

MedClean Propre Limpio


No. 118
Substitution of raw materials

Utilization of green packaging

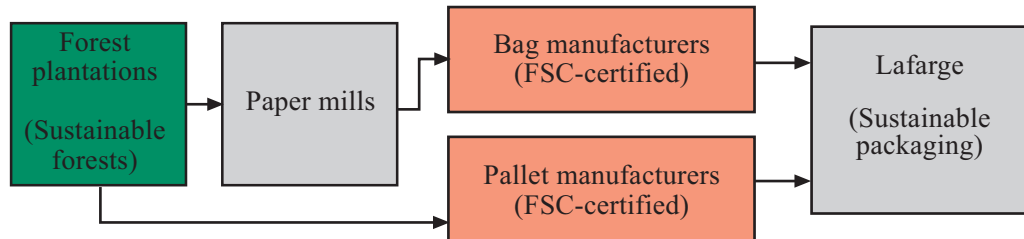
Company	Lafarge (Spain)
Industrial sector	Manufacture of cement, lime and plaster ISIC Rev 4 n. 2394 (<i>International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities</i>)
Environmental considerations	<p>Lafarge always seeks to apply sustainable solutions throughout production, and, in most cases, ahead of legal requirements.</p> <p>The main threat in the purchase of wood and its products is the uncertainty of its origin. Forest products like paper and pallets come from forest plantations, where the exploitation system is often very intensive, unsustainable, and causes major environmental impact. Moreover, in some regions of the world, the forest plantations are often associated with deforestation and land use change, wiping out the primary forest.</p>
Background	<p>Lafarge distributes a large portion of the cement sold in paper bags (up to 15 million units per year in the case of Spain) and also uses wood pallets for storage and transportation (more than 250,000 units per year in Spain).</p> <p>The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an NGO, which implements a certification system to ensure the sustainable exploitation of forests and traceability of these resources from the origin to the final product.</p> <p>FSC system requires the certification of the raw material sources (wood) and all suppliers through to the final product. As Lafarge is the ultimate consumer of paper bags and pallets, its demand mobilizes the certification of all intermediaries, paper industries and manufacturers of these bags or pallets.</p>
Summary of actions	<p>This is an example of green purchasing, where technological and environmental measures are incorporated in the negotiation of contracts in addition to economic measures.</p> <p>Lafarge also promotes responsible purchasing of forest products, by using FSC-certified office paper and printing their corporate brochures with certified companies. The fact that Lafarge uses FSC-certified bags and pallets means that the whole supply chain must also be certified. That includes paper mills and bag and pallet manufacturers.</p> <p>This initiative started in Spain in 2006, and to date (mid 2010) 80% of our suppliers are certified. At the end of 2010 this figure is expected to have reached 100%.</p> <p>FSC certification ensures, <i>inter alia</i>, the following environmental principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance between social, environmental and economic aspects, and North-South equity. • Setting up standards for the preservation of forests of high conservation value. • Providing strong incentives to local people to sustain forest resources and adhere to long-term management plans. • Avoidance of the conversion of natural forests to plantations.

Photo



Diagrams

NEW PROCESS



Balances

	OLD PROCESS	NEW PROCESS
Legal forest product consumption	Unknown	5,244.79 m ³ eq
FSC-certified forest product consumption	0	2,368.30 m ³ eq
Illegal forest product consumption	Unknown	0
Investment	Nonsignificant	
Payback period	One year	

Conclusions

In just a decade, the commitment of Lafarge has contributed greatly to facilitating FSC certification of over 124 million hectares worldwide. This initiative shows how a big company can support responsible purchasing initiatives and mobilize the sustainability of natural resources. In this case, demanding that forest exploitations be environmentally and socially responsible.

In addition to the direct impact, the initiative was extremely well received by the media. In 2009 alone, a global audience of 958,203 impacts was obtained through publication of the initiative in newspapers in Spain, with an estimated publicity value of over 34,000 Euros.

On the other hand, a reputational study, performed biannually by Lafarge in the area surrounding the cement plant, evidenced the importance of such initiatives to the population living nearby, being considered the most valuable action performed by Lafarge during 2010.

NOTE: This case study seeks only to illustrate a pollution prevention example and should not be taken as a general recommendation.



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