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ECONOMISER CASE STUDY

Raw Material Sustainability Investigation with Accrol

Keywords: Sustainable Materials | Paper | Bamboo

BACKGROUND

Environmental sustainability is increasingly used as a focal point in marketing products in the paper industry, especially for bathroom tissue products.

However, information relating to the carbon footprint of the paper manufacturing process, sustainability of raw materials, and impact of raw materials on biodiversity is either not widely published or is hard to find. The resulting lack of transparency can therefore obscure the credibility of marketing claims.

Accrol worked with EconoMISER via the Henry Royce Institute to conduct a detailed literature review into sustainability data within the bathroom tissue and forest products markets.

ABOUT ACCROL

Accrol (now part of The Navigator Company) is a leading tissue paper convertor based in Blackburn, Lancashire. Established in 1993, the company manufactures around 16 million units per week and supplies some of the UK's largest retailers.



ABOUT THE ECONOMISER PROJECT

Accrol worked with EconoMISER at the Henry Royce Institute to conduct a detailed literature review into sustainability data within the bathroom tissue and forest products markets. This investigation sought credible information on these topics to address the lack of transparency in the industry and challenge assumptions and claims surrounding the sustainability of raw materials in tissue products.

This project aimed to interrogate the sustainability claims made by tissue suppliers using bamboo as a raw material. Accrol wanted to investigate if Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-accredited fibres sourced from virgin wood, recycled paper or virgin bamboo were the best from a sustainability perspective. An application scientist from the University of Manchester performed a review of academic journals, technical reports, industry magazines, leading bamboo sanitary and health products, industry reports and intergovernmental reports.

RESULTS

The report illustrated that the question of which fibre source is more sustainable is beyond the scope of a single Life Cycle Analysis (LCA). The process of comparing LCAs is substantial and academic work has been done to interpret trends from multiple LCA studies.

However, the study did not support bamboo as being a more sustainable fibre source than other types of tree and other recycled fibres.

The report helped Accrol navigate sustainability claims made by competitors about sources of fibres for paper making. They can now make more informed decisions about the use of future feedstocks for their products from a sustainability perspective. This is important for Accrol to strike a balance between consumer pressure from the cost-of-living crisis and increased consumer awareness of sustainability.

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Visit navigatortissueuk.com to find out more about the company.

Visit ukfisc.org to find out more about the Foundation Industries Sustainability Consortium.

Visit royce.ac.uk to find out more about equipment available to access through the Henry Royce Institute.

“Having approached EconoMISER/Royce on a specific piece of research to assist our understanding in respect of wider market challenges within our business and sector, we found them to be extremely professional & knowledgeable.

The research itself was incredibly thorough, and the outputs have been put to positive use within our business, assisting in setting the direction of our medium & long-term goals.”

Phil Heathcote | Head of National Accounts, Accrol

