

## EUROSAC Congress 2024: Empowering circularity

**Paris/Stockholm, 19 June 2024:** From May 23–25, over 130 participants gathered in Porto, Portugal, for the EUROSAC Congress 2024 featuring engaging talks, professional debates and networking. The central theme was “Paper Sacks: Empowering Circularity”. The discussions revolved around the industry’s recent projects and solutions progressing paper sack recyclability and recycling. The EUROSAC Grand Prix Award was one of the highlights, honouring the industry’s most promising innovations. The Gold Award was presented to dyvision from dy-pack. Gascogne received the Silver Award for Gascogreen Fluor Free. The Bronze Award went to Protective Mailer from Mondi. C-in from Fiorini was awarded with the Industry Special Award. The audience’s favourite innovation was also dyvision – dy-pack took home the Public Choice Award as well.

The European paper sack industry looks back at a challenging year 2023. It saw a decline in sales across all market segments and delivered –15.9% fewer paper sacks compared to 2022. In its largest market, the construction sector with a market share of 58%, the industry sold –20% cement paper sacks and –9.8% building materials paper sacks than in 2022. The second largest market recorded dropping deliveries of –17.6% for food products and –6.2% for milk powder. The figures of the first quarter of 2024 show a certain recovery from the steep downward trend, but are still negative with –3.8% paper sack deliveries compared to the first quarter of 2023.



The participants received an update on global market trends, EU legislation and inspiration from best practice examples supporting the circular economy. Copyright: EUROSAC

### Challenging market trends and EU legislation

Camila Jaramillo, European Economist at Fastmarkets RISI, predicted an increase in demand for the next two years in her comprehensive global outlook for sack kraft paper and paper sacks. As new important drivers of the industry, she listed the substitution of single-use plastics, e-commerce and flexible packaging. “Despite different challenges from international competition and EU legislation, the European sack kraft paper and paper sack industry has all the potential to grow strongly. However, innovation is key to responding to regulatory and cost-competitive challenges, and to taking advantage of new uses demand,” Jaramillo concluded. The audience received an in-depth update of the latest EU legislation around packaging and packaging waste, deforestation and green claims including its chances and pitfalls for the industry. Also on the agenda was an update on the progress of the industry’s ambitious road map targets and the latest research and communication activities that support their achievement.



### **Advancing circularity**

The focus of the discussions were different projects and solutions supporting the circular economy in the sack kraft paper and paper sack market. CoCircular's report on the "Paper sacks go circular" pilot project gave insights into important lessons from the collection, separation and recycling of used paper sacks from the building materials sector in Spain. The French organisation Adivalor demonstrated a model of how agricultural waste can successfully be collected, valorised and recycled. Adding to that, the audience was presented advanced substitutes for traditional packaging (raw) materials by Paptic, Taghleef and The Navigator Company – from bio-based alternatives for plastics as packaging material, barrier films and laminations to different raw materials for paper sacks such as Eucalyptus globulus.

### **Alessandro Selmin new EUROSAC president**

After five years of heading the EUROSAC Board, Olivier Tassel handed over his office to newly elected Alessandro Selmin. "Our industry has a lot of opportunities for growth in the upcoming years. At the same time, it must tackle a lot of big issues such as meeting the highest recycling targets and the requirements of the upcoming legislations," Selmin said. "EUROSAC is the place where we can find solutions together. I trust that our industry can accomplish the necessary change. The range of Grand Prix contenders shows impressively that we are flying in the wind of innovation."



**Alessandro Selmin (Corazza) addresses the audience as newly elected EUROSAC president. Copyright: EUROSAC**

### **Innovation ahead: EUROSAC Grand Prix Award 2024**

With nine entries from eight companies, the Grand Prix Award again saw a lively participation. The prestigious Award honours the innovations that promise the most value to the industry's customers and the environment. "The decision wasn't easy. The entries represent a high level of innovation. As they cover different targets and development approaches, they are very difficult to compare," said jury president Herbert Rode. The **Gold Award** was presented to **dyvision** from **dy-pack**. "It combines important criteria for modern packaging such as sustainability, usability, machinability, and also market potential and improvement of recyclability," explains Rode about the jury's decision.



**The Grand Prix Award winners from right to left: the new EUROSAC president Alessandro Selmin (Corazza), Wilhelm Dyckerhoff (dy-pack), Alexandre Pinsolle (Gascogne), Pedro Cuesta (Mondi), jury president Herbert Rode (Windmüller & Hölscher) and moderator Ingo Theissen. Copyright: EUROSAC**



## **Grand Prix Award winners 2024**

**dyvision** from **dy-pack** not only convinced the jury but also the audience by providing excellent recyclability and won the **Gold Award** and **Public Choice Award**. The design of the sack makes it possible to easily separate the barrier from the paper material after use. The result: two monomaterials that can be sold as raw material for recycling instead of having to pay for waste disposal. Equipped with an easy, dust-free opening, the sack offers effective product and moisture protection as well as reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The **Silver Award** went to **Gascogreen® Fluor Free** by **Gascogne**. The sack is crafted from 100% fluorine-free papers with high greaseproof properties and a paper ratio of more than 90%. Specifically engineered for the pet food and food market, it offers a high level of protection against grease, moisture and oxygen. Gascogreen® Fluor Free is compatible with standard recycling processes and available with PEFC/FSC certification.

**Mondi's Protective Mailer** received the **Bronze Award**. Designed for e-commerce deliveries, it is crafted from high-strength, lightweight papers with an open flute design that replace plastic-based bubble wrap. The recyclable solution ensures optimal protection while minimising material usage and reducing waste. Their flexible design reduces parcel dimensions, leading to lower shipping costs and increased logistical efficiency.

**Fiorini** was honoured with the **Industry Special Award** for **C-in**. The paper sack features a window on the bottom patch which enables product inspection during palletisation, storage and selling. The solution is applicable to open mouth and valve sacks. It utilises a transparent plastic film for the window comprising less than 5% of the sack's composition. The sack qualifies as paper monomaterial and is recyclable with paper. The window can also be realised with a compostable film and in different shapes.

## **The competing entries from the industry**

**Probably, the best** developed by **Advanced Industries Packaging** is a paper sack solution that eliminates polyethylene (PE) while providing moisture protection equivalent to standard two-ply paper constructions with PE film. This bio-barrier packaging offers a fully recyclable, single-material product that enhances moisture protection and maintains filling line efficiency.

**DLF's Masterline** eco pouch by **Crown Van Gelder, Fiorini and Novidon** is a 1-layer paper bag for grass seeds made from Crown Native paper, featuring sugar beet fibres with an 80% lower environmental footprint than tree cellulose. The food-safe flexible bag boasts seamless printing capabilities and is more sustainable and more than 50% lighter than a 3-layer B2C box packaging. The empty bag is fully recyclable and compostable as post-consumer waste.

The **display bag** by **Klabin** is a multi-ply solution designed specifically for potatoes, seeds and fruits. A longitudinal plastic film display offers enhanced visibility of the packaged product while providing improved hygiene and protection during transportation, mitigating the risk of cross-contamination. The display bag is available in three different sack types and is recyclable in a specific recycled paper machine.



With the **IntegoBag**, **Mondi** showcased a coated paper sack with 50% less PE content that ensures comparable moisture protection levels to HDPE film solutions while extending product shelf life. It is compatible with existing filling machinery and maintains robust strength performance. IntegoBag is applicable across various sectors and recyclable in standard paper recycling streams.

The **EasyMix Sack** by **Smurfit Kappa Colombia** is a paper sack tailored to the Latin American market and designed to seamlessly integrate with cement, sand, gravel or ready mixes such as mortar or plasters and water in the mixer. Thus, it eliminates the need for collection and disposal, respectively saving costs. The first disintegrable kraft brown sack made from fast-growing Central American tropical pine species fibres is suitable for 42.5–50 kg two-ply sacks and also available for 25 kg or less in single-ply.

For more insights from the Congress, please contact Catherine Plitzko-Kerninon: +33 (0)147 237 558, email: [info@eurosac.org](mailto:info@eurosac.org).

Further information: [www.eurosac.org](http://www.eurosac.org) / [www.eurosac.org/grand-prix](http://www.eurosac.org/grand-prix)

***EUROSAC** is the European Federation of Multiwall Paper Sack Manufacturers. The federation represents over 80% of European paper sack manufacturers. Its members operate in 20 different countries. They produce some 5 billion paper sacks per year, representing 630,000 tonnes of paper converted in 55 plants. Sack manufacturers from all continents and bag manufacturers also contribute to the federation as corresponding members, and more than 30 suppliers (paper, film, machine or glue manufacturers) are registered as associate members. [www.eurosac.org](http://www.eurosac.org)*

***CEPI Eurokraft** is the European Association for Producers of Sack Kraft Paper for the Paper Sack Industry and Kraft Paper for the Packaging Industry. It has ten member companies representing a volume of 3 million tonnes of paper produced in eleven countries. [www.cepi-eurokraft.org](http://www.cepi-eurokraft.org)*