

Closing the Recycled Paper Loop Factsheet

In the past, if paper had been used once - for printing, writing, drawing - it was thrown in the bin and taken to landfill, never to be used again. Presently, we recycle at least 68% of used paper - more than two of every three sheets used!



However as the saying goes, unless you're buying recycled, you're not really recycling. You are only doing half the job. At the moment, less than 18% of new reams contain any recycled paper...that's less than one in five reams!

Paper and forests

In Australia - and in many countries around the world – the majority of timber and wood production is undertaken in managed and certified forests, meaning these trees have been grown primarily for the purpose of harvesting. Trees can be grown for a range of purposes from quality timber for furniture, floorboards, and building materials through to pulp for use in the manufacture of paper products.

How trees are grown can often influence their quality and what they end up being used for. Some plantations are specifically grown for use in paper production whereas others are specifically grown for other uses for example structural timber in house construction.

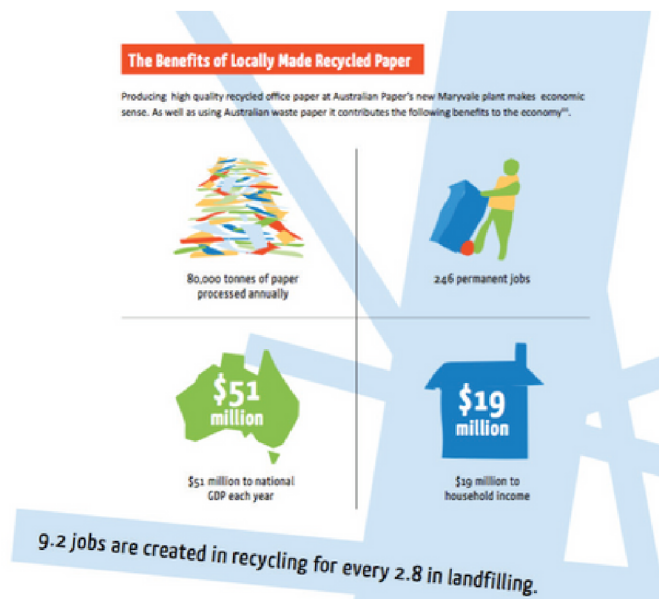
In managed forests that contain Australian native trees, it is not always possible to control the quality of growth to the same extent as plantations. Ideally the quality of timber is high and will generate valuable 'saw log grade' wood for quality timber products. Other trees will be of lower grade wood and more suitable to create wood chips that are used to manufacture paper.

All trees contribute to environmental health by converting CO2 into oxygen and providing habitats for animals. The difference between trees that are harvested and those that grow unmanaged is that plantations generally have lower environmental values and are more intensively managed by people.



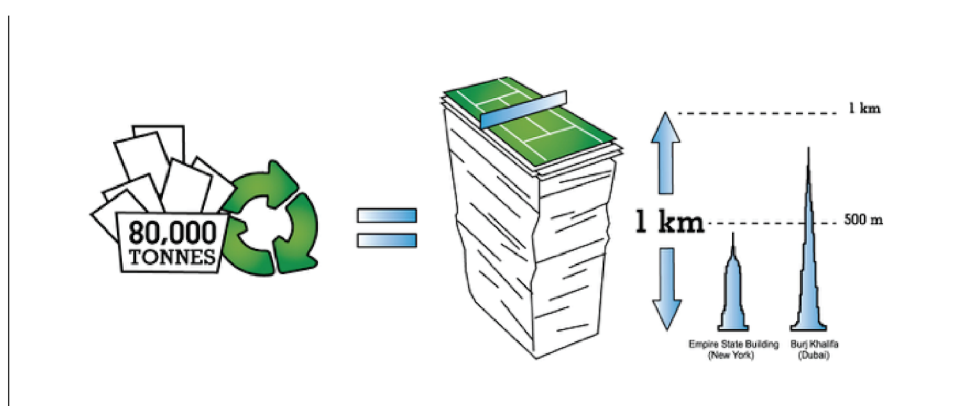
Recycled paper versus virgin paper

Some people think that recycled paper is of a lower quality to virgin paper. This could be because when recycled paper first appeared decades ago it had flecks of different coloured paper through it. The good news is that technology has moved on - there's not much difference between new and recycled paper at all!



Australian Paper has built a \$90 million paper recycling plant at Maryvale in Victoria; this will greatly increase the production of local recycled paper. To help us all make the switch to recycled, Planet Ark and Australian Paper have teamed up to create bright white, 100% recycled paper. It is hoped that through this initiative, the recycling of printing paper will increase, the amount of Australian waste paper going to landfill will be reduced and locally made, high-recycled content paper will be used more by businesses, schools, households and government.

“Planet Ark has a long history of working constructively with businesses to help them lessen their environmental impacts,” said Paul Klymenko, CEO of Planet Ark. “The recycling plant will take up to 80,000 tonnes of wastepaper, which is equivalent to 16 billion sheets of A4 paper, enough to pile a tennis court 1 kilometre high every year.”



At the launch of the facility, the CEO of Australian Paper Jim Henneberry said that the new paper recycling plant will make Australian made recycled paper an easy choice: “We want to move the recycled dial from niche to normal and prove to everyone who buys paper that recycled doesn’t have to mean lower quality,” he said. All you have to do is use Australian made recycled paper to close the recycling loop and finish the job!

