

grupo Portucel Soporcel



SEMINÁRIO INTERNACIONAL 2010

Biodiversidade
um valor com futuro

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR 2010

Biodiversity
an asset for the future

Press Release – 4 November 2010

5 November, at the Hotel Ritz in Lisbon, at 9.00

Portucel Soporcel organizes International Seminar on “Biodiversity, an Asset with a Future”

In the International Year of Biodiversity, the Portucel Soporcel group is organizing a seminar, to be held in Lisbon on 5 November, on the topic “Biodiversity, an Asset for the Future”, bringing together some of the top Portuguese and international specialists in the field of Biodiversity Conservation to debate an issue of the greatest importance to society as a whole.

Wildlife conservation and management with a view to deriving economic, social and environmental benefits is the theme for an event designed to raise awareness amongst relevant organizations, from public bodies to environmental NGOs, of the value and importance of biodiversity conservation for the country, and for forest-based industries in particular.

The speakers at the seminar will include Pavan Sukhdev (leader of *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*, an international research initiative co-sponsored by the United Nations and the European Union), Shulamit Alony (International Union for Conservation of Nature), Nathalie Balan (*Sair da Casca*), Henrique Pereira dos Santos (consultant), representatives of companies working in the field of Biodiversity protection – Paula Guimarães (Portucel Soporcel group) and Alexandra Silva (Secil) – Luís Neves Silva (WWF Mediterranean), Susana Fonseca (Quercus), Alfredo Cunhal (Herdade do Freixo do Meio).

Representing the *Business and Biodiversity* (B&B) initiative in Portugal will be Tito Rosa (Institute of Nature and Biodiversity Conservation), António Mexia (EDP), Vasco de Mello (Brisa) and José Honório (Portucel Soporcel group).





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Biodiversity Protection as a mission

Wildlife and biodiversity conservation play a leading role in the development strategy of the Portucel Soporcel group, as a company managing woodland assets, producing renewable energy, pulp and paper. The Group is committed to the responsible management of some 120 000 hectares of forests, and in its partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) it has been recognized that much of the Group's certified woodland meets the requirements for classification as Areas of High Conservation Value in view of the diversity, abundance and interactions between species and ecosystems, and because of the presence of significant cultural and environmental assets.

Because the operations involved in forest management and industrial production can have direct or indirect potential impacts on habitats and species, the Group has incorporated Biodiversity Conservation into its business model, which has also allowed it to achieve certification of the woodlands under its management under the prestigious schemes run by the FSC – Forest Stewardship Council and the PEFC - Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes. The Group's forest management procedures have accordingly developed a significant commitment at local level to assessment, management and monitoring of wildlife.

The Group's approach to biodiversity issues has in fact been the subject of case studies in four national and international publications, two of which were recently conveyed or broadcast or communicated or announced at the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP10) in Nagoya, Japan, in e-publications launched by the WBCSD (World Business Council for Sustainable Development) and by the WWF's New Generation Plantations Project.



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One of the examples of good practice in the Group's forest management, in the field of biodiversity conservation, concerns the protection of Bonelli's eagle, a bird of prey classified as "threatened" in Portugal, as part of a partnership with the Iberian Birdlife Research Centre (CEAI).

Biodiversity is also a central theme in the *New Generation Plantations* project, coordinated by WWF International, in which the Group has been involved for approximately three years. The participants in the project include other international companies in the sector, representatives of governments (including the UK Forestry Commission), and WWF delegations in a number of countries. The project seeks to draw attention to many positive aspects of plantations, and defines New Generation Plantations as those which maintain the integrity of ecosystems and High Conservation Value areas, involving processes for effective participation by stakeholders and contributing to economic growth and employment.

In the context of its Biodiversity defence strategy, the Group has adopted a *Business and Biodiversity (B&B)* management philosophy, as well as establishing a cooperation agreement with the Institute of Nature and Biodiversity Conservation and signing up to Countdown 2010, an initiative run by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The Group also plays an important role in defending woodlands against wildfires. As the largest private-sector contributor to national efforts to reduce fire risks, the Company has invested heavily each year in measures to prevent and help fight forest fires. Significantly, more than 85% of the fires fought by the company's teams working for Afocelca (the industry organization majority owned by the Group) are located on land neighbouring the Group's woodlands. This fact provides further evidence that well-managed forests are far less vulnerable to fire risks.



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About the Portucel Soporcel group

The Portucel Soporcel Group is one of Portugal's strongest players on the international stage, operating in one of the country's core sectors and occupying a highly prominent position in the international paper and pulp market.

The Group's new mill, which started up in August 2009, has had a significant impact on the Portuguese economy and has positioned the Group as the European leader in the production of UWF printing and writing paper, allowing Portugal to stand at the top of the European league of producers of this type of paper.

The Portucel Soporcel Group is currently one of Portugal's top three exporters, and possibly the largest in terms of national value added, accounting for approximately 3% of Portuguese exports of goods.

The Group currently has production capacity of 1.6 million tons of paper and 1.4 million tons of pulp (of which approximately 1.1 million tons is incorporated into paper), generating annual turnover in excess of € 1,300 million.

The Group's current production structure comprises a pulp mill in Cacia and two integrated industrial complexes producing pulp and paper, located in Setúbal and Figueira da Foz. These complexes set international standards for size and technological sophistication.

The Group has successfully pursued a strategy of innovation and development of its own brands, which today account for 60% of sales of manufactured products. Special mention should be made of the Navigator brand, the world's best-selling product in the premium office paper segment.

The Group's sales are made to some 100 countries in five continents, with Europe and the United States as the two main destinations.

The Portucel Soporcel group pursues an active policy of developing Portugal's woodlands, and is responsible for the largest number of trees planted in the country. As the leading player in the eucalyptus sector, the Group is responsible for the management of forests occupying some 120 hectares. In 2009, the Group obtained certification for the woodland assets under its management under the prestigious PEFC - Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes, adding to its certification by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) in December 2007.

The Group is also a frontrunner in the energy sector and Portugal's leading producer of "green energy" from biomass. It generates more than 50% of the power obtained from biomass in Portugal. In the first 9 months of 2010 its power output was in excess of 1.2 TWh.





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