



DEFINING BUSINESS COMMITMENT: ELOPAK

Right: The Slim carton is Elopak's latest innovation. Made from wood from replanted forests, this has a low carbon footprint



Buying and selling of emission CO₂-quotas is not viable and only provides a temporary and false solution, argues Elopak. None of this company's carbon-reduction initiatives include offsetting. Furthermore, Elopak believes that 'cap and trade' simply does not work to reduce global CO₂.

In 2007, Elopak commissioned environmental consulting company, Bergfald & Co and Deloitte, to measure and audit its carbon footprint. Emission data from 13 manufacturing units and 40 sales offices were assessed. With this knowledge as a baseline, they drew up a commitment to reduce carbon emissions from operations by 15% by the end of 2010.

The company is on target to reach these goals. In 2009, it reduced its absolute CO₂ footprint by 2.5%. Relative to increased production volumes of 8%, emissions were reduced by 9.5%. Over 9,000 tons of CO₂ emissions were saved in 2009.

More than just a figure

The company's real commitment goes beyond an internal figure to driving the whole industry. It further aims to achieve continuous environmental improvement year-on-year. It sees it has

“a moral obligation to ensure the business and its products are truly sustainable”. While the short-term focus is on reducing energy consumption, longer term all aspects of business operations, product lifecycles and employees’ everyday lives are being addressed.

2008 was a landmark year with the launch of its global Green Challenge campaign and the signing of a partnership with WWF Norway.

Green Challenge gives staff the information, motivation and attitudes required to establish programmes that will make a difference. The first action was to ask. Every sales office, market unit and plant were given their own carbon footprint and asked to come up with ideas to reduce it. The response was astounding. Many inventive, simple and effective initiatives have been implemented and results are emerging. These include basic initiatives such as switching off PCs, equipment and lights after use and putting a 30-gram per km emission cap on company cars. Elopak’s unit in Serbia changed its heating oil to liquid gas, reducing both fuel costs and CO₂ emissions.

Elopak has strengthened its environmental strategy with key alliances. In 2008, it was admitted into the WWF Global Climate Savers programme, supporting an action plan to partner leading corporations with ambitious emission reduction targets. In 2010, Elopak was the first packaging company to become a member of the Carbon Disclosure Project’s (CDP) Supply Chain programme, an international system for reporting carbon emissions performance. CDP puts the risk of climate change at the forefront of global business strategy. All suppliers are required to be transparent, and provide an accurate measurement of the impact of their own operations. The CDP membership supports Elopak’s strategy to extend its CO₂ reduction programme to units it does not fully control, including joint ventures and partnerships. The goal is to have full transparency of its actions encompassing the whole product lifecycle from the forest to the shelf.

2010 has also seen Elopak’s main European operations achieving full certification by the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC). Approximately two billion FSC-labelled cartons are to be supplied to customers. It is the first, single, common certification system across the company and raw materials in the value chain. The company is set to be globally FSC compliant by 2011.

As a company and as individuals, Elopak believes there is a threat to the Earth's sustainability. It also believes society is not only to blame, but also has the responsibility to take action.

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