International Council of Forest and Paper Associations
Climate Change

The global forest products industry has a long-standing commitment to contribute to climate change mitigation all along the value chain. The industry has made significant strides in addressing climate change through:

- The deep reduction of its specific greenhouse gas emissions, with a global reduction of 16% compared to the year 2005
- The growing contribution of biomass and renewable energy to fulfil the energy needs of the industry (58% of the onsite energy needs in 2012)
- Its engagement in responsible forest management, reflected with the constantly growing amount of forest areas that are third-party certified, from which the industry is sourcing its raw material.
- The growing recovery and recycling of wood products, with the recovery rate for paper reaching 56% in 2012 compared to 46% in 2000.

All these illustrate the various climate benefits that the global forest products industry delivers to society, namely:

- the absorption of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in trees, especially in well managed forests
- the storage of CO_2 in products, which can be further prolonged through recycling
- the substitution benefits of wood-based products compared to other fossil-based products
- the substitution benefits of renewable energy – heat, power and liquid and gaseous fuels – compared to other climate impacting sources of energy.

After the agreement reached in Durban, South Africa in November 2011 in the context of COP-17 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the global forest products industry calls on the parties to the Convention to further recognise all the positive contributions that forests and forest products provide in combating climate change.

Key messages to the forthcoming negotiations

Sustainable forest management should be given clear credits for its contribution to the

global climate effort and further incentivised (possibly through mechanisms like REDD +[1] and simpler CDM[2] and JI[3] projects).

The forest products industry needs clear and predictable conditions in the future. A clear long term agreement on climate change is an indispensable pre-requisite to reduce the regulatory risk for investments, innovation and the future competitiveness of the industry.

The carbon neutrality of forest biomass used for energy-substituting fossil fuels should be reaffirmed in international carbon accounting protocols, notably in the scientific reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). In that context, Land Use, Land Use Changes and Forestry (LULUCF) carbon accounting provisions already account for biogenic emissions resulting from land use changes.

Approved by the ICFPA steering committee on October 28, 2013.

[1] Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries; and the role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks (REDD +) – is a mechanism under negotiation in the UNFCCC whose objective is to support activities to enable reduction of CO_2 emissions that are caused by deforestation and forest degradation.

[2] Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is a Kyoto Protocol market-based mechanism involving sustainable development projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries.

[3] Joint Implementation (JI) is a Kyoto Protocol market-based mechanism enabling industrialized countries to carry out joint implementation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in other developed countries.