

Press Release – 16 July 2014

**"Give the Forest a Hand" Campaign**

# **Portucel Soporcel Group wins award for best Social Responsibility Communication Campaign**

- **Event designed to raise public awareness of the importance of caring for woodlands and preserving natural resources**
- **Six different locations, road trip totalling 1750 km, more than 1300 children involved, 3450 ornamental plants and young trees given away.**

The Portucel Soporcel group's **"Give the Forest a Hand"** Campaign was again chosen as Best Social Responsibility Communication Campaign by the Portuguese Corporate Communication Association (APCE). The campaign involves a series of educational events to raise awareness in Portugal of woodlands conservation issues and for the second time running it was awarded the APCE Award for Excellence in Communication (2013 and 2014 awards).

This award reflects the Portucel Soporcel group's consistent commitment to original and distinctive communication campaigns, with a strong educational and environmental component, designed to raise public awareness of the need to care for our woodlands and preserve natural resources.

The other finalists alongside the Portucel Soporcel group in the category for Best Social Responsibility Communication Campaign were Caixa Geral de Depósitos, with its "Young Volunteam" campaign, EPAL, with "Let's tackle hunger" and also Galp Energia with "UP Mission | United for the Planet".

The winning Social Responsibility Communication Campaign, **"Give the Forest a Hand"**, consisted of a series of events organized by the Portucel Soporcel group in April 2013 as part of the celebrations for World Forest Day, on 12 March. By giving away thousands of young trees and ornamental plants from the Portucel Soporcel group's nurseries to local residents in six selected municipalities, up and down the country, the campaign sought to highlight the company's commitment to generating wealth, employment and well-being in the regions where it operates, helping to preserve and improve woodlands and to promote forest-based products.

With the slogan **"Caring for woodlands 365 days a year"**, the campaign was developed in partnership with the local authorities, running from 1 to 8 April at town-centre locations in **Paredes de Coura, Aveiro, Figueira da Foz, Abrantes, Setúbal** and **Odemira**, where several thousand plants typical of these regions

were given away, including umbrella pines, eucalyptus, cork oaks, Mediterranean oaks, holm oaks, lavender, rosemary and strawberry trees.

Various educational games and other activities were organized at each location to raise awareness and educate the younger generations, focussing on the themes of woodlands protection and conservation of natural resources.

These games included the "Wish Tree", where each child was invited to write on a sheet of paper either a wish or an example of how to treat the forest correctly, and the "Forest Dance", in which the children were invited to learn a song about the woodlands, which they then combined with a simple dance, designed to create a strong involvement with the issues.

Following these events, the Group then organized celebrations for World Environment Day, on 5 June, consisting of educational activities at the Espirra Estate, where the Portucel Soporcel group has its largest nurseries. A total of 200 primary school children from Setúbal were able to enjoy a full day of environmentally-themed fun and games.

Talking about the APCE award, Rui Pedro Batista, Communication Director for the Portucel Soporcel group, said that *"The Group is a leading force in improving Portugal's woodlands, helping to develop the country's forestry sector which accounts for more than 9% of Portuguese exports of goods. This award constitutes recognition of our active policy of conserving biodiversity, which is built into our forestry management model. Each year, the Portucel Soporcel group invests around 3 million euros in preventing and helping to fight forest fires, and this accolade from APCE encourages us to strive even harder to raise awareness of the environmental, social and economic need to defend one of Portugal's strategic natural resources"*.

This campaign was launched in 2011, the International Year of Forests, and has been patented as a registered trademark belonging to the Group. Organized as part of its Social Responsibility policy, the **"Give the Forest a Hand"** project has earned a reputation as a prime tool for raising awareness in local communities of the importance of protecting woodlands and the environment.

**Attached - Photo 2014 Gala**

### **About the Portucel Soporcel group**

The Portucel Soporcel group is Portugal's second leading exporter, and the exporter generating the highest level of national value added. The Group accounts for approximately 1% of Portugal's GDP, around 3% of the country's total exports of goods, close to 8% of all containerized cargo and 7% of all containerized and conventional cargo exported through Portuguese ports.

In 2013, the Portucel Soporcel group achieved new records for paper sales and output, consolidating its position as Europe's leading manufacturer of uncoated woodfree

(UWF) printing and writing paper. The Group exported products worth €1 215 million and its turnover rose to € 1 530.6 million.

The leading European manufacturer, and the sixth largest in the world, of uncoated woodfree (UWF) printing and writing paper, the Group is also Europe's top producer of BEKP (Bleached Eucalyptus Kraft Pulp), and the fifth largest in the world.

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 118 countries over five continents, with Europe and the United States as the two main destinations.

As a vertically integrated forestry group with its own forestry research institute, it leads the world in the genetic improvement of the *Eucalyptus globulus*. It manages vast tracts of forest in Portugal certified under the international FSC and PEFC™ systems (FSC license C010852 and PEFC license 13-23-001), and boasts annual production capacity for 1.6 million tons of paper, 1.4 million tons of pulp (of which 1.1 million is integrated into paper) and power generation of 2.5 TWh, adding up to annual turnover approximately of approximately 1.5 billion euros.

Thanks to recent investment in doubling the production capacity of its nurseries, the Group now operates one of Europe's largest nurseries for forestry plants, with annual production capacity of approximately 12 million certified plants of various species, ready for use in renewing Portugal's woodlands.

In keeping with its strategy of international expansion, the Group is currently investing in a major vertically integrated forestry project in Mozambique, set to culminate in the construction of a cellulose pulp mill, a capital project worth 2.3 billion dollars.

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