

Smurfit Westrock with solid Q3 performance amid challenging demand environment

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Smurfit Westrock has reported a stable performance in the third quarter of 2025 despite ongoing demand weakness in global packaging markets. According to the company, operational and commercial improvements, especially in North America, supported earnings, while demand in EMEA and APAC region remained subdued.

The group generated net sales of \$8.0bn in the third quarter (Q3 2024: \$7.7bn) and achieved an adjusted Ebitda of \$1.3bn, slightly above the figure of the same period last year. Net income increased significantly to \$245m, compared to a loss of \$150m in Q3 2024.

“Our third-quarter results reflect continued progress, driven by strong operational performance in North America and resilient results in EMEA and APAC,” said Group CEO Tony Smurfit.

North America delivers strong margin

The North American division remained the group's main earnings driver, posting an adjusted Ebitda of \$810m (Q3 2024: \$780m). Corrugated box deliveries were down nearly 9 per cent year-on-year, due not only to a slower market, but also the group's decision to exit unprofitable legacy business. Mr Smurfit explained that the division's corrugated operations continued to prioritise value over volume. The process of reducing loss-making and inefficient assets in the corrugated segment was ongoing, but also starting to deliver results.

The SBS and CUK business benefited from substitution effects as customers moved away from coated recycled board, due to lower calipers and improved runnability and printability of fresh-fibre grades.

EMEA/APAC: High paper mill utilisation rate thanks to integrated business model

In the EMEA and APAC region, adjusted Ebitda amounted to \$419m, which is only marginally higher than the figure from one year before. Box deliveries were on par with last year's figure, reflecting the lack of growth on the European market. However, thanks to its integrated model, Smurfit Westrock's paper mills were able to run close to full capacity (>90 per cent). Conversion capacities are being streamlined, with Smurfit Westrock closing down two corrugated facilities in Germany (Lübbecke, Hanau).

Higher box prices and lower recovered paper costs were not able to offset high energy and labour costs and lower paper prices in

third party transactions. Within the EMEA/APAC region, development was varied. While the UK and Germany were still lagging behind, growth was strong in Eastern Europe and on the Iberian Peninsula, according to Mr Smurfit.

Despite challenging conditions, Smurfit Westrock highlighted the resilience of its margins and its strong market positions across Europe, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific.

In Latin America, adjusted Ebitda came in at \$116m, reflecting continued operational improvement. Box deliveries were up 1 per cent year-on-year. A one-off operational issue temporarily affected profitability, but the company described the region as a “compelling growth market.”

Economic downtime expected in Q4

Smurfit Westrock described the market backdrop throughout 2025 as challenging and announced plans for additional economic downtime in the fourth quarter to optimise system efficiency. The Ebitda impact of these measures is expected to amount to \$60-70m in the fourth quarter. For the full year, the group now expects adjusted Ebitda in the range of \$4.9-5.1bn. Capital expenditure for 2026 is projected between \$2.4bn and \$2.5bn, focusing on asset optimisation and cost reduction.

Since the completion of the combination between Smurfit Kappa Group and Westrock in July 2024, the group has continued to advance its integration programme. In the process, Smurfit Westrock has already closed down over 500,000 tons of paper capacity and 18 converting facilities, resulting in approximately 4,500 job cuts. Operational synergies, particularly in procurement, logistics and mill optimisation, are beginning to materialise and are expected to contribute more visibly to results from 2026 onwards, said Mr Smurfit.

“As we end 2025 and enter 2026, we are a much stronger company, increasingly excited about our future prospects,” he added.

Smurfit Westrock results

million \$	July - September		January - September	
	2025	2024*	2025	2024*
Key data				
Sales	8,003	7,671	23,599	13,570
Adjusted EBITDA	1,302	1,265	3,767	2,220
Operating result	526	55	1,330	606
Net result	245	-150	601	173
Business area review				
North America				
Sales	4,721	4,649	14,145	5,499
Adjusted EBITDA	810	780	2,347	900
Europe, MEA and APAC				
Sales	2,831	2,651	8,191	7,056
Adjusted EBITDA	419	411	1,180	1,158
LATAM				
Sales	545	506	1,576	1,187
Adjusted EBITDA	116	116	354	257

*Results reflect historical financial results of legacy Smurfit Kappa Group.

Source: Smurfit Westrock

Södra posts losses in Q3 amid low demand, high cost pressure and negative currency effects

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Sweden's forest products group Södra reported a negative result for the third quarter of 2025, driven by weak demand, negative currency effects, and continued cost pressure. The group's net sales declined 9 per cent to SEK6.35bn (Q3 2024: SEK6.94bn). Operating profit before depreciation, amortisation and impairment (Ebitda) was still in the positive region at SEK50m (SEK1.32bn), but operating profit turned to a loss of SEK360m compared to a profit of SEK937m in the same period last year. The net loss for the third quarter was SEK328m versus a net profit of SEK807m in the third quarter of 2024.

The decline in earnings was mainly due to negative exchange rate effects of SEK380m, lower product prices, and higher raw material costs of SEK470m, Södra explained.

According to President and CEO Lotta Lyrå, profitability was squeezed by an imbalance between raw material prices and sales prices, combined with geopolitical and economic uncertainties, price pressure, and currency fluctuations.

One of these markets that remained under pressure in the third quarter was pulp. In the pulp segment, weak European demand forced a shift of volumes to Asia, but at lower margins. A global surplus of softwood and hardwood pulp further intensified price pressure throughout the quarter, the company explained. Södra Cell reported sales of SEK3.53bn (SEK4.06bn) and Ebitda of SEK214m (SEK1.32bn) in the third quarter 2025. However, the pulp business booked an operating loss of SEK80m (SEK1.06bn). The results of the pulp division were impacted by a negative SEK/USD exchange rate, higher raw material costs as well as an unfavourable geographical sales mix. Pulp deliveries fell by 8 per cent year-on-year to 480,000 t, while production declined by 2 per cent to 484,000 t. Inventory levels increased slightly during the quarter.

In the business with wood and wood raw materials, Södra reported higher prices and solid demand for spruce logs and softwood pulpwood, while demand for energy products was weak. Deliveries from Södra Skog were down 3 per cent year-on-year due to the negative trend in the energy segment. Earnings of Södra Skog were also impacted by higher investment costs in IT and digitisation, Södra said.

In September Södra Skog lowered prices on several product ranges in response to market conditions and an oversupply of fuelwood and pulpwood. Nevertheless, wood prices remain at historically high and competitive levels, according to Södra.

The weak third quarter result also weighed on cumulative results for the first nine months of the year. The group posted an

operating loss of SEK241m and a net loss of SEK290m, compared with an operating profit of SEK1.90bn and a net profit of 1.66bn in the same period last year.

To address external pressures, Södra has reportedly intensified its action programme aimed at improving competitiveness through structural cost reductions and operational adjustments. This included redundancy notices for 200 positions across four sites at the start of the fourth quarter.

Investments continue in parallel to secure long-term raw material competitiveness and customer stability. A key initiative is the SEK1.5bn investment in the Kisa sawmill, increasing capacity by 50 per cent and adding a new pellet plant, strengthening Södra's position in the growing wood-based market.

Södra results

million SEK	July - September		January - September	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Key figures				
Sales	6,349	6,944	21,696	22,084
EBITDA	50	1,316	901	3,032
Operating result	-360	937	-310	1,903
Net result	-328	807	-290	1,661
Business area review				
Södra Cell				
Sales	3,533	4,056	11,462	12,241
EBITDA	214	1,324	1,112	3,035
Operating result	-80	1,051	237	2,211
Production in 1,000 t	484	493	1,408	1,407
Deliveries in 1,000 t	480	523	1,422	1,475
Södra Skog				
Sales	1,196	1,359	4,879	4,812
EBITDA	-7	18	85	93
Operating result	-32	-9	8	23
Södra Wood				
Sales	1,568	1,482	5,135	4,794
EBITDA	-39	37	92	236
Operating result	-103	-16	-85	77
Södra Building Systems				
Sales	41	40	161	177
EBITDA	-27	-8	-62	-33
Operating result	-51	-27	-133	-92
Other				
Sales	11	7	59	60
EBITDA	-91	-55	-326	-299
Operating result	-94	-62	-337	-316

Source: Södra

Soft demand and maintenance downtime weigh on Holmen's paper and board division

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A weak consumer climate and declining prices for wood products led to low capacity utilisation along the entire forestry value chain in the third quarter of 2025 and weighed on Holmen's results. The company's sales decreased by around 5 per cent to SEK5.33bn, while Ebitda fell by more than 20 per cent to SEK1.11bn.

Demand for board and paper continues to decrease

Demand for board continued to weaken slightly in the reporting period, while the structural decline in paper markets persisted. Sales of the paper and board division amounted to SEK3.6bn (Q3 2024: SEK4.0bn) and operating profit to SEK356m (653m). The result was impacted by a scheduled maintenance shutdown costing SEK150m.

Divisional sales volumes were marginally higher at 354,000 t compared to the previous year. Holmen adjusted its energy-intensive paper production flexibly in response to volatile electricity prices, taking advantage of periods of lower costs.

The company said that the US import tariffs introduced in April have so far had little effect on its paper and board business. In the first nine months of 2025, divisional sales revenues totalled SEK11.1bn (11.5bn), including SEK8.3bn (8.7bn) generated in Europe. Sales in Asia declined to SEK1.2bn (1.4bn), and sales to other overseas markets to SEK0.9bn (1.0bn). Only Scandinavia saw an increase in to SEK0.7bn (0.6bn). Total deliveries were slightly lower at 1.06m t, as a modest rise in board sales was offset by weaker paper demand.

Lower prices for pulpwood, wood products and energy

The overall subdued activity in paper and board markets resulted in lower pulpwood prices, which retreated from previously high levels. By contrast, sawn timber prices remained resilient. Thanks to higher sales volumes of 666,000 m³ in the third quarter of 2025, sales revenues in this segment rose slightly to SEK2.28bn (2.20bn), while operating profit improved to SEK538m.

In the renewable energy segment, Holmen continued to operate below cost due to the ongoing electricity surplus in northern Sweden. With an average power price of SEK185 /mWh, the division reported an operating loss of SEK18m in the third quarter. However, Holmen expects the low prices to attract new energy-intensive industries to the region in the long term, which would benefit its energy business.

Prices for wood products declined again in the third quarter and, together with higher raw material costs, resulted in an divisional operating loss of SEK91m. Should construction activity pick up, the company expects to benefit from its efficient sawmilling and processing capacities.

Outlook remains muted

The overall outlook remains subdued, as geopolitical uncertainties continue to weigh on Holmen's key markets. Nevertheless, the company considers itself to be on a solid footing thanks to its extensive forest holdings and a product portfolio based on renewable raw materials, which aims to help customers enhance competitiveness while reducing fossil-based emissions.

Holmen results				
million SEK	July - September		January - September	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Key figures				
Sales	5,327	5,632	16,873	17,246
EBITDA	1,109	1,431	3,633	4,050
Operating result	737	1,078	2,531	3,005
Net result	944	816	2,298	2,304
Business area review				
Forest				
Sales	2,275	2,198	7,386	6,922
EBITDA	558	501	1,602	1,480
Operating result	538	482	1,545	1,424
Deliveries, own forests, 1,000 m ³	666	561	1,885	1,967
Renewable energy				
Sales	82	63	280	525
EBITDA	9	15	60	337
Operating result	-18	-12	-23	255
Hydro/wind power, GWh	324	365	1,207	1,197
Wood products				
Sales	943	921	3,105	2,964
EBITDA	-36	48	90	164
Operating result	-91	0	-70	20
Deliveries, 1,000 m ³	318	325	990	1,023
Board and Paper				
Sales	3,596	3,980	11,070	11,529
EBITDA	619	903	2,020	2,200
Operating result	356	653	1,243	1,461
Deliveries, 1,000 t	354	370	1,061	1,083
Source: Holmen				

Norske Skog reports stronger group profits in Q3 but packaging paper division still in the red

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Norske Skog ended the third quarter on a positive note and has announced an improvement in earnings. However, the company also reported losses from its packaging paper activities, which are affected by the ongoing ramp-up of operations at the new PM 1 in Golbey, France. Its publication paper business turned in a stronger performance.

All told, Norske Skog recorded a net profit of NOK161m for the third quarter of 2025, which was roughly twice the level posted for the previous quarter. By comparison, the group booked a net loss of NOK153m for the third quarter of 2024. Norske Skog posted an Ebitda of NOK38m (Q3 2024: 88m) and an operating profit of NOK193m (-5m).

Norske Skog said that, among other factors, the higher valuation of Norwegian power contracts had a positive impact on its third-quarter earnings. Sales volumes also developed favourably. According to the company, selling prices declined across all segments. However, this effect was partly offset by lower recovered paper and pulp costs, as well as reduced fixed costs.

PM 1 in Golbey reaches 20 per cent capacity

Events at the Golbey mill continue to weigh on the packaging paper business, although Norske Skog notes that this effect will be temporary. The mill is currently ramping up production at its new corrugated case material machine, PM 1, which was commissioned in May. Norske Skog produced 28,000 t of paper on this machine in the third quarter, which represents around 20 per cent of its total capacity of 550,000 tpy. PM 1 is expected to reach full capacity by the first half of 2027.

In light of this situation and with sales prices under pressure from challenging market conditions, the group's packaging paper division slipped even deeper into the red in the third quarter. A consistent downward trend has been evident in recent quarters, although revenues did display growth.

Norske Skog said that the remaining investment at Norske Skog Golbey is expected to be around €15m, and the mill is expected to receive additional €52m in investment grants and energy certificates during 2025 to 2027.

Publication paper operations posted an operating profit of NOK381m in Q3, up from NOK45m in 2024. The first nine months of this year combined also ended with much stronger results. Conversely, sales revenues in Q3 fell a little, something that Norske Skog attributed to lower sales prices. Sales volumes were lower than last year but slightly better than in the second quarter. While

magazine paper deliveries were up a little, newsprint deliveries dipped somewhat.

Decision still pending on PM 6 in Saugbrugs

A decision has yet to be made about whether to restart PM 6 at the Saugbrugs site in Norway. Norske Skog is considering bringing the SC paper machine, which has been out of service since suffering severe damage during a landslide in April 2023, back into operation. The company stated that a decision on the matter is to be announced during the fourth quarter and emphasised once again that PM 4 and PM 5 at the mill would close if PM 6 resumed operations.

Norske Skog results				
million NOK	January - March		January - September	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Key figures				
Sales	2,403	2,511	7,893	7,506
EBITDA	38	88	756	703
Operating profit	193	-5	757	293
Net result	161	-153	640	-236
Business area review				
Publication Paper Europe				
Sales	1,971	2,224	6,778	6,796
EBITDA	143	99	964	729
Operating result	381	45	1,115	425
Production 1,000 t	271	293	817	843
Deliveries 1,000 t	267	283	806	824
Packaging paper				
Sales	357	249	880	633
EBITDA	-95	8	-181	3
Operating result	-175	-22	-323	-84
Production 1,000 t	76	44	174	124
Deliveries 1,000 t	71	42	166	121
Other activities				
Sales	221	225	668	573
EBITDA	-10	-19	-26	-29
Source: Norske Skog				

Falling prices and declining deliveries of pulp and graphic paper reduce UPM's profits

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UPM faced declining results in the third quarter of its financial year. Falling sales prices and declining sales volumes in the printing and writing paper segment weighed on profits, only partially offset by higher sales in Adhesive Materials, Energy and Plywood.

UPM achieved a comparable Ebitda of €251m (2024: €450m) and an operating profit of €55m (€305m) in the third quarter. With sales of €2.30bn (€2.52bn), a profit after tax of €18m (€246m) was achieved.

In the third quarter, there was temporary clarity in international trade conditions, but consumer demand remained subdued and uncertainty prevailed, says UPM President and CEO Massimo Reynaudo, describing the market background in the third quarter.

At UPM Fibres, low pulp prices led to a significantly lower Ebit than in the previous year. Despite low market prices, the pulp platform in South America performed well, UPM says. In the third quarter, Fibres South achieved a comparable Ebit of €80m. After this first full year of nominal capacity for UPM Paso de los Toros and competitive outbound logistics, UPM expects further improvements to continue here. By 2027, the company expects expanded wood growing areas and improved wood procurement. Further capacity-efficient bottleneck eliminations are also planned to unlock further potential of the platform.

In Finland, however, Fibres North recorded a comparable Ebit loss of €37m, with the impact of the extended shutdown and maintenance of the Kaukas pulp mill accounting for around €30m. Wood costs reached their highest level, although wood market prices showed initial signs of decline. UPM stated that it would continue to take decisive action to adapt its Finnish pulp operations to the market situation.

In the Advanced Materials segment, UPM Adhesive Materials and UPM Specialty Papers once again improved their performance compared to the previous year, despite the visible impact of global trade tariffs on consumer confidence and demand. UPM Adhesive Materials continued its growth strategy by investing in the United States, Malaysia and Vietnam. In addition, the company announced plans to discontinue production in Nancy, France.

UPM Communication Papers faced weak demand and was affected by export tariffs. During the reporting period, UPM decided to discontinue paper production at the UPM Kaukas mill by the end of the year. The Plattling mill was sold to a local logistics company in October.

UPM reports that the Leuna biorefinery has achieved stability and industrial-scale production levels in the hydrothermal conversion of wood to sugar and lignin. Production and sales of industrial sugar and lignin-based products are expected to begin by the end of this year, with glycol production and sales starting in the first half of next year.

UPM results				
million €	July - September		January - September	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Key figures				
Sales	2,298	2,521	7,344	7,707
Comparable EBITDA	251	450	929	1,298
Operating result	55	305	359	709
Net result	18	246	233	558
Business area review				
UPM Fibres				
Sales	777	943	2,625	2,727
Comparable EBITDA	88	267	409	653
Operating result	39	190	220	397
Pulp deliveries, 1,000 t	1,262	1,185	3,888	3,496
UPM Energy				
Sales	149	125	439	465
Comparable EBITDA	39	24	102	129
Operating result	37	22	97	124
Electricity deliveries, GWh	2,829	2,819	7,980	8,296
UPM Adhesive Materials				
Sales	405	374	1,264	1,181
Comparable EBITDA	46	35	143	145
Operating result	4	15	59	105
UPM Specialty Papers				
Sales	304	335	1,006	1,099
Comparable EBITDA	45	40	151	170
Operating result	34	22	106	111
Paper deliveries, 1,000 t	333	316	1,044	1,061
UPM Communicaton Papers				
Sales	619	751	1,913	2,265
Comparable EBITDA	28	71	115	218
Operating result	-53	61	-76	84
Paper deliveries, 1,000 t	733	838	2,203	2,507
UPM Plywood				
Sales	113	103	305	321
Comparable EBITDA	16	15	35	52

Operating result	7	9	15	35
Plywood deliveries, 1,000 m ³	128	113	346	361
UPM Other Operations				
Sales	149	141	506	466
Operating result	-9	-24	-54	-118
Source: UPM				

Domtar closes Grenada newsprint mill in the US

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Domtar has closed its Grenada newsprint mill in Mississippi, USA in September. According to various local media reports, the closure was announced at the end of August. Domtar reportedly wants to adjust its capacity to declining demand.

The Grenada mill was opened in 1989 and produces newsprint on one machine with a capacity of 235,000 tpy. The site employs 181 people.

Domtar operates two other newsprint mills in North America. Its Canadian Clermont mill has a capacity of around 220,000 tpy and employs 160 people. Domtar recently announced an investment in energy recovery at this site.

No decision yet on possible conversion in Gatineau

At its Gatineau mill in Canada, the company has 160 employees and can produce up to 187,000 tpy of newsprint. However, Domtar has been considering converting the paper machine there to produce recycled corrugated case material for some time. According to Canadian trade union Unifor, the implementation of the project hinges on government funding. A final decision had not yet been made at the end of October.

Tough final quarter expected for recycled containerboard producers on German market

More price concessions for folding boxboard (GC) likely

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Recycled corrugated case material prices stayed the same in Germany in October. Although demand has improved slightly, it still falls short of expectations. The year-end is expected to be particularly challenging due to the timing of the holidays. Industry sources told EUWID that firms were already making arrangements to get through the period between Christmas and New Year as best as they could without having to build up huge inventories. Scheduled downtime is generally part of these plans.

EUWID Price Watch Germany			
October 2025			
Prices in € per tonne free delivered unless stated	October 2025	September 2025	October 2024
Fine paper			
Woodfree uncoated			
AI-C-grade, bleached paper	790 - 800	800 - 800	870 - 1,010
AI-C-grade, non-bleached paper	780 - 830	780 - 830	830 - 960
Other wood 80 g	910 - 960	920 - 1,010	1,040 - 1,130
Other wood 80 g	880 - 930	890 - 930	970 - 1,030
Woodfree coated			
Stone, double coated, 100 g	900 - 900	920 - 1,010	1,040 - 1,130
Peck, double coated, 100 g	870 - 910	890 - 930	960 - 1,010
Publication paper			
Neoprene G 3 standard	580 - 600	580 - 610	600 - 630
Neoprene G 3 special	590 - 610	590 - 620	610 - 640
Neoprene G 3 standard	570 - 600	580 - 610	600 - 630
UVF offset 80 g	770 - 800	770 - 800	790 - 820
UVF offset 80 g ¹	-	800 - 820	800 - 830
UV offset 80 g (A)	670 - 690	670 - 690	690 - 710
UV offset 80 g (B)	670 - 690	670 - 690	690 - 710
Corrugated case material			
Primary fibre corrugated case material			
Unbleached fullboard from Scandinavia 170 g	870 - 900	870 - 910	870 - 890
Stone chemical corrugated medium ²	790 - 1,000	790 - 1,000	770 - 1,000
White top fullboard 160 g	1,080 - 1,170	1,090 - 1,170	1,070 - 1,130
Recycled corrugated case material			
Salween	560 - 580	560 - 580	590 - 610
Waldmüll	560 - 610	560 - 610	620 - 640
Tactilon S	620 - 640	620 - 640	630 - 670
Tactilon B	600 - 620	600 - 620	610 - 630
White top fullboard, coated	940 - 950	930 - 950	910 - 930
White top fullboard, 160 g, 50/70/75	810 - 825	810 - 825	790 - 800
Cardboard			
Unbleached	790 - 825	810 - 830	810 - 830
G 3	870 - 910	890 - 960	890 - 960
G 4	1,200 - 1,215	1,210 - 1,230	1,210 - 1,215

Recycled containerboard sales picked up a little in October

In Germany, the month of October delivered the traditional upturn in recycled corrugated case material sales volumes. That being said, order intake still failed to live up to expectations. Sources told EUWID that ordering in October and November was curbed by price increases announced in September, which led to stockpiling by the corrugated board industry. Additionally, ongoing consumer caution is leaving its mark.

Insiders typically described workloads as “reasonable” and “pretty solid”, with weaker production schedules partly offset by stronger demand. Experts anticipate that November will be more challenging, although prices are largely expected to stay the same.

The year-end also looks set to be tricky due to the way that the holidays fall this year. A whole raft of customers have designated 19 December as the final day for accepting deliveries. EUWID contacts report that companies are already preparing to navigate the period thereafter as best they can without building up huge inventories. Scheduled downtime is largely built in, production is to be adjusted to demand.

Annual contract talks are also in progress. Brown recycled corrugated case material prices held steady in October, with hikes announced by producers having evaporated after conversations during the Fachpack trade fair in late September. Negotiations on annual contracts are now focusing on keeping prices stable, alongside planning volumes.

Across the industry, additional price cuts are viewed as simply out of the question. Experts agree that “nobody is making money anymore.” Nonetheless, insiders feel that converters are leveraging their strong position and will push for another (small) price cut.

Paper manufacturers pointed out that current prices are roughly where they stood at the start of the year, although costs for relevant recovered paper grades are much higher, as are costs for many other factors, such as wages, freight and energy.

Looking ahead to the start of 2026, observers expect recycled corrugated case material manufacturers to fight for much higher prices, much as they did in 2025, despite existing surplus capacity. For their part, buyers were seeking more stable prices. After all, the corrugated board industry believed that the volatility seen in 2025 had been detrimental to the entire supply chain. EUWID sources are not predicting strong sales growth for 2026, either, but are hoping at least for a quarter or two of lasting recovery. Moreover, insiders think that a market shakeout is likely through machine closures.

White-top testliner grades experienced barely any changes in pricing. White-top testliner producers are also bemoaning high raw material costs and steadily shrinking sales volumes in the face of sustainability efforts.

Demand for cartonboard has not picked up after all

Recycled cartonboard manufacturers reported that their machines were operating at relatively good workloads up until roughly the end of July, given the prevailing macroeconomic climate. Order intake was better than expected. Manufacturers did not have to offer buyers excessive concessions to secure business. Only the spring price increase linked to higher recovered paper costs had to be fully rolled back.

Conversations in late October revealed that brisker business experienced by a few cartonboard producers was connected to instability in the wider market. Capacity cutbacks and the looming risk of further cuts reportedly prompted customers to bring orders forward, although this effect appears to have waned because of the situation since the summer. While businesses remain busier than those in other markets and sectors, looking at the year as a whole, conditions are far from good. The packaging industry does not appear to have an improvement on the horizon, either. Packaging customers are ordering less and more cautiously.

The situation facing the recycled cartonboard sector is interpreted as a reflection of the true economic climate. Unlike their counterparts in the primary-fibre cartonboard or recycled corrugated case material segments, companies are not grappling with the installation of additional capacity. Still, orders are not enough to operate machines at good workloads.

Producers of folding boxboard (FBB) are battling poor economic conditions, along with expanded capacity. During the Covid-19 boom years, companies decided to invest heavily, anticipating that soaring demand would persist, a view further reinforced by expectations of favourable impacts from new European legislation.

However, the markets for GC board are relatively firm, and no significant additional products or sales markets have been added. As one seasoned observer remarked, companies were competing in the “same markets that have always existed.” As a result, additional price concessions had already been made for GC board during the course of the third quarter, which was unprecedented development in the German market.

The third-quarter concessions were followed by another round of price cuts in the fourth quarter. Figures suggesting triple-digit price cuts are circulating, but this does not accurately reflect the broader situation.

Instead, they tend to represent instances where a few high prices were brought in line with the market. The bulk of sources are reporting that prices dropped by €20-30/t at the start of the fourth quarter.

Normally, market players outlined their demands for the upcoming year in mid-November, with these plans serving as the basis for annual negotiations. However, none of EUWID’s contacts currently expect anybody to call for higher prices. Further concessions, if they arise at all, are likely to be tied to conditions such as contract duration.

More wins at the negotiating table would be crucial for the folding box industry, though. Insiders told EUWID that a few customers’ demands in tenders were bordering on outrageous.

To our customers: Price reporting for rotogravure LWC in Germany discontinued

EUWID has discontinued price assessment for rotogravure LWC in Germany as of the end of the third quarter 2025. The decision reflects changes in the German printing market. The last assessments for the rotogravure LWC grades was published in EUWID Price Watch Germany September 2025 on 26 September.

Germany: production, deliveries and consumption by main grades

January - September 2025

1,000 t	January - September		%
	2025	2024	2025/2024
Paper and board			
Production	14,126	14,640	- 3.5
Deliveries	14,163	14,586	- 2.9
Domestic deliveries	6,918	7,216	- 4.1
Export deliveries	7,244	7,371	- 1.7
Graphic paper			
Production	2,574	3,136	- 17.9
Deliveries	2,585	3,126	- 17.3
Domestic deliveries	1,286	1,604	- 19.8
Export deliveries	1,300	1,522	- 14.6
Paper and board for packaging			
Production	9,470	9,380	+ 1.0
Deliveries	9,472	9,325	+ 1.6
Domestic deliveries	4,069	4,003	+ 1.6
Export deliveries	5,403	5,322	+ 1.5
Sanitary paper (machine production)			
Production	1,014	1,050	- 3.4
Deliveries	1,048	1,080	- 3.0
Domestic deliveries	1,017	1,047	- 2.9
Export deliveries	31	33	- 4.8
Specialty and technical paper and board			
Production	1,068	1,075	- 0.7
Deliveries	1,057	1,056	+ 0.1
Domestic deliveries	547	561	- 2.6
Export deliveries	510	494	+ 3.2

Source: Die Papierindustrie statistics

Prolonged global slowdown keeps decor paper markets under pressure

Chinese manufacturers to offset weak home market with renewed exports

 **EUWID+** 05 November 2025 | 🕒 ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

The persistently challenging conditions on global sales markets continue to slow the decor paper business, with demand barely recovering after the summer break. September remained at a similarly weak level to August, when holiday-related shutdowns left their mark. In Europe, there has been virtually no noticeable recovery. Buyers continue to place orders at short notice and only in line with their still significantly reduced needs.

A few decor paper manufacturers noticed at least a slight upturn in October, but many others remain sceptical about the current market environment. In North America, business weakened further in the course of the third quarter, with US converters reducing their orders more sharply. Market conditions in South America and Southeast Asia have remained essentially unchanged in recent months, with demand for decor paper relatively stable.

The market in China remains challenging, with decor paper producers continuing to struggle with weak domestic demand. As a result, many have intensified their efforts to expand export sales. Shipments to Europe declined in the first half of the year, following the introduction of provisional anti-dumping duties by the European Commission. However, some Chinese suppliers are now planning to resume or even increase exports to Europe, as the final duties have been set at a slightly lower level than the provisional rates.

Chinese suppliers doing business in Europe are reportedly also offering new price concessions aimed at partially offsetting, or in some cases fully compensating for, the anti-dumping duties.

In other export markets not affected by such tariffs, Chinese decor paper producers and suppliers are exerting even stronger downward price pressure. However, weakening demand in these regions has also limited sales opportunities, with the impact most pronounced on the decor paper market in Turkey.

Slowdown forces European decor paper suppliers to curb output, accept price cuts

Weak global demand is increasingly weighing on European decor paper producers. Most companies had planned to continue producing through the autumn following extended summer shutdowns. However, the first market-related shutdowns have already occurred. Only a few companies were able to maintain continuous operations, in some cases due to special effects. Overall,

average inventory levels have risen and additional downtime is expected in the coming weeks to prevent further inventory build-up.

The anticipated price reductions have now taken effect in negotiations for fourth-quarter deliveries. Prices in freely negotiated contracts fell by an average of €10 per 100 kg, with individual price cuts of up to €15. In benchmark agreements, decor paper prices had already been adjusted earlier in line with changes in pulp and titanium dioxide costs during the third quarter, resulting in only minor lagged corrections from September to October. Producers now intend to keep prices stable through year-end but aim to seek higher prices in the first-quarter talks starting in December to compensate for pulp cost increases.

Five EU states float possibility of abolishing EUDR in note to Agriculture Council

 **EUWID +** 05 November 2025 |  ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

The future of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) is being called into question again, this time by five member states. At the meeting of the EU Agriculture Council on 27 and 28 October in Luxembourg, a note was submitted by Latvia, with support from Poland, Czechia, Bulgaria and Estonia, saying “immediate actions” are required with respect to the implementation of the EUDR. According to Latvia, the Regulation “imposes a disproportionately large administrative and financial burden” on economic actors in the EU relative to its stated objective of avoiding deforestation in locations where it occurs.

In its note to the EU Agriculture Council, Latvia says it already has national legislation aimed at avoiding deforestation, destruction of forests, and conversion of forest to agricultural use. “Consequently, it can be considered that the EU Deforestation Regulation is essentially implemented in Latvia through existing legislation” and the country has a negligible risk of deforestation, according to the document.

The recent proposal by the EU Environment Commissioner Jessika Roswall that the EUDR should be postponed by one year due to unresolved IT problems was “understandable.” There are reportedly concerns about the IT system’s speed and capacity to process large volume of data in a short time, which would result in “significant financial and human resource consumption,” thereby reducing the competitiveness of EU companies in external markets.

Call for re-examination of zero-risk category and impact assessment

Against this backdrop, Latvia calls for the application of the EUDR to be postponed for at least one year, as was previously suggested in Commissioner Roswall’s letter. In addition, the country also expressly stated its wish that the conditions of the Deforestation Regulation be simplified, including the introduction of a “no-risk” category.

“Furthermore, we call on the Commission to re-evaluate the impact assessment comparing the costs of implementing the EU Deforestation Regulation with the expected practical results. If the administrative and financial burden on Member States is found to be disproportionate to the intended objective, the abolition of EU Deforestation Regulation may be reconsidered,” the note concluded.

Pro-Gest to permanently close Cartitalia containerboard mill

 **EUWID +** 05 November 2025 | ⌚ ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

Italian packaging and tissue group Pro-Gest will permanently close its recycled corrugated case material mill Cartitalia in Mesola in northern Italy by the end of the year. A spokesperson of trade union Slc Cgil said that production had already been transferred to Pro-Gest's Mantova mill one year ago. Now, the site will be permanently closed.

According to the spokesperson, Pro-Gest applied for temporary layoffs for the mill's roughly 27 employees around one year ago. The short time work was extended again in June. Some employees had already left the company, and the remaining 18 persons would now be laid off at the end of the year, the trade union spokesperson added.

The trade union cited difficult market conditions and the ongoing crisis in the paper and packaging markets as the reasons for the closure. The mill had reportedly been operating at reduced capacity, and the remaining production was then transferred to Mantova.

According to the current IPPC permit, the Mesola paper mill of Pro-Gest's subsidiary Cartitalia houses one paper machine with maximum production capacity of 110,000 tpy of recycled corrugated case material.

UK publishes roadmap for recyclability assessment

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The roadmap also foresees reviews of guidance on printing inks, security tags, and food contamination, topics that are highly relevant for paper and board converters seeking to demonstrate high recyclability ratings under pEPR rules.

PackUK said it developed the roadmap in consultation with its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which will continue to meet quarterly to oversee progress and respond to stakeholder feedback. The regulator emphasised that all timings remain subject to change as the methodology evolves in response to technological and market developments.

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Market pulp in growth and transition: BHKP heading towards new expansion cycle

China’s capacity build-out challenges global market pulp suppliers

 05 November 2025 | [Igor Dugandzic](#) |  ~ 7 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

The world’s population continues to grow with societal and demographic structures shifting, and both trends are driving sustained expansion in global pulp demand, giving fresh momentum to the pulp market.

Market pulp capacity expansion projects since 2022						
Company	Region	Country	Pulp grade	Capacity	Date	Comment
Aracruz	Asia	China	BKPP	1,300,000 tpa	2022	Replacing 200,000 tpa BKPP line
SCA	Europe	Sweden	CTMP	300,000 tpa	2022	Replacing 100,000 tpa CTMP line in Östmark
UPM	Europe	Finland	BKPP	2,100,000 tpa	2023	
Mitsui	Asia	Japan	BKPP	1,000,000 tpa	2023	
CMPC	South America	Chile	BKPP	300,000 tpa	2023	
Lenzing	Europe	Austria	BKPP	2,000,000 tpa	2024	
Phosco	Asia	China	BKPP	1,700,000 tpa	2024	Market pulp share not exactly known
Phosco	Asia	China	CTMP	300,000 tpa	2025	
Announced projects						
APPON Pulp and Paper	Asia	Indonesia	BKPP	2,000,000 tpa	2025	Market pulp of less than 1 million t
Aracruz	Asia	China	BKPP	1,000,000 tpa	2025	
Braskem	South America	Brazil	Chemical pulp	2,000,000 tpa	2025	
CMPC	South America	Brazil	BKPP	1,000,000 tpa	2025	
Edwards Brazil	South America	Brazil	BKPP	2,000,000 tpa	n.a.	Increased capacity by more than 50 per cent
Phosco	Asia	China	BKPP	1,000,000 tpa	n.a.	Increased capacity by more than 50 per cent

Consulting firm Afry forecasts that global pulp production – including both market pulp and integrated pulp – will increase by around 1.6 per cent per year over the coming decade, rising from approximately 175 million t in 2023 to roughly 211 million t by 2035. Meanwhile, US market analyst and industry information provider TTO BMA expects demand for chemical market pulp to climb from about 72 million t in 2024 to nearly 81 million t in 2030.

Yet the pulp industry is not only expanding, it is undergoing profound structural change. End-use patterns are shifting: demand for printing and writing papers continues to decline globally and is expected to fall further. In contrast, consumption and production of tissue as well as packaging paper and board are advancing steadily.

Regional market dynamics are also being reshaped. Asia, and China in particular, remains the world’s key growth engine for market pulp demand. However, countries across the region are increasingly evolving from pulp consumers to producers. Countries such as Indonesia, are emerging as competitive suppliers of market pulp, with volumes now flowing into European markets as well.

China, the world’s single largest market pulp consumer, is pursuing a strategic restructuring of its pulp and paper industry to increase domestic pulp supply and strengthen resilience in volatile markets. Paper and board capacity continues to grow rapidly, but China is accelerating its push toward domestic pulp production and deeper vertical integration. This trend is reflected in a wave of new integrated pulp-and-paper complexes as well as standalone pulp mills designed to supply existing paper capacity with in-house fibre.

According to TTO BMA, Chinese pulp output has surged from roughly 10 million t in 2013 to 23 million t in 2023, and surpassed 26 million t in 2024. Afry projects production will rise by another 17 million t to reach around 43 million t by 2035. This expansion is progressively reducing China's dependence on imported pulp. In parallel, China is working to secure fibre supply by not only importing wood chips but also accelerating afforestation and plantation development.

Eucalyptus pulp from Latin America dominates the global pulp market

The start-up of the eucalyptus pulp mill in Ribas do Rio Pardo, Brazil, operated by the world's largest producer of market bleached hardwood kraft pulp (BHKP) producer Suzano, marked the end of major capacity expansion cycle in mid-2024. Between 2022 and 2024, several pulp mills with a total capacity of around 9 million t of market pulp were commissioned. The majority of these projects involve BHKP and are located in Latin America.

Four of the major projects with a combined capacity of around 6.5 million t were realised in Latin America: two in Brazil, one in Chile, and one in Uruguay. All of them produce bleached eucalyptus kraft pulp (BEKP). Outside the region, projects include SCA's CTMP mill in Ortviken, Sweden, Metsä Fibre's soft- and hardwood pulp mill in Kemi, Finland, and Liansheng Pulp and Paper's BHKP mill in Zhangzhou in China's Fujian province.

In 2025, hardly any new market pulp capacity has come onstream. One noteworthy exception is the Phoenix Resources International facility on the Indonesian island of Tarakan, which began operating in the second half of the year and produces high-yield pulp. In 2026, APP plans to complete the expansion at its OKI mill in Indonesia and commission two production lines with a total capacity of 2.8 million t of BHKP, of which an estimated 1 million t will likely be market pulp.

From late 2027 through late 2029, another wave of expansion for eucalyptus pulp in Latin America is taking shape. If all announced projects are realised, more than 10 million t of new BHKP capacity and almost 3 million t of dissolving pulp capacity would enter the market. However, some projects have not yet received final approvals or financing, and start-up dates remain uncertain.

Decline in softwood capacity as more than 3.5 million t of BSKP exits the market

Between 2022 and 2024, numerous mills producing bleached softwood kraft pulp (BSKP), and softwood-based unbleached kraft pulp (UKP) as well as fluff pulp – primarily in North America – were shut down. The main reasons included aging facilities, low efficiency, high production and raw material costs, and limited wood availability. Canadian mills were particularly affected, as they struggled with fibre shortages triggered by widespread sawmill closures.

In Northern Europe, wood supply has also been strained since the start of the war in Ukraine and the import ban on Russian timber, and wood prices have risen sharply. According to Afry, delivered "at-mill" cost of spruce pulpwood in southern Sweden and southern Finland has become roughly 40 per cent more expensive since 2022, and the Nordic countries are now among the regions with the highest wood costs per tonne of pulp in the world.

Against this backdrop, Stora Enso's Sunila mill in Finland was shut down in 2023. Other Nordic producers also continue to face pressure from the current price-cost environment: low softwood pulp prices in Europe and China, elevated production costs, and unfavourable exchange rates are affecting profitability of BSKP producers. Several softwood pulp mills in Europe have therefore been forced to curtail production for weeks or even months at a time in 2025.

According to Swedish group Södra, pulpwood availability has recently improved somewhat, and industrial wood prices have eased slightly, although they remain at historically high levels.

Investments in new softwood capacity have been rare in recent years, and such projects are unlikely in the near future. The reasons are illustrated by a preliminary feasibility study conducted by Afry on behalf of Canadian pulp and paper producer Domtar (Paper Excellence). Domtar's plan to invest in a new mill with a capacity of 700,000 tpy of pulp (including 500,000 t of BSKP and 200,000 of BHKP) in Liverpool in Canada's Nova Scotia province, was abandoned for economic reasons. According to Afry, construction of the mill would require investment of CAD2.7bn to CAD3.7bn, depending on configuration. Given current and expected market conditions of weak demand and lower expected BSKP selling prices over the next five to fifteen years, the project would not be financially viable.

BHKP gains ground amid rising competition

Only in the past roughly 20 years have production capacities for BHKP exceeded those for BSKP. And hardwood pulp continues to gain ground thanks to rapid capacity expansion and the cost advantages of eucalyptus fibre. According to a forecast by TTO BMA, by the end of the next expansion cycle in 2029/2030, global market pulp capacity for BHKP could be twice as large as that for BSKP.

As industry leader Suzano highlighted in an investor presentation, approximately 63 per cent of global demand for chemical market pulp is already met by BHKP today. Ten to twelve years ago, that share stood at around 55 per cent. The growing use of BHKP has been accelerated not least by increased availability following the most recent capacity expansion cycle between 2022 and 2024.

At the same time, BHKP market pulp producers in Europe and Latin America are increasingly challenged by rising capacity, intensifying competition, and the rise of integrated pulp and paper mills in Asia – factors that compel them to optimise capacity utilisation and navigate periods of lower selling prices and combined with potentially rising costs. In particular, the expansion of integrated pulp capacity in China could become a challenge for traditional market pulp suppliers. Suzano, for example, expects organic demand growth for BHKP market pulp of 4.8 million t between 2023 and 2028, to reach 45.7 million t in 2028. Vertical integration in China could offset this trend by roughly 3.8 million t, dampening overall growth.

Hardwood pulp producers are responding with temporary output reductions – mainly at high-cost sites – and by diversifying into higher-value market segments.

Portuguese producer Altri is working to convert its Biotek mill to dissolving pulp production, aiming to benefit from favourable developments in the textile pulp market. Spanish eucalyptus pulp producer Ence has been expanding sales of its specialty pulp grades for several years, reducing dependence on standard grades. And Suzano is currently converting production at its Limeira mill in Brazil from BHKP to fluff pulp using a swing machine.

As a key part of its long-term strategy, Suzano also aims to promote substitution of softwood pulp with hardwood pulp across various end-use segments. This substitution trend is supported by shrinking softwood capacity and a widening price gap between softwood and hardwood pulp. Between 2023 and 2028, Suzano expects an additional 2 million t of demand from substituting softwood pulp with hardwood pulp. The company sees the greatest potential in the tissue segment, followed by specialty papers, printing and writing papers, and cartonboard. Suzano has also started to develop tailored eucalyptus-based pulp grades to better serve these specific customer needs.

Market pulp capacity closures since 2022						
Company	Mill	Country	Pulp grade	Capacity	Date	Comment
Arauco	Arauco Mill	Chile	BHKP	290,000 tpy	2022	Arauco closed 290,000 tpy fibre line 1, but added new fibre line 3 with 1.6 million tpy in capacity.
Paper Excellence	Calhoun	USA	BSKP	150,000 tpy	2022	One BSKP fibre line shut down, other BSKP line converted to 250,000 tpy of UKP.
West Fraser	Hinton Pulp	Canada	BSKP	380,000 tpy	2022	
West Rock	Panama City	USA	Fluff pulp	215,000 tpy	2022	
Arauco	Licancel	Chile	UKP	160,000 tpy	2023	Prior to the closure the mill produced fluff pulp with a capacity of 240,000 tpy.
Canfor Pulp	Prince George	Canada	BSKP/UKP	280,000 tpy	2023	
Domtar	Espanola	Canada	BSKP	280,000 tpy	2023	
Georgia-Pacific	Foley Cellulose	USA	BSKP/ Fluff pulp	465,000 tpy	2023	IP shut down one fibre line at Riegelwood but continued production on second line before selling the mill to AIP.
International Paper	Pensacola	USA	Fluff pulp	180,000 tpy	2023	
International Paper	Riegelwood	USA	Fluff pulp	145,000 tpy	2023	
Metsä Fibre	Kemi	Finland	BSKP	620,000 tpy	2023	Metsä built a new BSKP/BHKP mill with 1.5 million tpy before closing the 620,000 tpy BKSP line.
Nine Dragons Paper	Old Town	USA	UKP	160,000 tpy	2023	Replaced by new 300,000 tpy mill in Ortviken.
Paper Excellence	Espanola	Canada	BSKP	220,000 tpy	2023	
SCA	Östrand	Sweden	CTMP	100,000 tpy	2023	
Stora Enso	Sunila	Finland	NBSK	375,000 tpy	2023	
West Rock	Tacoma	USA	UKP	70,000 tpy	2023	
Aditya Birla	Terrace Bay	Canada	BSKP	340,000 tpy	2024	
Canfor Pulp	Northwood	Canada	BSKP	300,000 tpy	2024	
International Paper	Georgetown	USA	Fluff pulp	300,000 tpy	2024	
Winstone Pulp	Karioi	New Zealand	BCTMP	220,000 tpy	2024	
EUWID resumes no liability for the correctness or completeness of the above data.						
Source: EUWID, Companies						

UK publishes roadmap for recyclability assessment

 **EUWID +** 05 November 2025 | ⌚ ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

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The roadmap, published in early October, outlines a sequence of planned reviews and updates to ensure that the RAM remains aligned with policy developments across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as with international recyclability standards such as RecyClass, 4Evergreen and RECOUP.

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Industry associations criticise “legal and operational uncertainty” associated with new EUDR plans

05 November 2025 | 🕒 ~ 3 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

More than 20 European industry associations have issued a “stop the clock” statement after the European Commission decided not to grant a blanket postponement of the application deadline for the European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and proposed only partial changes to the legislation.



In a joint statement the associations complain that the Brussels authority’s plans would “prolong a situation of costly uncertainty and unrealistic implementation timelines.” In the statement released on 27 October, they wrote: “The new proposal, and the very challenging timeline to have it approved, risks undermining both the credibility and the practical enforcement of the Regulation, while placing European operators in an untenable position of legal and operational uncertainty.”

The substantial changes proposed by the Commission, which still require formal approval by the EU Parliament and Council, “deserve appropriate time” for analysis and discussion. However, this would be “exceptionally difficult” considering the current deadline of 30 December 2025, according to the document. Moreover, the associations claim it is “unrealistic and unacceptable” that companies must be ready to comply right away with a Regulation that has been “hastily renegotiated only few weeks before entry into application.”

The Commission’s proposal also “fails to reflect the operational reality of the market,” where medium-sized and large companies routinely interact with small and micro-enterprises within integrated supply chains. The proposed various application dates – with the rules applying for large and medium-sized enterprises as of 30 December 2025, while small and micro enterprises receive an additional 12 months to comply – “will lead in practice to all companies needing to comply with the regulations as of the same date,” the associations assert.

The signatories of the statement include representatives of the European pulp and paper, printing, folding cartons and corrugated board industries, such as CEPI, Intergraf, ECMA and FEFCO.

German paper industry rejects plans for partial EUDR amendments

In a statement on 31 October 2025, German pulp and paper manufacturers' association Die Papierindustrie rejects the EU Commission's plans to amend the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). The proposal poses major challenges for companies a few months before the rules come into force and creates additional legal uncertainty, according to the representative body for the pulp and paper industry in Germany. In principle, the new focus on initial distributors is correct, as only raw materials or intermediate products are used in downstream production whose EUDR conformity has already been ensured in the upstream supply chain, the association writes.

However, the current proposal leads to additional complexity for the downstream value chain, according to the association's statement. Even if the obligation to declare due diligence does not apply, information must be collected and bundled by suppliers and passed on to customers. "This information transfer includes reference numbers as well as newly introduced declaration identifiers of micro and small suppliers – a procedure that is not practical from the point of view of the pulp and paper industry in Germany," writes the industry association.

The association therefore urges the EU Commission to take into account that changes to the EUDR would require at least 6 to 12 months of lead time to ensure legally compliant implementation for affected companies.

European Commission confirms PPWR obligations to start in 2026

04 November 2025 | 🕒 ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)

The European Commission will stick to the planned start date of the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). In a letter to the joint body of German packaging producer responsibility organisations (Gemeinsame Stelle dualer Systeme) and the members of the German Bundestag, EU Environment Commissioner Jessika Roswall made it clear that the new obligations, including the revised manufacturer definition under extended producer responsibility (EPR), will apply as planned from 12 August 2026.

The German organisations had raised concerns about the challenges of implementing the regulation mid-year, warning of serious legal, financial and systemic risks. The

summer changeover would lead to "two legal regimes within one year" and endangered planning and contractual security for extended producer responsibility systems, municipalities and manufacturers. The risk of a system breakdown is particularly critical: duplicate contracts, parallel data reporting and unclear financial flows could lead to funding gaps, disruptions to municipal services and destabilisation of EPR structures.

Commissioner Roswall ruled out any formal postponement of the application of the Regulation. However, she said that her services were examining "pragmatic solutions within the existing legal framework". Member states would be allowed to introduce national correction mechanisms in 2026 to ease transitional problems when responsibilities shift between obligated producers. The aim, she said, was to achieve a coherent approach across all EU countries.

With Brussels now ruling out any extension, it is clear that the timetable will remain unchanged. Instead, the Commission plans to facilitate the regulation's implementation through technical and administrative transitional mechanisms. By 2026, national authorities will be required to establish procedures to address potential shifts in responsibility or accounting.



Jessika Roswall, European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy

For producers and producer responsibility systems (PROs), legal and planning uncertainty remains for the time being. The design of the correction mechanisms and their effectiveness remain unclear.

The Commission has stated that it would continue consultations with member states and stakeholders in the coming months to prepare for the transition in August 2026. In the meantime, businesses must proceed with preparations according to the current timetable, with only limited relief expected from national transitional arrangements.

UK Government cuts electricity costs for energy-intensive industries

03 November 2025 | [Frauke Schmidt](#) | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 45/2025](#)



Discounts on electricity network charges will rise from 60 to 90 per cent from April 2026.

Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) sector welcomes 90 per cent discount on network charges

The UK government has announced a major package of measures to reduce electricity costs for around 500 of the country's most energy-intensive businesses, including those in the paper and board manufacturing sector.

According to the Department for Business and Trade, the discount on electricity network charges under the Network Charging Compensation (NCC) scheme will rise from 60 to 90 per cent from April 2026. The reform is expected to deliver annual savings of up to £420m across industries such as steel, chemicals, glass, cement and paper.

The measure, also referred to as "Supercharger scheme", aims to bring UK industrial energy prices in line with European competitors and safeguard jobs in sectors employing around 400,000 people nationwide. It forms part of the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, which also includes the British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme (BICS) to further reduce energy costs from 2027. In parallel, the UK Government is driving forward plans to launch a new Connections Accelerator Service by the end of 2025 to streamline access to the electricity grid.

CPI: "Decisive action to improve competitiveness"

The Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) welcomed the announcement, calling it a "vital step forward" in levelling the playing field for UK paper and board producers. CPI said that high energy costs have long been one of the key barriers to competitiveness for UK mills. The new NCC discount would bring network costs closer to those faced by competitors in Germany, according to the association.

Alex Veitch, CPI Chief Executive Officer, commented: "This policy decision is a welcome step in the right direction (...). Looking ahead, our member need government to set us on a course toward international competitive energy prices to keep and grow jobs and manufacturing in the UK."

Sappi completes consultation on job cuts at Alfeld mill

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Sappi has concluded the consultation process regarding capacity closures at its Alfeld mill in Germany, which will lead to a reduction of around 180 positions.

According to the company, the reduction will be achieved through a combination of unfilled vacancies, voluntary agreements and, where unavoidable, redundancies.



Sappi's Alfeld mill will focus on speciality and high-barrier papers.

In July, Sappi had announced plans to shut down paper machines 1 and 4, offline coater 2 and the sheet finishing operations at the Alfeld site. The measures are aimed at improving the mill's profitability and cost competitiveness.

"These changes are part of our broader commitment to optimising operations, enhancing sustainability and ensuring the long-term competitiveness of Sappi Europe. By consolidating production on the remaining machines, we will strengthen our ability to serve customers reliably while positioning Alfeld for future market demands," said Misa Bursac, VP Manufacturing, R&D and Technology.

The closures are part of Sappi's wider strategic programme to align capacity with market demand and optimise the utilisation of its remaining assets. Going forward, the Alfeld mill will focus on speciality and high-barrier papers. Deliveries to customers will continue without disruption, the company emphasised.

The measures at Alfeld are part of a broader capacity-adjustment initiative. Earlier this month, Sappi closed its PM 2 at the [Kirkniemi mill](#) in Finland, while consultations on job reductions at the [Ehingen site](#) are still ongoing.

