

Patagonia's Paper Procurement and Use Policy

Overview

When it comes to producing paper and other forest products, we are acutely aware of how irresponsible forestry practices are systematically destroying the Earth's biodiversity. For logging companies, clear-cutting is the most expedient and cost-effective method of converting trees to logs. This worldwide practice results in the deforestation of vast tracts of wild forest, which are replanted with neat rows of easily managed (frequently non-native) trees. These biological jewels are home to diverse and endangered plants and animals. Like all forests, they store vast amounts of water and carbon dioxide. They are precious, irreplaceable and must be protected at all costs.

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We use paper in many of our business processes—printing at our corporate offices, producing catalogs for customers, putting hangtags on our products and shipping goods in boxes across the globe. The principles stated below aim to reduce our impact on the natural world from our use of paper products.

Purchasing Principles

The following is a set of overarching principles that guide the purchase of paper by Patagonia departments and affiliates:

1. Prioritize recycled paper products

Purchase paper products that maximize recycled content while still meeting requirements for functionality and quality. Our goal is to use only materials made from 100% recycled content. This applies to all feasible product categories including catalogs, office paper, product hangtags, packaging and shipping boxes.

2. All paper products must be recyclable

Ensure that all products are 100% recyclable once they are done with their useful life.

3. All virgin paper products should be SFI® or FSC® certified

When recycled materials are not available or feasible for intended use, ensure that paper products are Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) or Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) certified, with a strong preference given to FSC® certification. This ensures human rights protection and environmental responsibility. This provides the clearest assurance of protection for high conservation-value forests, imperiled wildlife, First Nations and indigenous peoples' rights, and other crucial environmental and social values.

4. Work with responsible catalog and paper supplier

Do business with forward-looking suppliers who are open and proactive in their business practices, who are considered progressive by environmental groups looking at the entire life cycle of paper, who have endangered forest policies and have achieved FSC® Chain of Custody certification. We seek relationships with suppliers who embrace the concept of a minimum-impact mill, which means a paper mill that seeks to 1) minimize the consumption of resources (wood, water, chemicals and energy); 2) minimize the quantity and maximize the quality of releases to air, water and land; and 3) make investments consistent with those goals, for example, de-inking facilities, technologies that reduce chlorine use, greenhouse gas-reducing enhancements and renewable energy systems. Finally, we aim to work with mills located close to our printing facilities, which reduces the footprint associated with transportation.

5. Source only chlorine-free paper products

Limit purchasing to only chlorine-free paper sources.

6. Look for local sourcing options

Where possible, look to partner with locally sourced timber supplies to reduce the shipping impacts of paper-product sourcing. If FSC® certifications are not available for smaller, local vendors, ensure that responsible harvesting and manufacturing practices are guaranteed.

Purchasing Criteria

Below are specific purchasing requirements for different paper products used for our business:

1. Catalogs

Catalogs comprise a large portion of our company's paper use. For all paper used in catalogs, we require 100% PCR (Post-Consumer Recycled) inputs and FSC® certification.

2. Shipping Boxes

For all of our outbound shipments to dealers, stores and customers, all boxes must be at least 60% PCR, and any virgin inputs must be SFI® or FSC® certified.

3. Hangtags

For hangtags on our garments, we require materials be FSC® certified in addition to 100% PCR for insert paper and 30% PCR for cover paper.

4. Product Packaging

For product packaging that is derived from paper inputs, we require everything to be FSC® certified with a minimum of 30% PCR.

5. Retail Packaging

We offer free paper bags in our stores, but do not automatically place purchases in them. When customers do request a bag, it is made of FSC® certified, 100% PCR paper.

6. Fiber-based marketing and promotional materials

For marketing materials in our stores, mailings and other uses, we require materials to be 100% PCR and FSC® certified.

7. Dealer workbooks

For dealer workbooks, we mandate 100% PCR and FSC®-certified inputs.

8. Patagonia books

For all of the books published by our Patagonia Books® division, all paper must be FSC® certified in addition to 100% PCR for interior pages and minimum of 30% PCR for cover materials.

9. Hygienic paper

For hygienic paper used in bathrooms and other facilities, maximize recycled content and ensure any virgin materials are FSC® certified.

Paper Use Guidelines

The following is a list of guidelines we employ throughout our business as it relates to the use and disposal of paper products:

1. Reduce

We encourage our employees and customers to consider the need to print every project. For example, we ask whether a message to our customers can be communicated by email rather than by postcard. This not only saves forests, but also money. In our offices, we rely heavily on electronic bulletin boards, an intranet, PDFs and email to reduce the use of paper in daily business operations. We also prioritize lightweight paper products to reduce the inputs of materials for business operations.

2. Reuse

We have collection boxes for Good-On-One-Side (GOOS) paper, which has been printed on but still has a blank side. Feeding GOOS back into copiers and printers can be problematic, but GOOS paper works well for note-taking. Our on-site childcare center also happily takes GOOS leftovers for its art projects. We use mailing boxes and envelopes over and over and over, placing them in mailing stations throughout our buildings.

3. Recycle

We ask our employees to recycle everything they can, including office paper, magazines, paper towels and cardboard. We have communal recycling bins across our offices and stores, where employees can place used paper products.

Our Vendors

The following is the list of vendors and partners we use to manage our paper-procurement processes:

Allied Graphics: alliedgraphicsprint.com

Dogwood Alliance: dogwoodalliance.org

Environmental Defense Fund: edf.org

ForestEthics: forestethics.org

Forest Stewardship Council: fsc.org

Midland Paper: midlandpaper.com

Mohawk Fine Papers: mohawkpaper.com

Natural Resources Defense Council: nrdc.org

Neenah: neenahpaper.com

New Leaf Paper: newleafpaper.com

Rolland Enterprise: rollandinc.com