

Press Release – 18 June 2012

United Nations Debate on Sustainable Development

Portucel Soporcel Group at the RIO+20 Conference

- **From June 13 to 22, in Rio de Janeiro, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) will bring together leaders from the different member States of the United Nations**
- **The Portucel Soporcel group will be represented in the Portuguese pavilion due to its importance in the country's forestry sector, which is crucial to the national economy**
- **On June 21, the Group will make a presentation on "Forest Management and Certification in the Portuguese Paper Industry"**

The Portucel Soporcel group is set to take part in the RIO+20 Conference, running from June 13 to 22 in Rio de Janeiro. With the prime aim of assuring renewed political commitment to sustainable development, the Conference will bring together heads of state and government to debate the green economy in the context of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

In view of the strategic importance to Portugal's economic, environmental and social development of the management of its forestry resources, Paula Guimarães, in charge of forest certification at the Portucel Soporcel group, will be making a presentation in the Portuguese Pavilion on 21 June on "Forest Management and Certification in the Portuguese Paper Industry".

This conference is the highest-ranking global event in the debate on the challenges facing the planet in the field of sustainable development. The Group is therefore keen to draw attention to the crucial role that forest plantations can play in reducing pressure on the extraction of raw materials from natural forests, providing opportunities in regions from which natural forests are all but absent and offering a solution for the needs of forest-based industries. In short, the Company believes that, when properly managed, forest plantations can generate wealth and contribute to environmental balance and social well-being.

The forestry sector is today acknowledged as a key player in the green economy worldwide, not just because of the sustainability of forestry products but also because of the role of forests as carbon sinks.

The Portucel Soporcel group will take the chance offered by the event in Rio to highlight that the responsible forest management practices of Portuguese companies in the pulp and paper sector (of which the Group accounts for approximately 70%),

whose certified woodlands represent 70% of the total certified forests in Portugal, provide clear evidence of how well-managed forest plantations can make a positive contribution to the integrity of ecosystems at a landscape level, to the conservation of biodiversity and to furthering the common social and economic good.

The pulp and paper industry accounts for more than 5% of all Portuguese exports of goods, making it the forestry sector's top contributor to the trade balance. Overall, we should stress that more than 50% of European exports of office and offset printing paper can be traced to the Portuguese industry, in other words to the Portucel Soporcel group.

Occupying 38% of the country's land mass, and strongly geared to export markets, Portugal's forests generate an extremely high National Value Added (NVA) – 71.4%, well above the national average of 59.3%. This significantly boosts the importance of these exports to the country's GDP.

Thanks to the Portucel Soporcel group, Portugal is the leading European producer of UWF (uncoated woodfree) printing and writing paper and of BEKP (bleached eucalyptus pulp). The Company accounts for 0.7% of Portuguese GDP and 3% of exports of goods, generating an extremely high and unrivalled level of NVA, thanks to the fact that its products are nearly all obtained from Portuguese raw materials and resources.

As a vertically integrated forestry group, with operations ranging from applied research into responsible management of a natural and renewable resource, the country's woodland, to the production of cellulose, energy and paper, a commitment to sustainability is built into its business model.

In its role as Portugal's leading private sector operator in the forestry sector, the Group works to improve and protect the country's woodland, adding value to the 120,000 hectares under its management in Portugal. Proud to have been the first organization in Portugal licenced to use its forest management certification simultaneously under the two most prestigious systems (the FSC® - Forest Stewardship Council¹ and the PEFC - Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification), the Company applies the best practices in forest husbandry, implementing an effective plan for defending and protecting against forest fires and working to manage biodiversity.

The presence of the Portucel Soporcel group at the RIO+20 is proof of its commitment to sustainable development in its industry, in the belief that sustainable practices are socially just, environmentally indispensable and economically advantageous.

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¹ FSC- C010852