

Sustainable Paper Products

Issy-les-Moulineaux, July 2022

In July 2020, Sodexo formalized its commitment to protect Forests and Peatlands, within the framework of our Better Tomorrow 2025 roadmap, with an initial focus on palm oil, paper, soy and beef. This paper specifically covers the paper products roadmap (hygiene paper, office paper and paper vouchers). Sodexo has a specific strategy for food service disposables and therefore this category is not in the scope of this paper. For more information on Better Tomorrow 2025 roadmap and other commodity specific commitments and actions please refer to the section at the end of the document.

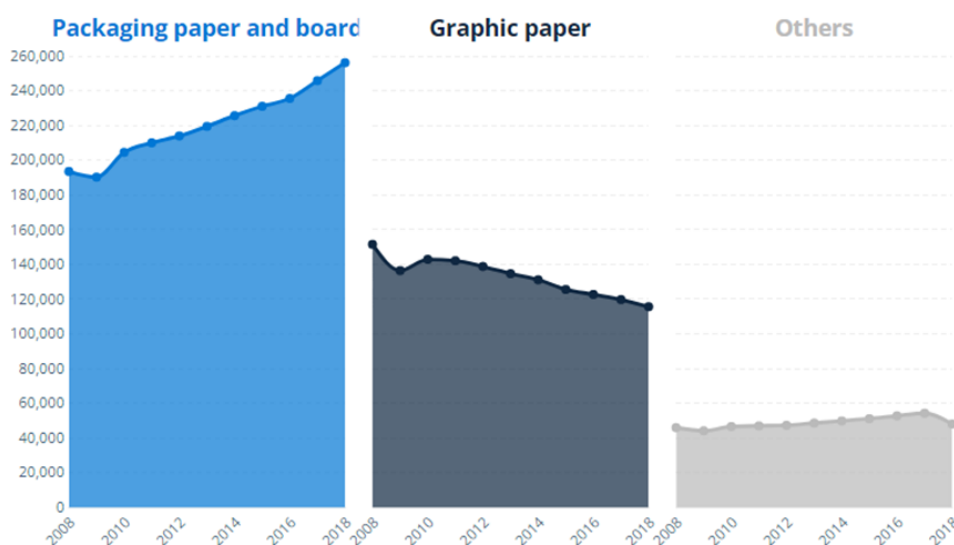
What's the specific context?

Background on the pulp and paper industry

The pulp and paper industry covers various products such as office and catalogue paper, glossy paper, tissue, and paper-based packaging. This sector accounts for 13-15% of global wood consumption and uses 33–40% of the total amount of industrial wood traded worldwide (WWF, 2022).

Although the digital era has reduced some paper-based products (newspapers, for example), paper production is expanding overall, driven in part by growing consumer demand for packaged e-commerce goods. Indeed, over half of the paper produced is utilized as packaging material, followed by the graphic paper sector, which consumes nearly 33% of the world's paper production. (STATISTA, 2018).

Global paper production volume from 2008 to 2018 (in 1,000 metric tons)



Source: [Verband Deutscher Papierfabriken](#)

Source: [Statista](#)

Impacts of Paper Production

The paper industry has a high impact on both people and the environment.

Unsustainable harvesting and paper production is a primary driver of deforestation and land conversion. In turn, this can cause soil erosion and endanger local biodiversity ([WWF, 2022](#)).

According to a WWF assessment, the paper and pulp industry is the largest industrial water user in developed countries, and a major consumer of energy ([WWF, 2022](#)). It can take 2 to 13 liters of water to produce one sheet of A4 paper ([source](#)). The chemically intensive industrial activity of paper mills is a major water polluter that can endanger surrounding aquatic biodiversity and people's health ([WWF, 2022](#)). Paper and cardboard represents over 40% of total packaging waste in the EU ([EUROSTAT, 2019](#)).

In addition, unsustainable or illegal practices can infringe on the human rights of local indigenous people. According to the World Bank, hundreds of millions of people around the world depend on forests for their livelihood and subsistence ([source](#)).

As a responsible company and a significant buyer of paper products, Sodexo has a responsibility to ensure that the products we buy are produced fairly and sustainably. Sodexo believes that protecting forests and human rights is a key component of a sustainable supply chain alongside food safety, food security, nutrition, fundamental rights for workers and economic viability.

Sodexo's Commitment to Sustainable Paper Products

Within the framework of our [deforestation-free supply chain commitment](#), Sodexo is committed to sourcing 100% certified sustainable disposable paper products* globally by 2025.

*Scope

The following purchasing categories are in scope for this 2025 commitment:

- **Hygiene paper:** single use paper products that are used once and thrown away. This includes paper hand towels, toilet paper, paper napkins, paper kitchen wipes.
- **Office paper:** paper used for copying or printing.
- **Paper vouchers:** The paper used by our Benefits and Rewards activity for vouchers.

Definition of sustainable

Sustainable disposable paper products are defined as products which are either produced from recycled materials or from certified renewable resources such as wood and paper from managed forests. While FSC certification is preferred, renewable sources may also be certified by: PEFC, SFI, EU Ecolabel / EU Flower or Nordic Swan.

Sodexo's Implementation Strategy

- **Embed requirements** into relevant category strategies, supplier tenders, and client bids, etc.
- **Engage suppliers** to ensure their ambition and actions align with our commitment and that we can work together to achieve it
- **Engage clients and consumers** on reducing paper usage (e.g. WasteLESS week)
- **Incorporate sustainable disposable paper products systematically into client offers**
- **Continue internal engagement with and training** of the Supply Management team
- **Cross-industry and cross-sector collective action** to drive systemic change in priority commodity supply chains (for example landscape initiatives)
- **Annual tracking and reporting** of the three categories through our Universal Registration Document (office paper will start in the 2022 document)

What has been accomplished?

- 2010: Sodexo selected disposable paper products and office paper in the framework of its efforts to promote sustainable supplies
- 2013: Sodexo began publicly reporting on progress at Group level
- Fiscal Year 2021: 78.8% of spend on hygiene paper was certified sustainable¹ (up from 71.3% in fiscal year 2020).
- Examples of actions to reduce pressure on natural ecosystems from unsustainable forestry:
 - The TakeONE initiative in napkin dispensers is deployed globally. By better controlling napkin dispensing, it reduces napkins consumption by up to 55%.
 - Every October since 2010, Sodexo has organized WasteLESS Week on its sites around the world. The goal of this dedicated week is to raise awareness among employees, clients and consumers of the importance of fighting all types of waste: food, water, energy, paper and raw materials. The event offers activities like personalized messages for clients and recipes that use left overs, and supports Sodexo's ongoing waste-reduction efforts.
 - Benefits and Rewards services is actively transitioning away from paper vouchers. Currently 97% of vouchers globally are either re-usable or fully digital and not paper based.
- 2016-present: Sodexo has been reporting on its paper policy through the CDP Forests Program.
- Cross-industry collective action:
 - In 2021, Sodexo became the first food service company to join the Consumer Goods Forum Forest Positive Coalition. We are working to align our scope and KPIs with the Paper, Pulp and Fibre-based Packaging (PPP) Roadmap.
 - As part of the CGF Forest Positive Coalition's commitment to learn through action and direct engagements with landscape and jurisdictional initiatives, Sodexo is supporting Winrock International in their program to contribute to the restoration and sustainable use of peat in a landscape where palm oil and pulp and paper are produced in Siak district, Riau province, Indonesia. The project will create sustainable livelihoods while protecting and restoring natural ecosystems.

Related Documents and Links

- Sodexo's Commitment to Protect Forests and Peatlands: <https://www.sodexo.com/files/live/sites/com-global/files/02%20PDF/Sodexo-Commitment-to-Protect-Forests-and-Peatlands.pdf>
- Carbon action plan: <https://www.sodexo.com/home/positive-impact/sustainability/reducingcarbon-emissions.html>
- Consumer Goods Forum – Forest Positive Coalition: <https://www.theconsumergoodsforum.com/environmental-sustainability/forest-positive/>
- State of the Global Paper Industry 2018: https://environmentalpaper.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/StateOfTheGlobalPaperIndustry2018_FullReport-Final-1.pdf
- FSC: <https://fsc.org/>
- PEFC: <https://www.pefc.org/>
- SFI : <https://forests.org/>
- EU Flower: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/Factsheet_Paper.pdf
- Nordic Swan: <https://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/nordic-swan-ecolabel/>

¹ See 'Scope' and 'Definition' above.