

# Virgin vs recycled fibre

## ■ What is Norske Skog's policy on using virgin and recycled fibre?

Norske Skog will continue to use a mix of recovered paper and virgin fibre from sustainably managed forests.

## ■ Why not just use recycled fibre?

There is an implication in the question that recycled paper has to be better than paper produced using virgin fibre either from plantation or regrowth forests. This is not the case:

- recycled paper may not be available at an economic cost (particularly where mills are located a considerable distance from major centres of population)

- the available recycled fibre may already be in use by domestic processors for other products

- the recycled fibre may not be available – even though recycling rates are already very high in many countries there is demand for the resource for many applications (particularly packaging).

- many mills have long established sustainable plantation-based supply. The plantations and consequent harvesting and processing bring employment to remote regional areas and assist in the viability of regional communities

- virgin fibre in many instances provides the best way of bringing valued newspapers and magazines to consumers at the lowest cost

## ■ Why do we keep establishing and maintaining plantations?

Plantations provide an economically viable source of sustainable fibre; they allow harvesting to cease in contentious native forest areas; they are a viable option for what would be marginal agricultural land and they help provide a viable basis for regional communities

## ■ Why are plantations prone to criticism?

Whilst plantations offer many benefits they nevertheless can also raise other issues:

- they are generally located closer to townships than the native forests they have replaced which can impact on the local amenity – water, transport, dust etc..

- they tend to represent a monoculture

- chemicals are used to control weeds and browsing animals

- they can be considered to be in competition with agriculture

- they may increase fire risk

Norske Skog recognizes the issues as well as the benefits and works with local communities to address their concerns. A balance can generally be found between the conflicting interests.