

Notes from the Discussion Session at the BIEC Roundtable: *Indonesian Pulp and Paper and Overseas Manufacturing: Addressing Risks and Developing Solutions*

What are the Greatest Challenges to Avoiding Controversial Fiber in Books Printed Overseas?

- Lack of availability of certified papers
- Lack of cost neutral alternatives
- Reliance on printers to supply paper
- Scarcity of paper grades desired
- Difficulty in getting environmental papers for last minute reprints/rushed print runs.
- Scheduling-getting ethical paper sometimes comes at the cost of the schedule and perhaps lost opportunities or missed commitments.
- Distance from suppliers makes it difficult to verify their claims. Verifying claims can be difficult, time consuming and costly.
- Acacia fiber how to know what acacia fiber is “bad” (what about the 10% that doesn’t come from Indonesia? How to tell if some is from older plantations or plantations on degraded lands?)
- Maps and data are poor, particularly overseas
- Price opportunism for those who make environmental grades
- Channel constraints that do not permit the publisher to increase the list price of the book to cover additional expense to use environmentally preferred papers
- Freight and shipping from overseas is a contributing factor to the environmental impact
- Currency risks can cause a swing in overall pricing
- Publishers must pull the trigger early on print quantities when manufacturing abroad, this tends to lead to overprinting
- Differences in business practices and cultural perspectives to overcome
- Does avoiding one major player because of poor environmental performance open the door for other renegeed players?
- Increasing prices may impact viability of printed books.

What Actions Can Publishers Take?

- Publishers can request the origin and verification of legality for fiber baskets
- Conduct verification through random testing and site visits
- Can use certifications as a way to better understand and verify chain of custody
- Consolidation of vendors
- Consolidation of trim sizes and print buys
- Standardization of RFP language following the Scholastic example
- Directed buys with a printers in Asia
- Form a purchasing coop amongst printers that worked with a consolidated group of printers to develop sheets that met environmental standards
- Strengthen PREPs for use in the United States
- Pool resources with other publishers to develop a better analysis of forests down to the concession level
- Manage inventory so that printers are given order forecasts in terms of trim sizes/sheet sizes to ensure suitable sheet sizes are available to avoid wastage and that ethical paper is on hand for printing so that dubious paper is not a quick go-to
- Work with FSC/RAN and like bodies to ensure that major retailers and e-tailers do not take huge orders at random just to return these to warehouse due to non-sales. Better projections needed from within their own organizations.
- Hire an independent consultant to verify social/environmental claims

- Use only printers and mills that agree to meet transparency standards
- Consider stepwise approach to prioritizing and eliminating most egregious fiber sources first
- Educate suppliers about concerns relating to environmental sustainability and social conflict

What Actions Can Printers Take?

- Enforce paper policies and market this to publishers
- Conduct supply audits
- Use a 6-9 month phase-in period to transition to better environmental papers
- Hire an independent consultant to verify social/environmental claims
- Printers can seek more stability in floor sheets, ensuring there is always a floor sheet with desired environmental attributes
- Improved consumer education - Purposefully and deliberately educating consumers on the effects of non-ethical paper so that they will understand the premium on books using ethical paper.
- Get certified by organizations like FSC, PEFC, ICTI, etc. and hence making the adjustments in operations and set up to go green.
- Ensure compliance with all green and ethical standards, not just in paper but other aspects such as bindery operations, waste disposal, other materials used, etc.
- Develop and enforce a procurement policy in line with ethical practices per guidelines of certifying bodies
- provide a more stable selection of grades of paper—less purchasing “du jour” mentality
- Continue to have an open dialogue with publishers on sustainability issues.
- Use only mills that agree to meet transparency standards
- Educate salespeople on available environmental options/alternatives
- Send clear signal to paper mills that APP & April must undertake reforms in order to maintain business since forest issues in Indonesia have become significant issue for their customers
- Get FSC certified and talk with mills about increasing their output of FSC and recycled sheets