



Press Release

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Paper & Beyond stages industry's leadership on Europe's circular bioeconomy

[Paper & Beyond](#), the new event concept where circular bioeconomy leaders meet, took place just a week following the release of the EU's new Bioeconomy Strategy, which set out a clear path for better linking the bioeconomy and circularity.

"The new European strategy comes at a defining moment for the bioeconomy" says Karl-Henrik Sundström, CEO of Stora Enso and Chairman of CEPI. *"Industry's transformation is gaining pace across the entire forest fibre and paper value chain. As the mainstream renewable and recyclable material industry, we are ready to take the lead on Europe's circular bioeconomy"*.

The first of its kind conference got off to an innovative start with a competition gathering some of Europe's most promising young researchers. From the engineering of spider silk strong nanocellulose filaments to paper-based electrodes for fuel cells, researchers illustrated the innovativeness and European lead in forest fibre research.

Building on this year's theme, the *"Europe & Beyond – Getting the best from the bioeconomy"* session welcomed keynote speaker Peggy Liu, a world-renowned sustainability expert on China who brought a global perspective on the circular bioeconomy. She touched upon recent developments in China, including the country's waste restrictions, its policy on single-use plastics and its recent investments in Europe under the Belt and Road initiative.

Following the positive trends in production (up 1.5%), exports (up 5.4%) and investment (up 7.5%) seen in the latest [market data](#) for 2017, RISI returned to provide insights into circular bioeconomy markets, with, for the first time, a business intelligence session on European nanocellulose markets.

Paper & Beyond also hosted the final conference of the EU-funded Provides project which has confirmed the Deep Eutectic Solvents (DES) technology. This breakthrough aims at achieving a 40% reduction in energy use and a 80% life cycle reduction in CO₂ emissions, while also producing high-quality lignin from wood for biochemicals or biocomposite production. The consortium will continue research on a DES pulping pilot and demo, aiming at commercial deployment by 2030.

Note to editor:

CEPI is the European association representing the forest fibre and paper industry. Through its 18 national associations CEPI gathers 495 companies operating more than 900 pulp and paper mills across Europe producing paper, cardboard, pulp and other bio-based products. CEPI represents 22% of world production, €82 billion of annual turnover to the European economy and directly employs more than 177,000 people.

From forest fibre technology to advance paper design, the industry currently invests almost 5.5 billion annually in Europe and is a recognised leader of the low-carbon circular bioeconomy transition. CEPI's 2050 '[Investment Roadmap](#)' outlines the industry's vision to advance this transformation in Europe through value creation and decarbonisation.

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