUWID’s enquiry, Metsä Fibre did not confirm permanent closure plans for the Joutseno mill. Nor did the company specify a shutdown period extending through the winter.

Production at Joutseno pulp mill was halted in late March due to market conditions. In early September, Metsä Fibre had already announced preparations for prolonged shutdowns in view of the pulp demand outlook and conditions in the pulpwood market. The mill has a production capacity of up to 690,000 tpy of northern bleached softwood kraft (NBSK) pulp.

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PM 4 at Stora Enso’s Langerbrugge mill temporarily down after fire

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Stora Enso has temporarily suspended newsprint production on PM 4 at its Langerbrugge publication paper mill in Belgium following a fire. The mill houses two paper machines producing newsprint and SC paper.



Newsprint production on PM 4 at Stora Enso Langerbrugge paper mill is currently idle.

“We can confirm that there was a fire at the Langerbrugge PM 4 newsprint line last weekend, but the situation was brought under control very quickly thanks to the efficient action of our staff and the fire brigade,” a spokeswoman for Stora Enso said in response to an EUWID enquiry today. The company expects production to resume within a few days, she added.

Stora Enso’s Langerbrugge mill operates two paper machines with a combined annual production capacity of 555,000 t of recycled fibre-based newsprint and supercalendered (SC) paper. PM 4 has an annual newsprint capacity of 400,000 tpy.

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US Commerce sets final dumping margins on dissolving pulp imports from Brazil and Norway

EUWID + 19 October 2026 Igor Dugandžić | Published in issue 43/2026

The US Department of Commerce (DOC) has issued final affirmative determinations in its antidumping investigations into high purity dissolving pulp from Brazil and Norway, finding that these imports are being, or are likely to be, sold in the United States at less than fair value. In parallel, the department issued a final affirmative determination in its countervailing duty investigation into high purity dissolving pulp from Brazil, finding that producers and exporters had received countervailable subsidies. The findings were announced on 16 October.



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The DOC determined a dumping margin of 6.50 per cent for Bracell's Brazilian operations Bracell SP Celulose and Bracell Bahia Specialty Cellulose, and all other Brazilian suppliers. The corresponding antidumping cash deposit rate is 6.40 per cent after adjustment for subsidy offsets. It also established a subsidy rate of 9.37 per cent for Bracell Bahia Specialty Cellulose and all other Brazilian suppliers. The two rates are additive, bringing the combined rate for Brazilian imports to 15.77 per cent.

For Norway, Commerce set a dumping margin of 6.51 per cent for Borregaard and all other suppliers.

The investigations were launched in September last year following petitions by Rayonier Advanced Materials and the United Steelworkers (USW) union. The period of investigation is 1 July 1 2024, through 30 June 2025.

The proceedings still require a final injury determination by the US International Trade Commission (ITC), which is scheduled for November. If the ITC finds that the imports have injured the US industry, the Department of Commerce will issue duty orders with the corresponding margins. A negative finding would terminate the investigations.

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Belarus moves forward with new pulp mill project

EUWID + 20 October 2026 Karolina Utracki | Published in issue 43/2026



A new pulp mill with Omani participation is planned in Belarus

Belarus could see the construction of a new pulp mill with an annual capacity of 800,000 t. President Alexander Lukashenko signed a decree on the project on 14 October. An excerpt from the decree published shortly afterwards identifies the site as the premises of a former protein and vitamin concentrate plant in Novopolotsk, in the Vitebsk region in the north of the country.

The decree is intended to establish the conditions required to implement the investment project. However, key provisions remain undisclosed: six of the eight points are marked "for official use only". The publicly available section does not specify the planned pulp grades, investment costs or the dates scheduled for the start-up of construction and commissioning. Enquiries by EUWID to the relevant authorities have so far gone unanswered.

Belarus has been pursuing a pulp project with Omani participation for some time. In October last year, the two countries signed a memorandum of cooperation on the construction and operation of such a mill. According to Oman's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the project forms part of the Oman Investment Authority's strategy to diversify its international investment portfolio. The Oman Investment Authority is the investment arm of the Sultanate of Oman. The statement also provides no details of the ownership stakes or financing arrangements.

If realised, the project would significantly increase Belarus' pulp production capacity. At present, the country has only one pulp mill in Svetlogorsk. The facility has a design capacity of 400,000 tpy and produces bleached softwood kraft pulp. The Svetlogorsk pulp mill began operations in November 2017.

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Germany: Recycled cartonboard producers seeking to pass on higher gas prices

Recycled containerboard prices stable / Cost pressure for corrugated board

EUWID + 21 October 2026 | Published in issue 43/2026

Some manufacturers' attempts to raise prices for recycled corrugated case material again in October have evidently come to nothing. All grades apart from coated white-top testliner are not currently the topic of additional price negotiations. Given the trend in gas prices, rising recovered paper prices and high transport costs, the outlook remains uncertain, though, especially since price hikes for recycled corrugated case material to date have fallen short of fully covering higher costs.

The German corrugated board market continued to display zero growth through mid-October. Yet, weak demand is much less of a burden than mounting cost pressure from corrugated case material prices, which have been rising steadily since May, even as the average selling prices for corrugated board have been in decline. With earnings falling, sometimes dramatically so, manufacturers appear increasingly willing to turn down unprofitable business.

Even though recovered paper prices have been steadily rising in 2026, mounting gas prices are the main focus of current talks in the German recycled cartonboard market. Producers could secure at least part of their proposed price increases across much of the market this month. Folding carton manufacturers are negotiating hard as there is little room to pass higher costs down the supply chain.

Recycled corrugated case material prices unchanged in October

In the early days of October, it was still not very clear what the future had in store for recycled corrugated case material prices. By mid-month, though, it is evident that some producers' attempts to increase their prices by another €20/t had gone nowhere. With the exception of coated white-top testliner, which is only now seeing an increase this month after lagging behind, no further price talks are taking place in mid-October.

With gas prices, high transport costs and the shifting geopolitical situation clouding the outlook, none of the people contacted by EUWID were prepared to predict where prices will go beyond October. Prices for the relevant recovered paper grades are a particular concern: while monthly increases have been small, they have now added up to a rise of a scale that has previously compelled paper producers to pass on higher costs in a prompt fashion.

However, EUWID sources said that the hikes in gas prices have so far outstripped the rise in recovered paper prices that the latter are receiving less attention for now. Nonetheless, it was clear by mid-October that recycled corrugated

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case material price increases fell short of covering higher gas costs, even before rising recovered paper costs were factored in, they said. Whether this shortfall persists remains to be seen.

Capacity utilisation of the paper machines currently running is described as good. However, companies told EUWID that there had also been maintenance shutdowns, which reportedly led to better utilisation of the other machines at some producers.

Cost pressures hitting corrugated board sector more than lack of market growth

Deliveries on Germany's corrugated board market remain flat in a year-on-year comparison. Market players said that some quarters or months might show growth slightly above zero, before facing a renewed decline the next. Although performance across corrugated board companies has varied over the past three quarters, EUWID research found that just a few companies booked a cumulative increase in sales volumes in Germany between January and mid-October. The only bright spot seems to be that, for the bulk of the market, the months of August and September faced less severe declines than initially feared. Yet, even where companies saw their sales fall less than feared or some companies enjoyed growth in sales volumes, this did nothing to alter the sometimes dramatic decline in earnings.

Costs have soared and margins are feeling the squeeze. Corrugated board producers have faced paper mills continually passing on higher costs since May. For recycled corrugated case material, energy costs are the main argument cited by producers for adjustments, while kraftliner manufacturers are taking advantage of the tight market. Brown kraftliner prices are now around €180/t above their October 2025 levels, and recycled corrugated case material prices are around €140/t higher. However, passing on these hikes is no straightforward matter for the German corrugated board industry given current capacity utilisation rates. Sources told EUWID that this was reflected in falling average prices at the same time as competition was mounting. In addition, businesses are facing hefty transport costs, assuming that enough freight capacity is available in the first place.

In light of this situation, corrugated board companies appear to be instructing sellers not only to raise prices, but also resist any further concessions and, when necessary, walk away from orders that do not make any money. However, not all market players were taking this approach, with some reportedly competing for business extremely aggressively.

Growing market concentration was also an area of concern for independent corrugated board manufacturers. They fear that integrated companies can continue to make a profit on paper without passing on cost hikes in the form of higher corrugated board prices, allowing them to undercut the market. Calls for tender issued by major end users were exacerbating matters, and annual talks had only just begun. There is thus little optimism in the German market about the all-important final quarter.

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Passing on higher gas prices dominates talks about recycled cartonboard

Recovered paper prices have been climbing steadily since February/March, but have played only a limited role in prompting price negotiations on the German market for recycled cartonboard this year. Instead, discussions have centred on two connected issues since September at the latest: the trend in gas prices and the need to pass higher costs down the supply chain soon. In the current situation, not a single manufacturer could afford to keep their own GD 2 and unlined chipboard prices unchanged, market players told EUWID. Increases of up to €80/t sought in August and September are consequently the subject of heated negotiations.

However, the implementation of these price increases on the market in Germany was not running smoothly. Folding carton producers cannot readily pass the increases on to their customers in a market that continues to perform below its potential. Yet folding carton producers cannot absorb an increase of this magnitude either, leaving them no choice but to pass it on promptly, possibly even under existing contracts.

In the middle of October, the outcome of talks between cartonboard mills and folding carton manufacturers in Germany still varied. Some converters had to accept increases from 1 October, while others had to dig deeper into their pockets from 12 October. A start date of 1 November has also been mentioned, although this appears to be the final stage of a two-step increase, with the size of that second instalment still under discussion. EUWID sources suspect that the increases currently being implemented may not be the last if the situation intensifies further.

The hikes in unlined chipboard prices appear to have taken effect in early October, with less room for negotiation of their size than for white-lined chipboard (WLC) grades.

Lead times for GD 2 and unlined chipboard stand at three to four weeks and depend on machine production cycles. Multiple sources also said that average grammages are falling as a result of the PPWR, something that industry insiders said was only possible if machines ran at slower speeds.

From the outset, there was little clarity about the timing of proposed mark-ups on the German folding boxboard market, with price hike implementation dates for GC 2 reportedly varying from October at the earliest until into November. A few companies are now reporting minor increases under quarterly contracts or following the transfer of orders from insolvent cartonboard producer Folbb. However, conversations involving EUWID in mid-October suggested these are not yet representative of the broader market. The majority of increases are due to take effect in November, although contacts frequently highlighted existing contracts that run until 31 December.

Observers said that a few suppliers had longer lead times that extend beyond the recently reported range of six to eight weeks.

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German recovered paper prices climb further in October

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In October, the upward price trend for recovered paper in Germany continued. In particular for the ordinary grades mixed paper, supermarket paper and board and sorted graphic paper for deinking, upticks of €5-10/t are being seen this month. Stable or slightly higher prices were reported for the medium and higher grades.

Recovered Paper Germany
September 2026

Monthly changes in €/t	September 2026	August 2026	July 2026	Jan - Sep 2026[2)]
Mixed paper and board (1.02)	+ 3.00	+ 1.50	+ 2.00	+ 21.00
Supermarket corrugated paper and board (1.04)	+ 5.00	+ 1.00	+ 1.50	+ 31.50
Used corrugated kraft II (4.03)	+ 5.50	- 0.50	± 0.00	+ 26.50
Sorted graphic paper for deinking (1.11)	+ 5.00	+ 6.00	+ 4.00	+ 15.00
Coloured letters (2.05/2.06) [1)]	+ 13.00	+ 2.50	+ 4.50	+ 14.00
Multi printing (3.10)	+ 1.50	- 0.50	+ 2.50	+ 6.00
White newsprint/magazine paper (3.14/3.15)	+ 4.00	- 2.00	+ 18.00	+ 17.00
White woodfree uncoated shavings (3.18.01)	+ 1.00	+ 7.50	+ 3.00	+ 13.50

[1)] Since January 2026, price and volume data for grade 2.05 (sorted office paper) have been incorporated into the reporting for coloured letters (2.06).
[2)] The column shows the cumulative price changes in the current calendar year.
Changes based on free delivered prices within Germany.

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In September, prices for various grades had already started heading higher. According to the analysis of prices reported by recovered paper suppliers and consumers, mixed paper and board (1.02) became €3.00/t more expensive compared with August, while a rise of €5.00/t was recorded for supermarket paper and board (1.04). Used corrugated kraft II (4.03) cost €5.50/t more.

The upward trajectory also continued for sorted graphic paper for deinking (1.11) in September, with a gain of €5.00/t. A significant increase of €13.00/t was recorded for coloured letters (2.05/2.06). Multi printing (3.10), on the other hand, edged higher only by €1.50/t. Prices of white newsprint/magazine paper (3.14/3.15) were up by €4.00/t, whereas white woodfree uncoated shavings (3.18.01) saw only a minimal rise of €1.00/t.

Demand for ordinary grades remains good

In October, respondents say demand from the paper industry remains good. Paper mill buyers are increasingly seeking additional volumes of supermarket paper and board and mixed paper, EUWID was told. However, only very few market participants believe this is a sign that the order situation in the paper industry has fundamentally improved. On the contrary, most respondents are not seeing any fundamental change in the market. At the same time, there has been a noticeable rise recently in prices for finished paper.

Several factors appear to explain why recovered paper is currently finding buyers relatively easily. In some cases, mills reportedly have low inventory levels that are only slowly getting refilled after the summer. At the same time, they are already starting to build up fibre stocks for the Christmas and end-of-year period, EUWID was told. Other market participants suspect that significant volumes of finished paper are being exported to markets with stronger

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economic activity. They also believe that some papermakers are producing for stock.

While demand for recovered paper is slightly higher, supply remains relatively weak. After the summer holiday season, collection volumes have risen marginally at most, say waste management companies. It is therefore easy to find buyers for the available volumes, they explain.

Limited logistics capacity remains a concern. The resulting higher transport costs are also likely to have contributed to the increase in recovered paper prices, respondents believe.

Higher-priced recovered paper imports and good export opportunities to Asia

The main driver of higher prices, though, is surplus demand. In recent months, individual paper mills have apparently been turning to higher-priced imports to meet their additional needs. After recovered paper prices rose in neighbouring European countries, price adjustments became unavoidable in the German market as well, respondents said.

Demand for European recovered paper from Asian buyers also remains strong. In particular, paper mills in India, Vietnam and Thailand are reportedly offering good conditions. As a result, relevant volumes are leaving Europe. In light of the good demand and the recent price hikes in the domestic market, few volumes are being shipped from Germany to Asia at the moment. However, as volumes shipped to the Far East from other European countries remain stable, this limits availability in Europe and acts as a further driver of the upward price trend.

Demand for sorted graphic paper for deinking also continues to be good, say market participants. Most of the players surveyed by EUWID therefore expect grade 1.11 to see similar price increases to grades 1.02 and 1.04 in October. Others believe the price curve is likelier to flatten out, as supplies are now better able to meet demand.

It is a slightly more mixed picture for the medium and higher grades in October. Here, market participants generally expect prices to remain stable or rise only slightly. The recent strong demand for individual grades has reportedly softened again. In certain instances, though, buyers are apparently still paying mark-ups of more than €10/t for letters or shavings in October.

Looking ahead to the rest of the year, most respondents expect the recovered paper market to be relatively calm. Typically, recovered paper prices soften slightly towards the end of the year. But many players do not expect the same development this year, as the underlying situation is unlikely to change. Nevertheless, only a few respondents expect further price increases.

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This caution reflects the continued difficulties facing the paper industry. Most market participants say there are still no signs of a substantial improvement in paper mills' order books and operating rates. Yet, they believe dramatic price erosion for recovered paper is also improbable. In the event that mills implement extended production shutdowns, the attractive opportunities in the export market would provide a good outlet for volumes and thus prevent significant declines in prices, EUWID was told.

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Caustic soda manufacturers push for steep price hikes in Q4 as high costs hit

Q3 prices down / Volatility and rapid market changes fuel uncertainty

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Caustic soda manufacturers are now pushing for substantial price increases in fourth-quarter negotiations after prices spiralled downwards in the third quarter in Germany and across Europe. EUWID frequently heard complaints that current energy costs left them unable to operate profitably. For their part, paper industry buyers are questioning the size of the proposed increases, underscoring the availability of some lower-priced imports.

Caustic soda (NaOH) manufacturers report being under pressure from weaker business in areas such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and facing rising energy and logistics costs on the market in Europe. Industry sources said that the ongoing consolidation was forcing plant and site closures, with knock-on effects for caustic soda. NaOH prices, which the chlorine industry considers too low, are reportedly making this business unprofitable as well, potentially compromising security of supply in the long term.

Producers seeking exceptional hikes

Many caustic soda producers have opened fourth-quarter 2026 negotiations with demands for hefty price increases. Pointing to the trend in manufacturing costs, some companies stepped up the pressure as talks progressed. Suppliers sought increases of up to €100/t, with isolated demands well above that level. Some have set a goal of fourth-quarter prices at or above €700/t for 50 per cent caustic soda, expressed on a 100 per cent basis.

Buyers, including those at paper mills, criticise the rapid price changes, saying these made planning much more difficult. Nevertheless, there has reportedly been some room for negotiation in several cases.

Although the market has tightened somewhat, sufficient volumes were apparently available, prompting suppliers to work on securing volume commitments. Nonetheless, other industry sources confirmed that negotiations had been intense and business highly volatile. Towards the end of the talks, prices reportedly rose even for previously lucrative buying opportunities, for instance on the spot market.

Industry sources agreed that the trend was clear, although some negotiations have yet to be put to bed. Suppliers appear to have secured price increases across the board. However, EUWID contacts confirmed that caustic soda

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producers had to moderate their initial demands in many cases. Paper mills in Central Europe are generally understood to be negotiating increases of €30-80/t.

In most cases, buyers quoted prices in the mid-€600s for deliveries from October onwards, a range that suppliers confirmed. Specific quotes were in the region of €640 to €680, with lower prices also quoted for larger orders. Manufacturers said that they were often negotiating contracts containing prices close to €700.

Market sources said that NaOH suppliers' hefty demands were not least a response to the downward trend in prices in the third quarter. Contracts covering deliveries from July onwards frequently saw cuts of €50/t or more, with reductions going up to €80/t. Prices changed less sharply under contracts settled relatively early. Market players unanimously reported that prices edged towards €600/t, but did not recede to first-quarter levels. Shipments below the €600/t mark were reportedly available only rarely.

Regional variations in NaOH prices evident across Europe

Industry observers reported sometimes dramatic regional variations in prices across Germany and Europe. These reflected not only the growing number of individually negotiated agreements, but also the availability of relatively cheap imports and general logistics challenges.

Several EUWID sources confirmed that both factors were increasingly influencing prices in Germany. Overseas imports were making inroads into the European market at relatively low prices. What's more, higher freight costs are prompting manufacturers to prioritise customers closer to their facilities. Logistical issues, such as low water levels on inland waterways and shortages of rail and road haulage capacity, are also generally making it harder to maintain delivery service levels.

Low capacity utilisation raising questions about profitability

European chlorine output reached around 590,000 t in August 2026, according to the industry association Eurochlor. Average daily output fell by 8.0 per cent in a month-on-month comparison and 14.2 per cent in a year-on-year comparison. Capacity utilisation, which averaged 66.6 per cent in the first half, slipped further in July before falling below 60 per cent in August.

Caustic soda stocks stood at approximately 183,000 t in August, down 7.8 per cent on July and almost 70,000 t lower than in the same month last year.

The chlorine derivatives business remains challenging, market players said looking ahead. No improvement was on the cards in the months ahead. That also meant lower volumes of caustic soda, which is produced alongside chlorine, while industry representatives stressed that margins remain inadequate, too.

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Rationalisation and restructuring thus continue to dominate the chemical industry, with production being cut back in many places, sources added. Companies were increasingly focusing on reviewing the long-term viability of individual plants and entire sites. Consolidation is already under way, industry representatives stress.

However, buyers appear to have little sympathy for the steep price hikes that producers are currently seeking, not least because of the highly volatile situation and difficulty in planning ahead. They said that supply remained ample despite regional variations. The impact of downtime on the caustic soda market was reportedly also still difficult to gauge.

For their part, caustic soda industry representatives argue that a greater interest in imports could leave customers somewhat dependent on overseas supplies and exacerbate the market volatility seen in the recent past.

EUWID Price Watch Western Europe Caustic Soda
Third quarter 2026

Prices in € per tonne free delivered	Third quarter 2026	Second quarter 2026	Third quarter 2025
NaOH*	620 - 670	650 - 750	620 - 660

* 50% solution, calculated on a 100% concentration basis

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Circular Economy Act: Industry associations call for harmonised EPR rules

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A broad coalition of European industry associations, coordinated by Europen, and including Ecma, Pro Carton, Citpa, Finat, Fepe and Intergraf, has called on the European Commission to use the forthcoming Circular Economy Act to bring greater consistency to extended producer responsibility (EPR) rules across the EU. In a joint position paper, the associations argue that a functioning internal market for secondary raw materials requires a more harmonised approach. EPR systems currently vary considerably in their design and performance across member states, while differing national requirements hamper the functioning of cross-border value chains.

Central to the associations' proposals is a horizontal EU framework for EPR that would apply directly across the bloc. They are calling for an EPR Regulation setting common minimum standards for EU-mandated schemes and relevant waste streams, supplemented by sector-specific rules. This would reduce differences between national systems, create a level playing field and facilitate cross-border trade in secondary raw materials.

Responsibility for EPR schemes should remain with producers

At the same time, the signatories believe that responsibility for organising EPR schemes should remain primarily with producers. Public authorities should oversee the schemes but should not assume decision-making responsibility, while contributions paid by producers should be used exclusively for the collection, sorting and recycling of the products covered by the respective schemes. They also argue that the EU should not support state-run producer responsibility organisations where these contributions risk being treated as tax revenue rather than as fees earmarked for waste management services. To avoid conflicts of interest, stakeholders that receive EPR funding directly or indirectly should not also decide how it is spent.

The associations are also calling for greater transparency throughout the waste management chain. Producer responsibility organisations (PROs) should report annually on their performance, ownership and membership structures, fee models, use of contributions and, where applicable, eco-modulation criteria. Similar transparency requirements should apply to municipalities, public authorities and waste management operators receiving EPR funding. Standardised, granular and comparable data should facilitate enforcement and benchmarking, they argue. "This is essential to assess whether producer contributions are efficient, proportionate and directed to the right outcomes," they say.

Producer contributions should be ring-fenced

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The associations also want producer contributions to be clearly ring-fenced. Funds collected for a particular product category or waste stream should be used exclusively to cover the net costs of managing that category or stream. Revenue from the sale of secondary raw materials and other recovered outputs should be deducted from the costs covered by producers. EPR funds should not be used for broader waste prevention or reuse objectives where dedicated sector-specific EU legislation is already in place. Instead, contributions should primarily fund the infrastructure, operations and system improvements needed for collection, sorting and recycling.

The associations also want the Circular Economy Act to reduce the administrative burden associated with EPR. Registration requirements should be more closely harmonised across the EU and limited to the data needed to determine producers' status and obligations. For packaging, they argue that member states should be able to require authorised representatives for third-country producers, but not for producers already established in the EU. They say mandatory national representation creates market fragmentation and barriers to scale, particularly for companies operating across borders and for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Creating a functioning internal market for secondary raw materials

Finally, the associations call for better separate collection to strengthen secondary raw material markets. Member states should provide more detailed information on their separate collection systems, including their geographical and population coverage. Exemptions from separate collection should be narrowly justified and assessed against their impact on the achievement of recycling targets.

The associations also want EPR schemes and member states to do more to raise public awareness of correct waste disposal and sorting. They argue that harmonised EPR rules, ring-fenced funding, simpler administration and more effective collection and recycling infrastructure could together create the conditions for a functioning European market for secondary raw materials.

The European Commission is currently expected to present its Circular Economy Act proposal on 11 November. The proposal had originally been due in September but was delayed after the Commission's Regulatory Scrutiny Board raised concerns about the impact assessment.

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UPM appoints new CFO

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Aki Temmes has been appointed new Chief Financial Officer of UPM. He will succeed **Tapio Korpeinen** who will retire from his position at the end of the year. Mr Temmes is currently Executive Vice President at UPM Fibres. **Petri Hakanen** is set to succeed him in this role, UPM announced. Mr Hakanen is currently Senior Vice President, Fibres Finland Operations. Both are to assume their new roles on 1 January 2027.

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Antonio Sada & Figli in Italy becomes new CEO

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Italy's **Sada Group** has appointed **Antonio Dalessandri** as the new CEO of its subsidiary Antonio Sada & Figli. Mr Dalessandri brings 25 years of experience in the corrugated industry, the company says. Antonio Sada & Figli is part of Sada Group's Corrugated business division, which also includes corrugated board producers Sifim and Sabox. The Sada Group also produces corrugated board packaging and folding cartons via its subsidiaries Sada Packaging and Sada Packaging Verona.

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Südroh acquires german recovered paper recycling company Becker

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German waste management company **Südroh Recycling** has acquired a majority stake in recovered paper recycling company **M. Becker Altpapier Recycling**, strengthening its presence in southwestern Germany. Südroh has not disclosed the exact size of the stake. Most recently, Manfred Becker held 51 per cent of the company’s shares, while Roland Weishäupl held the remaining 49 per cent. The activities of Becker Paper, Südroh Recycling and Südroh Paper are now to be combined.

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Copacel condemns blockade at Sylvamo Saillat

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On Thursday 15 October, activists from a forest conservation group blocked the access road to the Sylvamo paper mill in Saillat-sur-Vienne, France, for five hours, thereby preventing the delivery of timber, reports Copacel, the French paper industry association.The activists justified their action by claiming that Sylvamo's timber harvesting posed a risk of damaging the habitats of protected species and that bat roosts in the locality of Bois Chardet in western France had been destroyed, the association stated.

Copacel condemned the blockade in the strongest terms and stated that it was unacceptable for activists to obstruct lorry traffic, create potentially dangerous situations and cause economic damage to businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises in the transport sector. Forest management is subject to strict regulations in France, Copacel says, and issues relating to biodiversity and forestry practices deserve a serious and informed debate. However, differences of opinion cannot justify actions that endanger people or hinder economic activity, the association explains.

Sylvamo's Saillat mill is geared for a capacity of 250,000 tpy of woodfree uncoated paper and 130,000 tpy of pulp, mostly for integrated paper production. Also affiliated with the mill are the forestry operations of the Comptoir des Bois de Brive (CBB) for timber procurement and Fôret Services for sustainable forest management.

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Ence’s new moulded pulp packaging project at Navia mill progressing as planned

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Spanish pulp producer Ence says its project to establish production of moulded pulp packaging at the Navia site “is progressing in line with its planned timetable.” The company is investing €12m in production facilities during the first phase of the project. The packaging can be used to replace plastics in the food sector, for example, in trays for fresh products and ready-made meals.

Ence initially announced the project in June 2025. At the time, the company said production and marketing of moulded pulp packaging would begin that same year and projected it would reach an annual capacity of 40 million packaging units by 2026. Ence subsequently postponed the start-up until the second half of 2027, and recently confirmed this timeline. There is an option to further expand the capacity in future. The new packaging business would take on 40 employees from the existing pulp production at Navia.

According to Ence, the packaging will be produced using eucalyptus pulp made by the group. Besides packaging for food, fast-moving consumer goods are a further application area. The products are reportedly also suitable for heating food in microwaves and ovens. Furthermore, they are said to be compostable and/or recyclable.

The project is part of the group’s attempt to diversify its businesses by adding new products. On its product webpage, Ence also highlights its research projects Valeria and Biomedpack. The Valeria project is pursuing bio-based alternatives to traditional plastic packaging for food and is supported by the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI). Biomedpack promotes new packaging solutions made from agricultural by-products.

Ence inaugurates fluff pulp line

Ence’s update on the moulded pulp project was included in an announcement about the official inauguration of three projects in Navia: the fluff pulp line, a new wood processing line and the revamped lime kilns. As EUWID previously reported, these plants were started up some time ago.

The fluff pulp line was commissioned at the end of 2025 with a capacity of 125,000 tpy. The upgrading of the mill’s wood processing and energy supply was completed in July 2026. In total, the group invested €48m in the two projects.

Ence operates two pulp mills in Navia and Pontevedra, with a combined capacity of around 1.2 million tpy of eucalyptus pulp. The group, which is also active in the field of renewable energy, generated revenues of around €750m in 2025 and most recently had around 1,300 employees.

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Arauco ahead of schedule with Sucuriú pulp mill

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Chilean company Arauco is making progress with the construction of its new Sucuriú pulp mill in Brazil. The company is sticking to the planned timeline for start of production in the fourth quarter of 2027. The mill near Inocência in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul is expected to produce 3.5 million tpy of bleached eucalyptus pulp.

Arauco wrote in its last quarterly report that the project was 74.4 per cent complete at the end of July, 6.3 per cent ahead of schedule. In early October, construction progress had reached around 81 per cent, Arauco announced at a congress in São Paulo. The company attributes the progress to accelerated construction work.

Engineering, procurement and construction work were around 90 per cent complete by the end of July. The focus is now on mechanical and electrical assembly as well as instrumentation. At that time, this work had reached a completion rate of 31.9 per cent and, according to the company, was also well ahead of schedule.

When Arauco published the last quarterly figures, the group also referred to the expected competitiveness of the new plant. In the third to fourth year of operation, cash costs including delivery to China are expected to range between $200 and $240/t. Wood supply for the first years of operation has already been secured.

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Woodberry Packaging becomes PXP Group

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Irish packaging group Woodberry Packaging has changed its name and will now operate as PXP Group. The company unveiled its new group name on 6 October at the CPHI pharmaceutical trade fair in Milan.

PXP stands for Print, Expertise, Packaging. The group produces folding cartons and package leaflets, among other products, for the pharmaceutical, healthcare and cosmetics industries at four sites in Ireland and the UK. It employs a total of 650 people and reports turnover of more than €120m. The group is led by CEO Peter Santo.

Owned by Dublin-based investment firm Woodberry Capital, the packaging group has been built through three acquisitions since 2021. The first was Irish print and packaging manufacturer Colorman in Dublin. In 2024, the group acquired folding cartons producer Reelvision in Haslingden, Lancashire, England. The acquisition of Medica Packaging in July 2026 added a site in Crewe, Cheshire, specialising in pharmaceutical and healthcare packaging, to the group's operations, as well as Medica's subsidiary F.G. Curtis in Redhill, Surrey. Curtis primarily produces folding cartons for cosmetics and personal care products.

"We are bringing the full buying cycle together, so customers can rely on us to produce cartons and leaflets in one place, ultimately resulting in an optimum supply chain, with significant cost benefits [...]," said CEO Peter Santo.

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Edelmann sells folding box plant in Brazil

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German folding box manufacturer Edelmann Group has divested its Brazilian site. A spokesperson told EUWID that the transaction was a management buy-out completed with effect from 30 September. The buy-out was led by Lucas Jardim, former local managing director of the plant in Brazil, together with Marisa Scheurich (head of sales), Fábio de Oliveira (head of production) and Shayla Pacheco (head of administration and finance).

The company spokesperson described the sale as an important step in the strategic realignment of Edelmann Group. The Brazilian business is to be continued independently. The folding box plant manufactures packaging primarily for the local healthcare market, EUWID was informed.

Edelmann Group produces folding boxes, package inserts and labels for the beauty care, healthcare and consumer brands markets. The company now runs 12 plants, half of which are located in Germany, with the remainder in Mexico, India, Poland and Hungary.

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