

**Sustainable
tissue paper -
one sheet
at a time**



Metsä

Sustainable tissue paper

- one sheet at a time

Many consumers are seeking a more sustainable lifestyle for the benefit of the environment, climate and humanity. At Metsä Tissue, we want to help consumers achieve this goal. Even small, everyday actions matter, and the choice of a tissue paper product is in itself a step towards a more sustainable future.

The main raw material in Metsä Tissue's products is wood fibre of known origin from sustainably managed Northern forests. The growth of a forest binds carbon for a long time, both in the trees growing in the forest and the wood products ultimately made from them, including sawn timber. All wood recovered during forestry is therefore used for the benefit of the bioeconomy, meaning that the wood replaces fossil-based energy sources or products.

Tissue paper is made from fresh fibre, or pulp, and recycled fibre. The wood raw material which pulp is made of, comes from sustainably grown and managed forests. The production of tissue paper from fresh fibre is part of the resource-efficient use of wood. The production requires lower water and energy consumption and generates less waste than when recycled fibres are used. Fresh fibre is an excellent raw

material for tissue paper. They are safe, hygienic and gently soft. Metsä Tissue therefore announced in 2021 that it would be investing in fresh fibre-based tissue papers aimed at local markets by renewing the Mänttä mill's paper machine, and it has previously shared plans for doubling fresh fibre production at the Mariestad mill in Sweden.

In this collection of articles, we will first learn about the use of fresh fibres from experts in both the forest sector and the scientific community, and we will examine the properties of fresh fibre from the perspectives of raw material, wellbeing, hygiene and recycling. On the following pages, you can read about why the discussions around sustainability are currently topical, and the significance and impact our daily choices can have.

For further information, go to:

Metsä Tissue Communications

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In this collection of articles, you will get to learn about the properties of tissue papers based on fresh fibres through the following themes.

Raw material, wellbeing, hygiene and the bioeconomy.



Raw material

1. In addition to fresh fibre, the production of tissue paper also utilises recycled fibre based on recycled paper.
2. Fresh fibre is the fresh wood fibre produced when thinning forests to ensure healthy growth or as a by-product of producing wood products. This wood fibre is the raw material for pulp – fresh fibre.
3. The production of fresh fibre products is resource-efficient: the production process requires less raw material, and consumes less water and energy than the production of recycled fibre products.



Wellbeing

1. Sustainable consumption choices have a positive impact on wellbeing.
2. Products made of renewable resources are a key element of a more sustainable lifestyle.
3. Consumers' values and behaviour are becoming increasingly sustainable, and people now focus more on the environment and other people when making choices.
4. Daily choices can have an impact on wellbeing: Tissue paper made of sustainable fresh fibre is a good choice from the hygienic and environmental point of view.

In this collection of articles, you will get to learn about the properties of tissue papers based on fresh fibres through the following themes.

Raw material, wellbeing, hygiene and the bioeconomy.



Hygiene

1. Not only does the use of tissue paper help maintain cleanliness by making daily life easier, it's also good for hygiene: when you dispose of tissue paper immediately after use, dirt and bacteria are also disposed of.
2. Research indicates that single-use paper hand towels are the most effective way to dry your hands, and they also reduce the risk of transmitting harmful viruses.
3. Wiping down the easily dirtied surfaces of your home with tissue paper is also an easy way to protect against bacteria and keep surfaces hygienic.
4. Hygiene practices brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, such as more frequent handwashing, are important to maintain even after the pandemic.



Bioeconomy

1. The purpose of the bioeconomy is to use renewable natural resources wisely and to take the sustainability of the whole production chain into consideration.
2. At Metsä Group, every part of the tree is used as efficiently as possible, so nothing goes to waste.
3. Fresh fibre used in the production of tissue paper is part of the efficient use of wood and in terms of its environmental impact, a sustainable raw material of bioeconomy, bringing solutions to daily needs.
4. You can make sustainable consumer choices by buying high-quality products which are sustainably produced and made of renewable raw materials. Tissue papers made of fresh fibre are examples of daily products of an efficient bioeconomy, which everyone can support their everyday choices.

Soft to the touch and sustainable – why northern wood makes for high-quality responsible toilet and kitchen paper

Alexander L. Deutsche (Ph.D.), Director, Research & Development, shows real enthusiasm. An expert in wood chemistry, Deutsche works European wide for Metsä Tissue, the company which has 9 paper mills in Europe. In his work, he leads development projects aiming for better and better tissue paper products and production phases that are as efficient and environmentally sustainable as possible.

What has Deutsche so excited is northern wood. At Metsä Tissue, the main raw material for tissue papers – such as toilet paper and household towels – is sustainable and renewable fresh fibre. Fresh fibre is the fresh wood fibre, which is generated by thinning forests to ensure healthy forest growth or as a by-product of producing wood products. These wood fibres are the raw material for pulp – fresh fibre.

As a raw material, fresh fibre originating from wood grown in the north is ideally suited for tissue paper.

“In toilet paper, for example, we use mainly short-fibre wood like birch. These fibres make the paper extremely soft, whereas the fibres of coniferous trees used in kitchen paper make the paper stronger,” says Deutsche.

“The fact that the fibres come from sustainably managed forests and from as short a distance as possible is also essential for the environment and sustainability,” he adds.



Fresh fibre is a plentiful raw material

The sustainability of forestry is the foundation of Deutsche's work. It is important for him to be able to work with a renewable natural resource like wood.

"Finland has an enormous number of forests, and thanks to sustainable forest management, they grow more than they are used. In Metsä Group's regenerating cutting phase we plant at least four new trees for every single tree used. As a raw material, wood must be used in full so that every part of it is put to use and the environmental impact of the production remains as small as possible. As the user of this raw material, it's our obligation to take sustainability into account in everything, and it's something our customers also expect from us. Resource-efficiency is at the core of Metsä Group's strategy".

He points out that fresh fibre is a sustainable raw material when it comes to its environmental impact.

The use of fresh fibres saves energy and water, because the fibres require only minimal processing in the tissue paper mill. Fresh fibre is a naturally pure and hygienic raw material for the production of hygienic papers.

"Every part of a tree is used as efficiently as possible, meaning none of the raw material goes to waste.

At the beginning of the year, Metsä Tissue announced that it invests in fresh fibre based tissue papers for the local market by renewing the tissue machine at the Mänttä mill and in addition, the company plans to double the fresh fibre production in its Mariestad mill, in Sweden. Although the company invests in fresh fibres, recycled paper is also utilized in tissue papers.

However, the issues with the availability of the recycled fibre raw material are important to understand explains Deutsche.



Newspaper subscriptions and the use of office paper, for instance, are declining continuously due to digitalisation, meaning that the volume of recycled paper is decreasing and recycled fibres are transported to the mills across increasingly long distances. In the long run, this is not good for sustainability.

In addition, the ink and other impurities in recycled paper must be carefully removed so that it can be used in the production of hygienic high-quality tissue paper.

"The use of fresh fibres saves energy and water, because the fibres require only minimal processing in the tissue paper mill. Fresh fibre is a naturally pure and hygienic raw material for the production of hygienic papers."

As a raw material, fresh fibre is also more plentiful than recycled fibre and thus more resource efficient.

"The production of fresh fibre tissue paper is materially more efficient than recycled tissue paper production, because the recycling process incurs a 40 % yield loss from cleaning the recycled fibers.* With increasingly strict regulations in the hygiene sector, we anticipate a growing reliance on fresh fibres from sustainable sources. For example recycled packaging board is more effective raw material when it is repurposed for non-food packaging, as the cleaning requirements are less strict than those of hygienic paper." says Deutsche.

**Alexander L. Deutsche (Ph.D.),
Director, Research & Development.**

Everything is based on sustainable and resource-wise forest management

Vesa Junnikkala has worked at Metsä Group for nearly 20 years. In 2019, Junnikkala, who previously worked on the development of wood supply, became Metsä Forest's Director in charge of sustainability.

Sustainability is a value that has an impact on all Metsä Group's operations and permeates the entire value chain, from sustainably managed forests to responsible wood supply, and all the way to the mills' production phases and the finished products, including tissue papers.

It is Junnikkala's experience that sustainability in the forest sector long meant that forests should not be over-harvested and that future harvesting possibilities should not be put at risk.

"Metsä Group's parent company, Metsäliitto Cooperative, is owned by forest owners across the country. It's always been important for the owner-members that their forests are passed on to the next generation in a good and robust shape," he says.

Awareness of environmental and climate issues has increased greatly during the 2000s, and Metsä Group has also begun to focus on sustainability from a new perspective and with increased determination. Now, sustainability is a value that has an impact on all Metsä Group's operations and permeates the entire value chain, from sustainably managed forests to responsible wood supply, and all the way to the mills' production phases and the finished products, including tissue papers.

"Given that we use renewable natural resources in our operations, they must always be sustainable, so that we can



also guarantee the availability of the wood raw material in the future. Metsä Group as a whole is also committed to increasing carbon sinks and the biodiversity of forests, of which forest certificates, for one, are an indication."

To summarise, Junnikkala says that the entire forest industry, Metsä Group included, is an integral operator in climate change mitigation and the preservation of biodiversity. He thinks the future looks promising, and emphasises that forests are more than just trees. Forest nature is valuable, because for many people in Finland, forests are not only a source of livelihood but recreation. Junnikkala himself grew up at a small farm near the town of Lappeenranta.

"I was practically born in the middle of a forest. Forests are an important place for me, given that I not only work but relax and spend my free time in them, orienteering or hunting. It's rewarding for me to be involved in developing solutions that safeguard forests from an ecological, economic and social perspective."

Alexander Deutsche also sees the forest industry's future as a bright one. When he joined Metsä Tissue, he was surprised by the strength of the company's desire to promote sustainability and responsibility.

"Instead of paying mere lip service to ecological aspects, the company also gets things done, including more environmentally-friendly mills. We work hard to find increasingly responsible high-quality solutions and products with the future in mind. I'm proud to be part of this work."

Deutsche knows what he is talking about. He and his team are developing promising new recipes for tissue paper production.

"We test the wood fibre blends of tissue paper in the lab on a continuous basis, examining their durability, absorbency, softness and other properties. If a particular recipe seems promising, we produce a test batch of it with a paper machine. That way, a successful project may result in a future quality product."

Vesa Junnikkala, Director, Sustainability, has worked at Metsä Group for nearly 20 years.

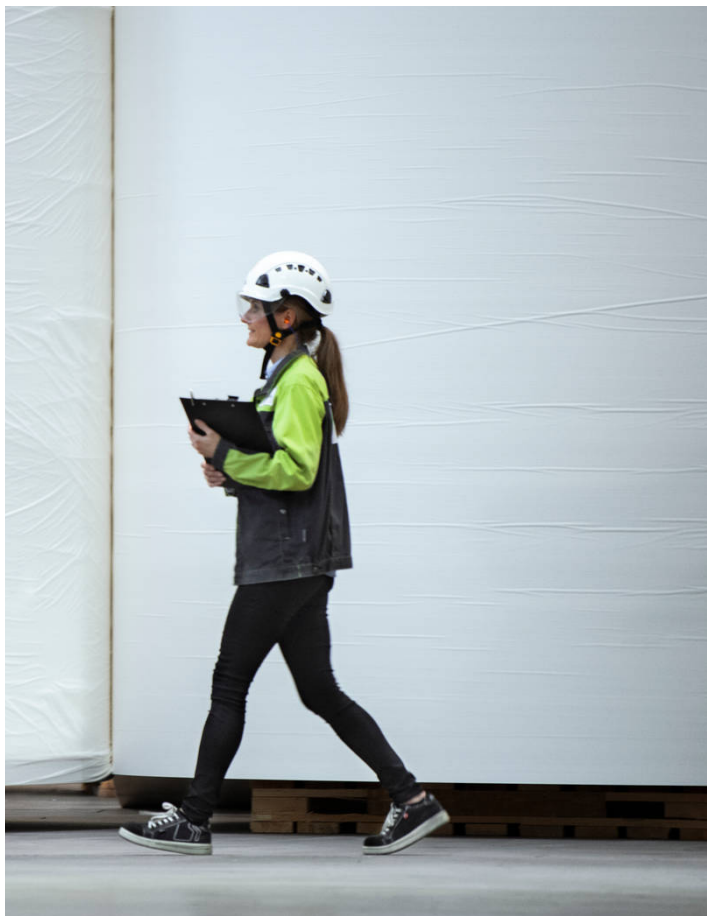
Sustainable consumption choices add meaning to life

Sustainable wellbeing benefits both the individual and society, says Professor Arto O. Salonen.

How is sustainability linked to our wellbeing? How can we live and consume more sustainably than before? How does the shift to a more sustainable lifestyle affect us?

These are some of the questions that Arto O. Salonen, Professor at the University of Eastern Finland, is seeking to answer. In his research, Salonen is examining the challenges that sustainable development poses to global wellbeing, and is looking for ways to solve the big questions facing humanity and our planet. Sustainability is at the core of Salonen's work. Just a decade ago, sustainability was an emerging phenomenon that was often met with suspicion.

Sustainability is ultimately about looking after the environment and climate to secure the prerequisites for life.



“Back then, people still associated with something that relates to only forest enthusiasts. Today, finding solutions to sustainability issues has become mainstream,” Salonen says.

As a researcher, Salonen approaches sustainability from social, economic and ecological perspectives. He studies ways for humans to thrive centuries from now. According to Salonen, this requires people to make smart and sustainable choices. Sustainability is ultimately about looking after the environment and climate to secure the prerequisites for life.

To enable the shift to a more sustainable lifestyle, we must also care for humanity in addition to the environment.

“Our own wellbeing is linked to other people. When we acknowledge one another's strengths, we also experience greater self-appreciation. We feel adequate as we are. There's goodness and beauty in every person, and revealing it makes us strong. We need this strength when carrying out the changes needed for a sustainable future,” Salonen explains.

To enable the shift to a more sustainable lifestyle, we must also care for humanity in addition to the environment.



From material goods towards quality of life

What does wellbeing really mean? According to Salonen, it first encompasses the material basis for life: a roof over your head, water, food and the ability to take care of your health and develop yourself.

“Not long ago, infections were still fatal in Finland, people were starving, and attending school was far from something to be taken for granted.

For example, modern means of hygiene, which have a key impact on our health, didn't gain popularity until the 1960s, when we began to see ads for toilet paper on TV. Following the post-war increase in wellbeing, our basic needs can now be satisfied.

In wealthy societies, questions concerning the quality of life are gaining importance alongside material aspects.

Second, in wealthy societies, questions concerning the quality of life are gaining importance alongside material aspects.

“Quality of life refers to the things that make life worth living. Once your basic needs have been satisfied, the focus turns to immaterial things. Contrary to material wellbeing, immaterial wellbeing is based on a host of endless opportunities. For example, filling the world with more knowledge and love doesn't harm anyone. Mutual trust, satisfaction and the joy of life are examples of the abundant elements of a good life that are accessible to all.”



Meaningful choices improve wellbeing

Sustainability has now become a mainstream, and recent development has been very rapid, according to Salonen.

“It’s interesting to see that investors are also gradually moving their attention and assets away from business that ignores the climate, natural resources and biodiversity loss. This signals a change in the global trend.”

Consumer research also indicates that people want to know the consequences of their consumption choices.

“People place ever greater emphasis on their own values when choosing products and services,” Salonen points out.

He believes conscious consumerism strengthens your self-esteem, because you become part of the solutions instead of the problems through your deliberate choices. It’s a question of finding meaning, which lies at the core of wellbeing for a Finn living in a plentiful world, Salonen explains. Daily choices like the kind of toilet paper you buy make a difference.

“There’s no room for wastefulness on our globe, which is reaching its limits. It’s important for me to know whether the toilet paper I buy is made of, for example, pulpwood, which is a by-product of log wood. It means I can choose to support a more sustainable future through my purchase. My choice also boosts my self-esteem.”

Salonen mentions local origins as another important consideration when making daily purchase choices. People want to support the vitality of their own region and country, as well as employment at home. Many people want to know where their money is going, and where the product comes from. In other words, consumers want to know where the raw material for their toilet paper comes from, the mill that produces the toilet paper, and the professionals who operate the machines.

It’s interesting to see that investors are also gradually moving their attention and assets away from business that ignores the climate, natural resources and biodiversity loss. This signals a change in the global trend.

“This information strengthens our sense of being part of building a good future through our daily choices. Daily items are made possible by a large number of people who do their best to ensure that the product is safe and sustainable,” Salonen explains.

“Transparency and sustainability build trust. If I know how a product has made its way into my hands, I can be proud of my choice. In turn, this has a positive impact on my wellbeing.”

Consumers become decision makers

In addition to sustainability and responsibility, consumption is also driven by other, sometimes conflicting, motives. Some people are attracted to aesthetic or practical objects, while others seek status or pleasure, and yet others emphasise price. Occasionally, the goal of a more sustainable life appears to mean giving up all material wellbeing. In Salonen's opinion, it makes sense to accept the competing needs for consumption.

“No one wants to hear the mantra of “give up, make do with less” all the time. You have to change the nature of the message. What if, instead of scarcity, we could strive towards something more noble, and instead of quantity, focus on quality?”

Each of us has both selfish and unselfish characteristics: as consumers, we want to make sustainable choices, while satisfying our individual needs. If we can achieve both in our consumption choices, society will see an accelerated shift to sustainability.



Quality of life is based largely on immaterial aspects that are not in short supply. As our own life begins to feel more meaningful and “worth living”, our hopes for a better future grow stronger and we can harness our capacity and creativity to solve the sustainability challenge. Individual benefit and the common good converge.



“Each of us has both selfish and unselfish characteristics: as consumers, we want to make sustainable choices, while satisfying our individual needs. If we can achieve both in our consumption choices, society will see an accelerated shift to sustainability.”

It may be tempting occasionally to say that your own choices are unimportant on a global scale, or that the destiny of a single planet makes no difference to the universe. Salonen warns that a pessimistic attitude like this can be deceptive. For the sake of our wellbeing, we must experience the joy of life and satisfaction.

“A person who resolutely opts for solutions can feel proud when they look in the mirror. They’ve done what a person with their knowledge has to do. If you’re satisfied with yourself, you will also have the energy to work for a more sustainable future.”

Arto O. Salonen works as a professor at the University of Eastern Finland.



“Handwashing has become an ingrained habit – **and that’s a good thing**”

Our experience of the coronavirus pandemic has changed our views on hygiene, says Piia Jallinoja, a health sociologist.

What should we eat today? Do I get enough exercise? Did I remember to wash my hands when I got home?

The consumption of tissue paper serves as an indicator of living standards: when the standard of living rises, so does the consumption of tissue paper. Each Finn consumes around 17.3 kilograms of tissue paper annually.

These are questions that we all ask ourselves in our daily lives. The same questions – as well as our answers – are of special interest to researcher Piia Jallinoja.

Professor of Health Sociology at Tampere University, Jallinoja studies phenomena related to health, food and nutrition from a social and cultural perspective. As a sociologist, she explores the emergence of various health-related phenomena, the types of people drawn to them, how health-related phenomena affect our attitudes and behaviour, and the role played by the authorities, the mass media and social media in the emergence of the phenomena.

Piia Jallinoja’s work is based on a major change concerning our standard of living, which has seen a sharp rise in the past century. After the mid-1900s, we successfully brought down the infant mortality rate and rid ourselves of major epidemics and famine, which had until then been the focus of Finnish public health work. We have now entered the era of lifestyle diseases and a diversity of lifestyles.

“Nowadays we have enough energy, time and assets to focus on questions other than survival. Food, exercise and health have become integral parts of our lifestyle and identity: they signal who we are, and who we want to become.

The consumption of tissue paper serves as an indicator of living standards: when the standard of living rises, so does the consumption of tissue paper. Each Finn consumes around 17.3 kilograms of tissue paper annually. The rise in consumers’ living standards, as well as our lifestyles and quality of life, influence our daily choices. To secure their quality of life, more and more consumers want to buy products made of raw materials that are more durable, of higher quality and sustainably produced.

Health-related phenomena reflect our attitudes

The hygiene revolution is also linked to the rise in living standards. Researchers learned decades ago how bacteria and viruses spread, and how their spread could be contained. This knowledge has become part of our daily routines and understanding: we wipe the surfaces in our homes and wash our hands and dishes. Consumers are also more inclined to invest in the quality of hygiene products.

Health is one of the underlying motives behind diets and hygiene habits that always comes up in studies. Of course, it would all be very simple if health were the only thing we valued. But as Jallinoja points out, people are rarely that straightforward.

“In addition to emphasising health, we seek pampering and a feeling of safety. We also want to save the environment, and show others how exciting and modern we are. This is what

makes health-related phenomena so complex. We want our lives to be diverse and not only focus on health.”

In addition to hygiene considerations, the choice of tissue paper is determined by aspects related to reliable functionality, including durability and absorbency, sustainable raw materials, local production, price, and the softness and quality of paper.

Consumer products are also expected to offer various properties to respond to different needs. In addition to hygiene considerations, the choice of tissue paper is determined by aspects related to reliable functionality, including durability and absorbency, sustainable raw materials, local production, price, and the softness and quality of paper.





Our behaviour is moulded by the flow of information and social pressure

According to Jallinoja, many things control our behaviour in health-related questions. We absorb information from many different sources such as the authorities, experts, our family and friends, the media, social media influencers and company communications, and then use this information to form opinions and adapt our behaviour.

The enhanced hygiene practices introduced during the coronavirus pandemic will continue to influence our behaviour after the pandemic.

We are also influenced by social pressure.

“We seek the acceptance of others and want to portray ourselves as being ‘decent’ – in both our own and others’ eyes,” Jallinoja explains.

For a health sociologist, the coronavirus pandemic has been very interesting, because it has affected every Finn. In the early spring of 2020, when the pandemic really hit Finland, we saw a strong campaign to boost hygiene. We were urged to wash our hands frequently and carefully, and to avoid coughing and shaking hands.

Jallinoja soon noticed that hand air dryers disappeared from toilets in cafés and shopping malls, and were replaced by paper hand towels, which have been found to be a hygienic alternative for hand drying.

“The spread of the coronavirus and the guidelines for combatting it had an immediate impact on our behaviour. People were motivated by their own health and the health of others, because we knew that the disease was serious.”

However, Jallinoja does not believe in prioritising our motives, because they all influence us in one way or another. Each culture and era prioritises different health norms. Jallinoja takes her own school years as an example: back then, the focus was on dental care, while today, handwashing has taken on a special role in hygiene. The coronavirus pandemic especially

The coronavirus pandemic has placed continued emphasis on hand hygiene and the use of paper towels for hand drying.

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Safe and familiar routines guide our activities

Jallinoja points out that familiar routines are important to people. They offer a feeling of safety. This is also true of hygiene products such as tissue papers.

“When we get used to a specific type or brand of toilet paper or paper hand towel in a specific situation, it feels easy and natural. If we have to make changes to our habits, what used to be familiar suddenly feels difficult.”

How we separate things into clean or dirty differs from culture to culture. We maintain this separation in our daily lives, and it becomes ingrained in our minds, Jallinoja explains. If we usually use a paper hand towel to wipe the table, it distresses us if we can no longer do so.

It takes a long time for changes in hygiene behaviour to take root, because the formation of routines requires numerous repetitions. Nevertheless, Jallinoja believes that the enhanced hygiene practices introduced during the coronavirus pandemic will continue to influence our behaviour after the pandemic.

“The importance of handwashing has become ingrained in our minds, and we’ll probably wash our hands more frequently than before, and prefer to use paper or cloth hand towels rather than air hand dryers.”



Piia Jallinoja works as the professor of health sociology at the University of Tampere.

Daily tissue papers are part of a sustainable bioeconomy

“The connection between humans and nature lies at the heart of the bioeconomy,” says Professor Eeva Furman.

Professor Eeva Furman, Director of the Environmental Policy Centre at the Finnish Environment Institute, strives to develop ways to best promote sustainability and biodiversity. Furman also serves as chair of the Finnish Expert Panel for Sustainable Development. In addition to sustainability, Furman’s work focuses on ways of using bioeconomy to solve major issues facing humanity, such as mitigating climate change and the decline in biodiversity.

Bioeconomy refers to industrial production that is based on renewable natural raw materials and utilises technologies related to them.



Bioeconomy is a concept that frequently comes up in reports on the future of Finland and in comments from authorities and policymakers. It refers to industrial production that is based on renewable natural raw materials and utilises technologies related to them. Overall, the goal of bioeconomy is to reduce fossil-based emissions and the consumption of non-renewable natural resources.

To a consumer unfamiliar with the topic, the diverse opportunities provided by bioeconomy may seem quite complex. However, products that make our daily lives easier, such as toilet paper and paper towels, are among the most typical products of bioeconomy.

Metsä Tissue’s tissue papers, such as Lambi products, are good examples of this. Tissue papers are produced from both fresh fibre, based on pulpwood that is generated as a by-product of log wood production, and from recycled fibre. It may be surprising to hear that the use of fresh fibre saves energy and water while generating less waste than the use of recycled fibre.

According to Furman, the idea behind bioeconomy is that humans and nature are interconnected and interdependent. Through bioeconomy we should be able to reduce the consumption of fossil-based natural resources and curb climate change, while safeguarding biodiversity. To reach these goals, the focus must be on more sustainable ways to make essential products.

“Bioeconomy aims to find a balance in which the wellbeing of nature also helps to ensure the wellbeing of humans. Bioeconomy seeks solutions that originate in natural systems and build the economy based on a sustainable connection between humans and nature,” says Furman.



Products that make our daily lives easier, such as toilet paper and paper towels, are among the most typical products of bioeconomy.

The use of sustainable raw material is based on efficiency

Ultimately sustainable recycling and the use of raw materials is efficient. This means that we try to move away from non-renewable raw materials and instead use renewable natural raw materials as efficiently as possible, ensuring that their volume can continue to increase. According to Furman, this is precisely the aim of corporate symbioses that follow circular economy and in which production processes are designed to be as sustainable as possible. In other words, circular economy is much more than just the recycling of raw materials. Essentially, it is important to optimise the use of raw material as well as any harm caused by the processes, including emissions from energy consumption and threats to biodiversity.

“However, well-organised recycling does not mean we can consume limitlessly – by generating more and more waste,” says Furman.

She believes that consumers want to know what raw material their daily products, such as toilet paper and paper towels, are made of. Products made of renewable materials, following the principles of sustainability, as well as the quality of products are important factors when deciding what to add to the shopping trolley.

According to Furman, it is the overall sustainability of products and services that counts the most.

The circular economy is much more than just the recycling of raw materials. Essentially, it is important to optimise the use of raw material as well as any harm caused by the processes, including emissions from energy consumption and threats to biodiversity.

“The strength of companies lies in how they use research-based solutions in their production and how transparently they describe the production of their products to consumers, from raw material sourcing to production. The consumer can then make their own informed choice. We are all in the same boat and are building a sustainable future together for all of us, especially for those who continue here after us. We don’t want to leave the problems we created for them to solve, do we?”

As part of Metsä Group, Metsä Tissue has the raw material chain in its own hands. This makes the company unique among European tissue paper suppliers. For example, 100 per cent of the wood used by Metsä Group is traceable, and nearly 90 per cent of it comes from certified sources. The company knows the origin of its wood and ensures that the wood is legal, in addition to ensuring the sustainability and acceptability of the supply chain.



Wood is a source of solutions

Furman considers wood to be one of the most important renewable raw materials for the Finnish bioeconomy. Despite being seemingly plain and simple, wood can serve as a plentiful source of innovation and future solutions. Tissue paper is one of the most familiar and important wood-based everyday products and there are also many other uses for wood. Wood products used in construction, paperboard packages and the new wood-based textile fibres currently under development are some examples of wood-based products of bioeconomy. All of these examples provide opportunities for replacing fossil-based materials.

“Instead of concrete, we can build our houses of wood. Clothes with fibres containing plastic and other oil-based substances could instead be made of bioeconomy-based fibres, such as wood.”



When using renewable raw material, we must ensure that the growth of trees exceeds the volume of felling so that our forest assets continue to grow. To safeguard biodiversity, we need protection as well as ongoing and continuously developing measures in commercial forests. Harvesting must support the protection of forest nature and climate actions, and the use of wood raw material must also be developed in an increasingly efficient direction to satisfy new needs.

At Metsä Group, every part of the tree is used as efficiently as possible, and nothing goes to waste. As the user of this raw material, it is the company's obligation to take sustainability into account in everything it does, and it is something that customers expect as well. Resource efficiency is at the heart of Metsä Group's strategy.

Furman considers wood to be one of the most important renewable raw materials for the Finnish bioeconomy. Despite being seemingly plain and simple, wood can serve as a plentiful source of innovation and future solutions.

From the perspective of sustainability, Furman emphasises the importance of developing solutions to big questions, such as how we move, live, eat, consume in our daily lives, work and spend our free time more sustainably.

“When evaluating the foundations of bioeconomy, we must primarily consider the overall benefits. The wellbeing of humans and the way in which our environment can satisfy our diverse needs must be placed at the centre of this evaluation. Natural systems form the basis for our wellbeing.”

Not giving up but receiving

A sustainable lifestyle is an important goal, but adopting more sustainable consumer habits may seem very complicated at times.

Furman has words of encouragement - change can be positive in many ways.

“We should let go of the idea of having to give up things and focus on what we receive instead.”

Furman believes it is important for consumers to understand that the direction of global development means that human action causes increasingly severe problems to our planet. This also erodes our own wellbeing, since we humans are part of the planet just like any other species.

According to Furman, everyone must take part in this joint effort so that we can break this vicious circle and turn it around. In addition to acting as individual consumers, Furman says we need shared commitment on a wide front.

“We need investments in research and technological development. Companies and the scientific community must encourage one another. In turn, the government and municipalities must inspire and show direction by ensuring adequate financial incentives and subsidies as well as the necessary legislation to steer companies and their operations in a more sustainable direction. After all, Finland is for those who live here, and everyone plays an important role in creating paths together towards greater sustainability.”

Everyone must take part in this joint effort so that we can break this vicious circle and turn it around. In addition to acting as individual consumers, Furman says we need shared commitment on a wide front.

Climate change or the decline in biodiversity are difficult to solve all at once.

“By changing the activities that give rise to these problems, we can quickly achieve positive results, which will effectively contribute to solving the ecological crisis. Instead of big words or empty speech, concrete action is the solution,” says Furman.

This also applies to individual consumers. Different products have different impacts on the natural systems of our planet and on the wellbeing of people. This makes every purchase significant. At the store, this can mean choosing a tissue paper product that has been produced sustainably: locally and from renewable raw materials.

Ultimately, it is a question of the kind of people we want to be.

“It’s not just about the sustainability of our own country, but about taking care of the future of our planet. Do we want to ensure the wellbeing of our children and our grandchildren? Sometimes we need to be reminded that our own actions always affect future generations.”



Professor Eeva Furman works as the Director of the Environmental Policy Centre at the Finnish Environment Institute.



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