

GORIČANE



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Annual meeting of company shareholders in 2021

Tea Rezelj

The annual general meeting of the Goričane, d.d. shareholders was held on June 10, 2021 on the company premises.

The meeting was attended by 98.25% of shareholders with the right to vote.

The shareholders present took note of the 2020 annual report, the auditor's report and the report of the supervisory board.

Mr. Andrej Pagon was again appointed as member of the supervisory board. The members of the workers' council have entrusted Mr. Klemen Burgar with another mandate as their representative in the supervisory board.

The general meeting confirmed all the decisions proposed by the company management.

The company concluded the financial year 2020 with profit.



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Business results in 2021



Text: **Andraž Stegu**

We are ending the year 2021 with mixed feelings. It was exciting, stressful and interesting. The first half of the year faced us with the prices of pulp and some other raw materials going completely wild, and in the second half they were joined by the prices of energy products, so we had to plan our production and sales not only around the general chaotic situation regarding raw materials, but we also had to take into account these variables.

The price of electricity was 60% higher in September than in January. The price of natural gas went up by 71% in the same period. The average purchase price of pulp was 62% higher in September compared to January.

In the first 9 months of the year, we therefore produced 61,848 tons of paper on the slitter, which exceeds the plan by 5.6%, and we sold 42% or 2,386 tons more than planned.

We exported 92.80% of our own products; 50.5% to EU markets and the rest to the markets outside of EU, mainly to Turkey and Israel.

The sales revenues have exceeded our plans by 11.5% but at the same time, the costs of materials increased by 21.3% on the expense side due to the higher purchase prices of raw materials and energy.

At the beginning of October, we unfortunately had a breakdown on the main transformer supplying

the whole paper mill, which cost us three full production days. To avoid subsequently overloading and compromising the other transformer as well, we were forced to ensure continuous operation with an increased consumption of natural gas; however, with the price of natural gas going up at the same time, that ended up having a direct negative effect on our business results. Of course, we could not charge our customers with this expense or we would lose most of our competitive edge.

Due to the high prices of raw materials and energy products, as well as the issues we had in the energy sector, it will be impossible to fully achieve the business plan as was adopted in December 2020. Still, we are planning to end this year with positive numbers.

Dear partners,
thank you for the successful cooperation and professional support in this very unusual year. We hope to maintain and continue such strong partnerships with you in the future as well.

Dear colleagues,
to all of us, I wish a rewarding end of the year, both at work and in our private lives. Let us remain active and committed to our common goals so we can continue proving that we are a successful company with responsible employees.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Enjoy the holidays with your loved ones!

Difficult year full of challenges and new opportunities

This was a year that we will certainly remember for a long time. Not only in the paper industry but in general, it was a year of unusual situations and turbulence which, it seems, do not intend to calm down for quite a while. The beginning of the year seemed rather calm and we all expected it to be similar to the previous year, except of course for certain covid-related restrictions.

After March, however, the prices of raw materials skyrocketed. First it was pulp, followed by all the rest, and now we are also facing a substantial growth in the prices of energy products. The Sales sector actively started increasing prices back in March but the prices of raw materials grew so fast and so steeply that we found it impossible to follow the same trend. During the summer, we pressured our buyers and adjusted the prices on a monthly basis, and even now, before the end of the year, the situation is far from under control.

What we are experiencing now has never happened before, even the most experienced senior papermakers do not remember a similar situation. Six price increases in one year or a total increase of 40%, problems in the supply and distribution chain ... All this proves that it was an extremely difficult year and we needed an enormous amount of patience, deliberation, changes in our sales strategies and adjustments of prices and volumes. Some paper mills have shut off their production of offset and coating papers overnight, thus instigating a fight for additional volumes, but Papermill Goričane is founded on tradition, trust and flexibility, and we intend to continue our work in such spirit. In 2021, we were selling to our existing buyers who were willing to pay for our products at requested prices, and in the meantime, sold a ton or two to new customers hoping they will accept our quality and begin a longer-term partnership with us. Every turbulent period reaches its end at some point and customers typically remember the relationship they had with the paper mill during the crisis. I believe that things will slowly return to normal and we will be able to once again focus on new products, investments etc.

However, we should not overlook the fact that we still managed to extend our product range to new countries and new continents. The first shipments made their way to other African countries and we are currently wrapping up negotiations in Latin America. Our lightweight papers are present in almost all pharmaceutical companies in Europe and elsewhere. By purchasing a ream wrapper, we bought ourselves a ticket to markets where paper is only sold in reams. After a long time, we managed to once again win a tender in the Saudi Arabia and produce 2,500 tons of speciality paper with protective elements.

In 2022, we plan to continue our work similarly but even more actively. We will establish ourselves in new countries, increase our share on existing markets, try to find a new sales agent abroad, and in cooperation with the development sector, make a new product for the food and packaging industry. By committing to our common goals with enthusiasm, we will move in the right direction leading us to a successful future.

Since we are approaching the end of the year, I would like to again use this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from me personally and on behalf of the whole sales and logistics department. We hope you will enjoy the holidays surrounded by those you love the most.

HAPPY 2022!

What do we most often talk about?

The period affected by the virus persistently continues. COVID is probably the most frequently spoken word in the last couple of years. In our production sector, the virus is fortunately kept under control. There were waves that splashed over the edge but with the support of our multitasking colleagues and the production management, we were able to continue operating without interruptions.

What are the words that are most frequently heard in production as well as in our private lives?



SPEED

(definition: rate of motion or progress): a physical fact that we encounter very often. Speed is mostly referred to in superlatives: a way of life that is too fast, aging too fast, driving too fast ... We also have events that are too slow, like a medical treatment or a reaction to something. While traffic speed is usually limited, we want production to work faster and faster. On the paper machine, speed is measured in m/min and our machine has a set speed limit of max. 1000 m/min. If we want to achieve it, we will have to invest in presses and quite a few other adjustments, but for now, the maximum speed of our paper machine is 920 m/min. It very much depends on the paper grade, basic weight, the porosity of base paper and especially the available steam pressure and the paper machine's condition. The target speed is set because it determines production, and production is essential for calculating the cost price. The cost price is the starting price for the Sales sector to form the real sales price. Speed for us is therefore an indicator that dictates production.

Our responsibility is to make sure we produce the planned tons of quality paper in a time unit, but production does not always operate at target speed because it is affected by two other factors - machine's time utilisation and subpar quality of paper, or the so-called broke. And that is how we stumble upon the terms *shutdown and quality*.

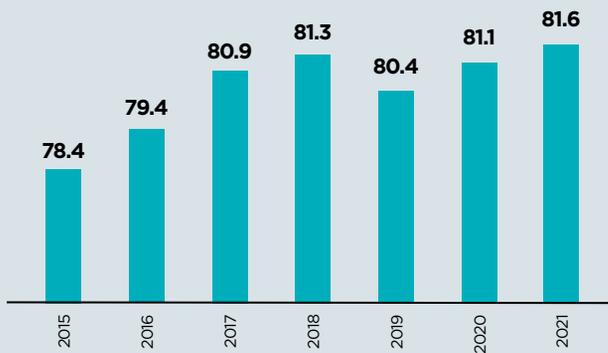


SHUTDOWN

(definition: cease of movement, motion, activity): we hear about shutdowns often as well, though not always with the same terms. In summer months or in bad weather, we see traffic jams, long queues of cars at border crossings, tunnel traffic congestions ... We can have delays in supplies of raw materials or medical equipment, shutdowns in economy ... In medicine, we hear of growth delays, respiratory arrests or even heart arrests. Luckily, production shutdowns have no fatal consequences for people's lives but they do have a very big effect on our efficiency. Shutdowns can be planned or unplanned. We are looking forward to the planned ones because they improve the paper machine's operation. During such shutdowns, we usually implement certain improvements and useful ideas, do some regular maintenance work and replace the machine clothing, and we give the machine a proper wash. You know there is no such thing as too much washing in the paper industry. Planned shutdowns are divided to process shutdowns and maintenance-related shutdowns. It is important to distinguish between the two so we can do a sound analysis and take proper action.

PRODUCTION

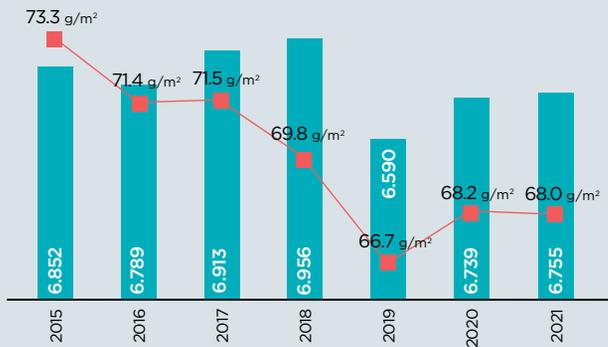
Total capacity utilisation on PM per year [%]



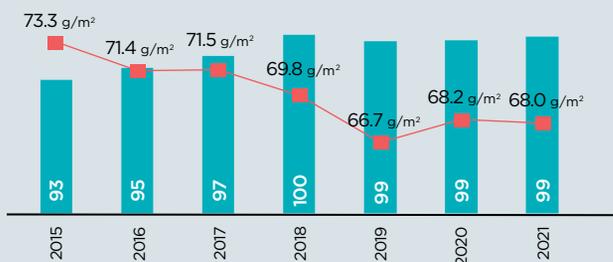
Share of process broke [%]



Net [T] / month in relation to weight [g/m²]



Net [km²] / month in relation to weight [g/m²]



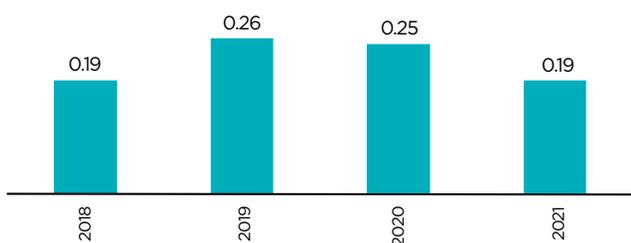
Some of the process shutdowns were substantially narrowed down but others occurred, mainly because of the changes in our production program. These are mainly cleaning and washing required by the program changes, planned washes and unplanned washes caused by holes or an increased number of web breaks.

Q

QUALITY

(definition: the degree of excellence in something): quality is often mentioned in our daily lives. We refer to the quality of goods and services. We are becoming more and more demanding about the quality of the things we buy. If a product purchased is of bad quality, we submit a complaint, and if we buy it online, we can just return it without explanation. We talk about the quality of relationships in the family or at work, about the quality of air, water and food. And if to all that, we add the quality of our work, we have low quality measured by the share of broke and the number of internal and external complaints on one hand, and good quality measured in tons of paper produced on the other. Our goal is to have as little broke as possible because this is paper that does not comply with the internal standard, has mechanical defects or is flawless but treated as broke due to low paper machine capacity utilisation.

Share of complaints (PM + slitter + dr. Roller) [%]



Broke is roughly divided to process broke and sales-related broke. These terms already show who is responsible for the broke to occur in the first place. In production, we mainly deal with process broke, whereas the production planning department can affect the sales-related broke by making correct optimisations. An important factor of process broke is its source, and we always take a close look at that. Most of the broke is still caused by mechanical mistakes on one of the two sources - the paper machine or the slitter. Our slitter has quite a lot of issues, with the configuration itself not being optimal in the first place, so we will soon have to consider investing in a new machine; after all, the one we have now is already 20 years old. The paper machine, on the other hand, has a new RAM 1 measuring frame installed that enables non-contact thickness measurements, so we expect fewer problems. A constantly decreasing number of complaints shows that our quality-related decisions are correct. The volume of broke this year was also very low.

g/m²

GRAMMAGE

(Dictionary of Standard Slovenian Language does not have this word): a term for determining the mass of one square meter of paper. In English, we usually use the common term weight instead. Weight is a very widely-used term; in the paper industry, it is mostly used for paper but also for textiles, adhesives, insulation materials and, last but not least, our machine clothing. This year, the average monthly weight fluctuated quite significantly, caused by the unpredictable market situation. Our plan was for the weight to range between 67 and 68 gsm, which on average we do achieve.

And so we have come to the end of most commonly spoken words in production. If we add concrete numbers from this year, we get production indicators that clearly show 2021 will be a positive year for our sector. The diagrams included here show that the most important factors are improved broke, which is now really low, and total capacity utilisation, which remained on a high level despite the unexpected issues and the scheduled shutdown in October.

The word covid will sooner or later disappear from our lives. Experts say that viruses naturally wear themselves out in a period of two to three years. Our conversations and the words mentioned above, however, will remain for as long as we can see the mighty steam smoke coming out of the paper machine hall. At the same time, we will maintain our responsibility to monitor, adjust, improve and upgrade them on an hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis, thus making sure the story of Papermill Goričane continues.



2021 - the year of raw material shortage

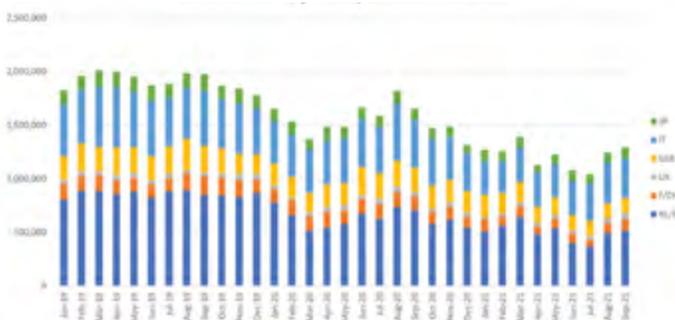
Compared to last year, the situation on the pulp market has changed dramatically. It is just another proof that these things happen in repetitive cycles. Year 2020 was the first time we were faced with an unknown virus and consequently the economy shutting down, which caused the prices of pulp to decrease significantly. By the end of 2020 and in the first quarter of 2021, however, when the industry began to function normally again, we suddenly started to experience unusual price increases and shortages of pulp, recycled materials and other raw materials.

The global crisis, dependency on the Asian market and an increased global demand are causing the increase of raw material and fuel prices, with prices of ship containers together with the increasing costs of road transport only further contributing to the uncertain situation.

With average growth of more than 50%, the prices of softwood and hardwood pulp have reached a record level. In addition, we kept experiencing supply delays or even cancellations from producers caused by force majeure.

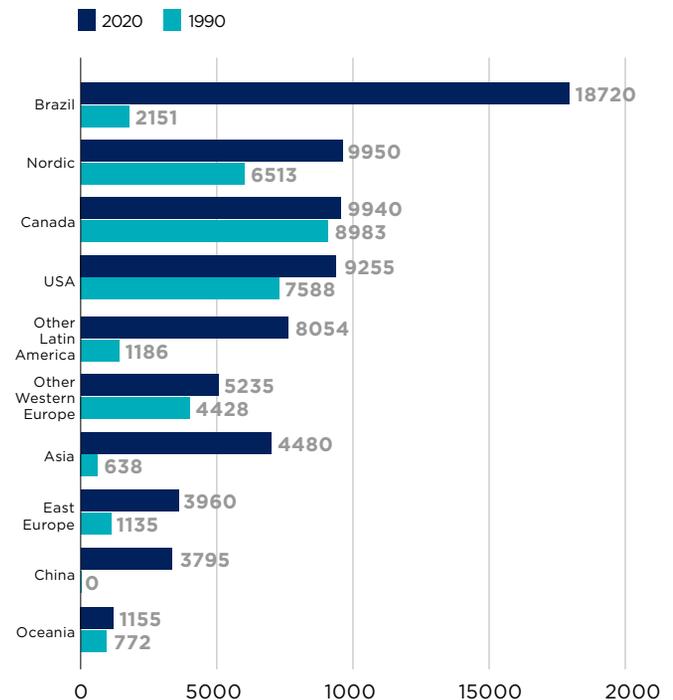
Among other raw materials, the biggest price increases were seen for latex and sizes. And again, there were delays in supply or cancellations due to force majeure. The forecasts for 2022 show that for some raw materials, the prices will keep increasing. We can definitely expect starch to become more expensive because shortages of wheat and corn forced the board and paperboard industry to start using potato starch.

Stocks of Wood Pulp in European Ports



Source: <https://www.europulp.eu/port-inventory-levels/>

Market Pulp Capacity by Key Region/Country



An increase in packaging prices could not be avoided either, however, I should point out that we made a considerable step forward. To protect sheet cut paper, we replaced the 10 mm particle boards with 18 mm ones, and the 5 cm paperboard edge protectors were replaced with wider, 10 cm protectors of white colour.

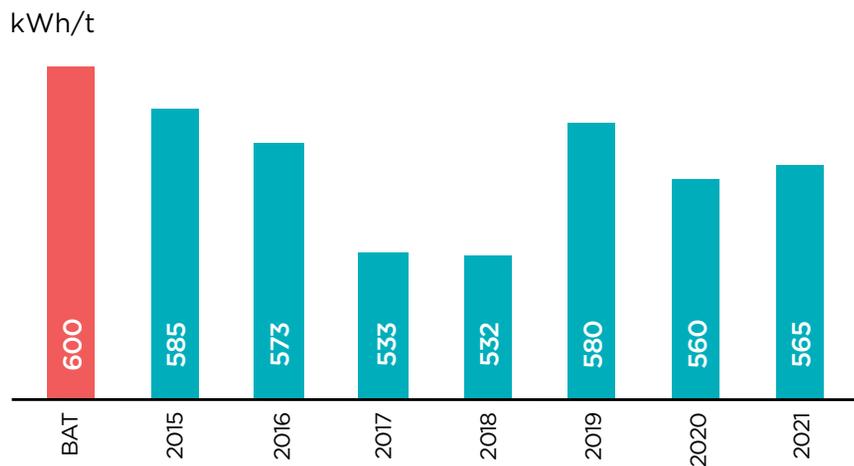
The prices of wood for packaging (pallets) have reached record levels as well. According to the data available, the average price of softwood timber has increased by more than 70% in one year. Wrapping, paperboard tubes and foil are more expensive as well - their prices have increased for 20% and up to more than 65%.

Paper sludge, on the other hand, was not an issue this year, but we are right before concluding a cooperation agreement with another Slovenian sludge contractor. I believe we still have open possibilities here to make a product out of sludge sometime in the future.

With teamwork and close cooperation, we have and will overcome any challenge in the upcoming year.

Role of energy products in paper production

Paper production is a very complex process that, in addition to a wide range of raw materials, also requires substantial energy investments and is thus classified as one of the energy-intensive industries like metal production, cement factories and brick-making plants, production of chemicals and chemical products or pharmaceutical industry.



The main energy products in our production process are electricity and natural gas, and the main consumers of electricity are the electric motors (there are more than 600 of them), the lighting and the heating.

The power rating of electric motors ranges from a few watts to 630 kW. The most powerful electric motors and the biggest consumers of electricity are in stock preparation, on the vacuum system and on the paper machine drives. Part of the lighting system for our 24/7 production process is always in operation but in the last couple of years, we have replaced almost all conventional bulbs and lamps with new, energy-saving ones, which brought down the electricity consumption by approximately 80%.

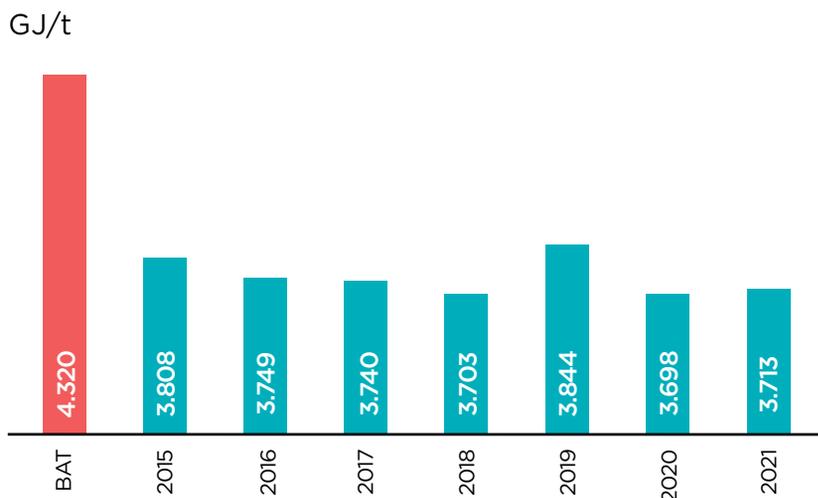
The main consumer of electricity for heating is the pallet packaging line because of the electric heaters installed in the pallet shrink wrap line. The machine only operates during pallet packaging, which takes max. 16 hours a day.

The average electricity consumption in our papermill ranges between 6 MW and 7 MW or about 54,000,000 kWh per year, which is the annual consumption equivalent of about 8,000 households.

The absolute energy consumption, however, is not a good indicator of process efficiency. The efficiency of energy use and consumption is better reflected in the specific consumption per ton of paper produced (kWh/t). Our production is very efficient in this segment due to the specific consumption of electricity being below the BAT target (600 kWh/t–1000 kWh/t) for our production program.

Our energy sector uses natural gas as fuel for steam production in the high-pressure steam boiler WB40 with cogeneration, or the low-pressure steam boiler Bosch. It is also used in production, more specifically on the paper machine IR heaters for direct drying of paper web after the coating aggregate.

The total consumption of natural gas on the annual level is about 130,000,000 kWh when we operate with the block boiler, and a bit higher



if we use cogeneration. In natural gas - and indirectly thermal energy - consumption, the specific consumption of heat per ton of paper produced is again the best indicator of the process efficiency, and this is another segment where we never exceed the BAT targets (4.32 GJ/t-7.56 GJ/t).

The energy expense is the second highest item in production costs. In addition to the price of kWh, it also includes the network tariff, the excise duty, the feed-in tariff, the energy efficiency tariff and the cost of emission coupons, which is why I think I should describe how energy products are traded on energy exchanges.

In the past decade, the price of energy products - in our case electricity and natural gas - on the market was relatively stable, with occasional, fairly "reasonable" ups and downs. Extreme deviations are an exception rather than the rule but if they did happen, they usually lasted for a predictable period of time and were relatively brief.



Diagram 3: Electricity price movement for year ahead (Y+1) for the period of 2010 onwards

Something similar happened in the first half of this year. There were no signs or drastic price fluctuations that would forecast such a tumultuous summer and stormy autumn, but unfortunately a one-way stampede occurred and no one seems to know or explain why.

From June this year, the price of energy on the market for next year has increased by 3 to 4 times, and even by more than 5 times for short-term supplies in 2021.

Whereas in the past, the market prices on the energy exchanges used to fluctuate for a couple of euros at most, we are now seeing multiple price corrections happening within the same day. Some of the biggest one-time corrections were as high as 20 euros, and none of the professionals, analysts or politicians is providing any proper explanation for this price growth. Some say that the situation is caused by the increasing prices of emission coupons (their price was stabilised at about 60 euros but the energy prices kept going up), the lack of wind and sun for renewable resources, the as yet unformed German government and subsequent non-operation of the northern pipeline, the forecasts predicting a severe winter and so on. While we did witness occasional crises on the energy market in the past, nothing like this has happened for decades. For us, the increasing price of energy products in the second half of the year meant that our energy costs were duplicated.

It is difficult or practically impossible to predict the prices for next year, so any forecasts made are just more or less speculative. It is hard to say how long this growth trend will continue, and how long the prices will remain on a certain level. A sudden drop can happen in a second, just like the price increase - or even faster.

In any case, we can expect this year's price growth to have an effect on everyone next year, not just the energy-intensive industries.

THE TRANSFORMER failure incident



In the morning hours of Saturday, October 2, 2021, a power outage occurred at the paper mill. After the crew's initial quick reaction, we organised a visit from the on-call service from Elektro Gorenjska and their inspection confirmed our initial assumption - it was a transformer failure. Subsequent additional inspections determined that there was a phase discharge breakdown on the primary or distribution side. At our paper mill, we have two equally sized, parallel-connected transformers that convert power from 20 kV to 6.3 kV of voltage, which is why this failure cost us half of our power supply.

The situation that occurred prevented us from receiving the sufficient amount of power needed for paper production, so the heads of maintenance and energy sector together made a decision to immediately, on the same day begin the preparations for the startup of electricity and steam cogeneration. That way, the missing power supply would be provided by production on the turbo generator driven by the Wagner Büro steam boiler. The situation on the energy market has not been ideal recently so the old machinery was kept in cold reserve from March 2019. Nevertheless, during this period we took various measures to make sure the beforementioned boiler and other devices that make up the turbo generator were

kept in proper condition. We are aware that in addition to the Bosch steam boiler and purchasing electricity on the market, we also need spare capacity for these types of situations, i.e. failures of the primary energy equipment, but in order to switch from one method of operation to another, we have to take into account that this has to be done gradually and that it takes at least a day.

Regardless of whether the energy sector produces steam and buys the total amount of power needed or operates with cogeneration, the noise we cause and our emissions to the environment do not differ much. The only exception are coproduction startups when we need to overheat the cooled steam lines and the steam turbine or the whole assembly respectively in order to ensure the energy sector to operate safely. In doing that, the increase of noise is caused only by the exhausts of excessive steam from the Wagner Büro steam boiler, where we use a small share of steam to slowly heat up the cold steam turbine. The share of steam for heating up the steam turbine is slowly increased to make sure the turbine is well heated, and then we redirect the whole amount of steam to the turbine, which is when we start operating with cogeneration and at the same time, stop exhausts of steam into the air. The energy sector crew works together as a team. The steam boiler operator and the steam turbine operator align the parameters that allow for a successful power production startup, while at the same time, the switching operator carefully synchronizes the turbo generator with the external power network.

We are aware of our influence on the environment and we make sure to properly schedule our startups, which - despite everything - are actually very rare (once a year or once every 2 years) and always conducted in daytime during the week, but with unexpected failures like this, we do not have much choice. On the beforementioned Saturday, we heated up the steam boiler which was left idle all night specifically to avoid causing too much noise in our surroundings. The process of heating the steam turbine therefore started on Sunday at 6 am in order not to cause any noise during the night before. I have to thank the whole crew because despite the steam boiler, turbine and generator having been inactive for a year and a half before, they managed to start them up with just minor issues and only two hours later than planned.

Text: Maja Šušteršič

Paper for contact with food

Paper products that we use for packaging are often in contact with food. They are designed for direct and indirect contact with food, and can affect the quality of food.

Material safety is covered by two regulations of the European Council that contain the general requirements (Regulation 135/2004/EC and Regulation 2023/2006/EC).

It is important for materials designed for contact with food to be inert enough to prevent their components from penetrating the food in amounts that would represent a health risk, cause composition changes or deteriorate the organoleptic properties. Paper is made of different components. Some of these components are added on purpose to improve the properties of paper, and others are added unintentionally and are mostly present as impurities or by-products, but the unintentionally added components are exactly the ones that most often represent a risk.

How to ensure and prove the suitability of paper for contact with food? Analyses are made based on the composition of paper and its intended use. An external laboratory uses the data and samples received to test the paper. Some compounds should not be present in paper at all, whereas others are allowed in limited amounts. First, the suitability of paper is checked based on the safety data sheets of its raw materials, followed by analyses. Biocides, for example, can be present in limited amounts because they are needed to ensure a stable production process. Different substances in paper may have different reactions when in contact with different foods. Their reaction can be affected by temperature, humidity level etc., which is why the requirements for contact with dry foods differ from the requirements for contact with greasy foods.

There are valid national guidelines and recommendations for materials in contact with food. National legislations differ in listing the compounds that are completely forbidden and compounds that can be present in limited amounts. In Europe, we often refer to the German guidelines BfR XXXVI (orig. Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung), whereas in the United States, food contact safety is regulated by the FDA legislation (Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act).

Analyses can be conducted by any accredited laboratory. One of the generally acclaimed certification laboratories is the German institute ISEGA which issues certificates of compliance for contact with food, valid for two years. For certification that complies with the Italian national legislation, we usually contact different laboratories in Italy.

Our customers are well informed and aware of the importance of safe materials for contact with food, which is why they tend to purchase products with relevant certificates. If we know exactly how our products will be used, we can also ensure proper certification. Any products made by Goričane and intended for contact with food are certified by the ISEGA institute in compliance with the German BfR XXXVI legislation and the American FDA regulations.

Quite a few analyses are usually needed to determine the suitability of a specific material. Here are the analyses for three separate products that affect the limitations of contact with foods:

- **SORA tea pack: for direct contact with dry and greasy food**

This paper is used for tea bags so it is important that it does not have any specific scent or effect on the taste of food. The paper is subjected to a sensory test of scent, done by six assessors. The indirect effect on the taste is also tested by six assessors. They determine if the presence of paper affected the taste of chocolate which was stored in the same container as paper for 44-48 hours.

- **SORA silico epc: for direct contact with dry, wet and greasy food**

This paper is also used for contact with wet food so it cannot contain any optical brighteners. The test is conducted with UV radiation, which determines the presence of optically brightened fibers, and if undetected, the paper is approved for contact with wet food.

- **SORA barrier: for direct contact with dry, wet and greasy food**

This paper contains a wet strength agent that has DCP (1,3-dichloro-2-propanol) and MCPD (3-monochloro-1,2-propanediol) compounds present as impurities. They are the by-products of wet strength agent production, which is why they have a limited content in paper as end product. For contact with greasy food, the DCP content has to be below 2 mg/l, and the MCPD content has to be below 12 mg/l of aqueous extract.

All valid certificates for our products can be found on our web site: www.goricane.si.

Text: Jerneja Pečnik, Urban Svoljšak

New control methods in the development of barrier papers

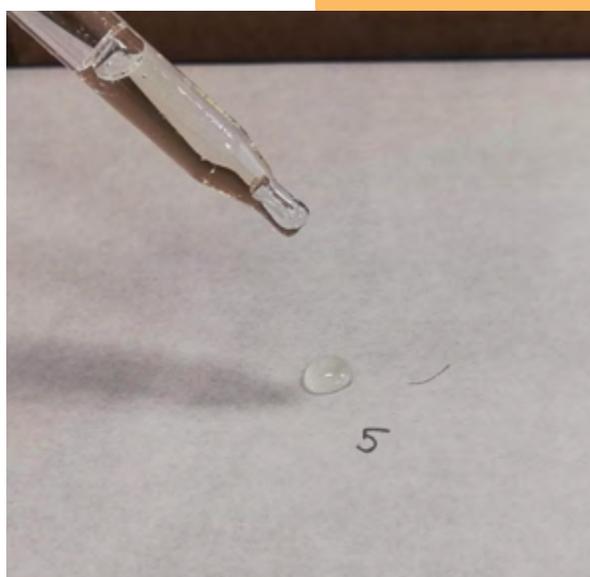
In 2021, we successfully launched two new products on the market - packaging papers SORA barrier GO WS KIT 5 and KIT 8 that contain a chemical grease-resistant barrier on the basis of fluorine chemicals. The regulation changes planned for 2023 will terminate the use of fluorine compounds for barrier purposes, so this year we were actively developing, both on the industrial and the laboratory level, a physical oil and a grease-resistant barrier without the added fluorine compounds, and we named the new paper SORA barrier ECO GO WS.

Among other things, new papers can be developed successfully if subjected to suitable control methods. The KIT test is used for chemical barriers based on fluorine chemicals. It is a standard method (TAPPI 559) for determining the grease resistance of paper, based on castor oil. The assessment uses a set of 12 solutions with different contents of castor oil, toluene and heptane, used to simulate the different levels of oil absorption into paper. The higher the KIT value is, the stronger is the paper's resistance to oil and grease. To perform the test, we add a drop of a specific solution to the surface of the paper, wait 15 seconds and then wipe it off. If it leaves no trace, we repeat the same steps with a solution of a higher rank until we see a trace.

In developing a physical barrier resistant to oil and grease, we soon realized that the existing control method using a KIT test is not sufficient. The KIT test determines the level of surface resistance because treating the paper surface with fluorochemicals reduces the surface energy and thus ensures the oleophobicity and hydrophobicity of the surface.

However, with a physical barrier there is no chemical interaction, it is about the physical resistance of oil and grease, which can be secured with a proper structure of the coating on the paper surface, leaving no pores or holes that would allow oil and grease to penetrate into paper.

The KIT test failed to achieve a suitable quality detection on our coatings, which is why we developed our own control method that involves the most commonly used types of oil and grease in gastronomy, e.g. olive oil, sunflower oil and butter. The method is very simple. We apply the oil and grease, wipe it off after a certain amount of time, and on the same spot assess the intensity of absorption.





The standard method ISO 16532-1 (Determination of grease resistance) is very useful as well; we use it to determine the ability of paper to resist the penetration of standard palm oil into paper under certain pressure and in a certain period of time. Barrier paper is coated with red-stained palm oil of a specifically defined composition and viscosity at a certain temperature. We use a stencil of prescribed dimensions, which ensures a uniform layer of palm oil. The test is then performed with a 50 gram weight placed on the grease, which helps us simulate the pressure of greasy food on the surface of paper.

A very important role in the development of barrier papers is played by the quality of the paper base, which is defined by the choice of fibres, refining, wet-end chemism and the conditions of paper formation on the fourdrinier wire of the paper machine. In addition to other traditional control methods, we also implemented a new method for evaluating paper formation which, up until last year, had been assessed only visually. The visual assessment is a subjective approach, so we upgraded formation evaluation with a newly acquired LAB 2D Formation Sensor device manufactured by Techpap. This device uses a regulated pulsating stroboscopic light to permeate through a sheet of paper, and then applies algorithms to calculate the formation index and the floc size distribution.



Text: Jerneja Pečnik, Matic Zibelnik

FAN SEPARATOR

efficient dewatering of waste paper sludge

For years, sustainable development has been an established concept in production, including the paper industry, which is why waste management plays an important role; it is becoming one of the main requirements not only from the environmental but also from the economical and social perspectives.

With the construction of a biological wastewater treatment plant that operates on the principle of aerobic biofiltration, the quality of water from the primary section of the plant has become extremely important. In the primary section, we had to ensure regular removal of primary sludge both from the

pyramids of the settling tank and from the thickener to prevent the occurrence of anaerobic microorganisms. However, sludge dewatering was conducted only five days a week in the mornings so after a while, the water started to emit an unpleasant smell and the sludge level in the sedimentation tank began to increase. To solve the issue, we had to find a method of uninterrupted sludge dewatering without the presence of an operator, which was not possible with the previous dewatering machine.



FAN Separator

We had a belt filter press that we used for paper sludge dewatering, but the dry content of the extracted sludge was low (approx. 25%). In 2021, we therefore invested in two new FAN Separator dewatering machines which combine two methods of separating the solid-liquid suspension because they are based on separating the suspension on a wire and a screw press.



Dewatering machine (new barrier)



Paper sludge from FAN Separator

The advantage of using a FAN Separator is that the share of dry outcoming content can be adjusted with a patented output regulator that allows us to achieve a high share of dry content (up to 55%) in extracted sludge. The increase of paper sludge dry content from 25% to 55% will significantly lower the costs of waste management.

To achieve a high dry content in extracted sludge, the incoming suspension's concentration has to be as high as possible. The previous method of thickening the paper sludge suspension failed to ensure interrupted sludge dewatering so this year, we built a partition wall to divide the thickener in two parts. We implemented alternating filling and emptying of both segments. While one segment is being filled with sludge from the pyramids with a very low concentration, the suspension in the other segment settles first and after a while, the upper layer of water is pumped back into the primary section. That way we can quickly achieve a 6% concentration in the thickener. If all the conditions in the thickener are met, the FAN Separator can automatically switch itself on or off once the level of sludge in the thickener falls below the target value.

For now, we cannot ensure uninterrupted dewatering of paper sludge because we are currently collecting the extracted sludge on a smaller tractor trailer that does not have enough space to accommodate whole-day dewatering. Therefore, the dewatering is only done in the mornings when the water plant operator repeatedly brings the tractor to and from an open platform serving as a temporary storage for paper sludge.

For uninterrupted dewatering, we have to provide the option of storing the extracted sludge for several days in a covered area so we can retain a high dry content even in the rain. In 2022, we will therefore move the dewatering machines to a logistically more suitable location.

Text: Robert Štifter

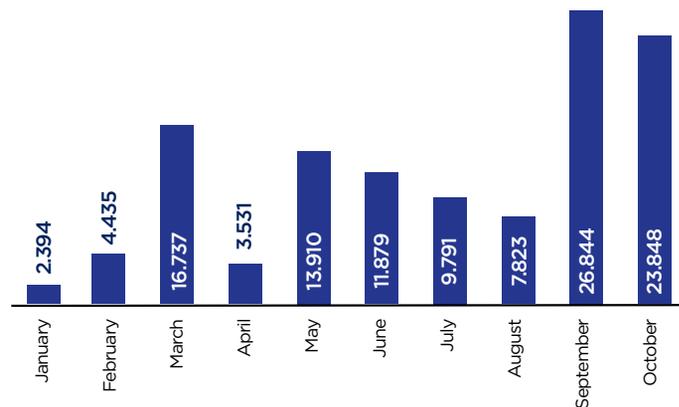
Ream wrapper in the Finishing sector

At the end of 2020, an increased number of orders for paper packed in reams motivated us to start thinking about purchasing a machine that would facilitate the job of ream wrapping.

There are several different wrapper producers on the market but because of the characteristics and qualities of the machines it manufactures, Bielomatik definitely stands out.

New machines can cost up to half a million euros or more though, so when we had the opportunity to buy a used machine, we seized it.

Number of reams wrapped per month in 2021



A Swiss company was offering a Bielomatik wrapper FSW 500/56B, model 2004, and its specifics suited our needs really well. The machine was in a very good condition and available for a significantly lower price than other comparable new machines on the market, so we decided to buy it.

We quickly found a suitable place for it, prepared the terrain for its installment, and on January 8, 2021, it was transported from Switzerland to Goričane.

We immediately began with activities for installing the machine that arrived in five separate major segments:

- the clamping section for wrapping paper - roll,
- the wrapping part of the machine, where a ream is formed and wrapped,
- the transporting section with conveyor belts that take care of wrapped ream bonding,
- both lifting tables (for the incoming and outgoing pallets with paper),
- electric cabinets with corresponding installations.

At the end of January, the wrapper was installed but we still had to perform the more demanding part of installations, connect the machine into the power grid and the compressed air network, and then start it up and run a trial. We did that with the help of a startup technician from the manufacturer's parent company, who took care of the system's operation and trained the employees that will operate the machine.

We decided to have a team of two employees that will operate the machine - one of them oversees the input of paper reams, and the other makes sure that the conveyor belts are operating smoothly, the wrapped reams are properly labelled and then transported, and a new pallet is ready on time. The team has to work in complete coordination at all times.

I need to point out that the ream wrapper significantly improved the quality of paper wrapped in reams, and especially increased the monthly quota of quality wrapped reams.

We used to wrap the reams manually on wrapping tables, which is why we never exceeded 5,000 wrapped reams in one month. With the new acquisition, however, these numbers are considerably higher, although of course they depend on the amount of orders from our buyers.

To illustrate the quantities, see the diagram, showing the number of reams wrapped per month in 2021. In months 9 and 10, more than 26,000 (in September) and almost 24,000 (in October) reams were wrapped and prepared for transport, which is quite an achievement.

The wrapper has thus proved to be an excellent choice and an efficient replacement for manual wrapping, and it also took an enormous load off our employees who used to manually wrap the reams before.

Text: **Jože Malej**

NEW IT EQUIPMENT for fixed assets inventory management

Our hardware and software were becoming outdated and we had more and more problems with inventories of fixed assets, so last year we decided to invest in IT equipment replacement and upgrading.

After 20 years of use, the portable terminal and printer were no longer compliant with the requirements of the new Navision business-information system. It became increasingly difficult to get spare parts or help with repairs of such outdated equipment, and at some point our contractual partner terminated the software support as well due to Windows being removed from mobile devices and the development of Android applications.

We continue our partnership with Špica, the leading provider of asset management software on the Slovenian market. The system they developed themselves is also the most widely used solution in Slovenia. They kept the basic functionalities from previous versions and added several new ones.

The software solution is actually an intermediary between the portable terminal or the barcode scanner and the ERP information system, so we had to sync it with Navision which we use to keep an organisational and accounting record of fixed assets inventory.

The first test of the new equipment was completed smoothly during the inventory itself, which was followed by the transfer and further processing of data in the business-information system.



Old and new IT equipment.



SORA

QUALITY
PAPER
by GORIČANE

Redesign of the Goričane company logo and the Sora trademark

This year, we decided to redesign the Goričane company logo and our SORA trademark.

A trademark is an industrial property right for protecting any type of symbol or combination of symbols that can be presented graphically and that in trade, allow for identical or similar products and services owned by one company to be distinguished from products or services owned by another company. A trademark can be composed of words, letters, numbers, figurative elements, tridimensional images or combinations of colours.

The SORA trademark has become a synonym for our paper so this year, we decided to give it a new, modern design that will symbolise the content it represents.

The letter O in SORA represents the rotating roll of the paper machine or the final appearance of the product - a reel of paper.

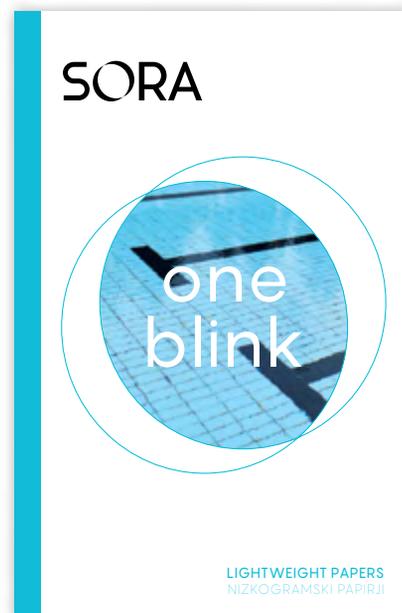
For company logo GORIČANE we removed the sigh in front of the inscription.

The redesign of the trademark and the logo also means that we have to make changes in the documents we use in our work. To emphasise - deliberate, consistent and correct use of logos is an important part of a company's internal and external communication. It is a reflection of respect towards the trademark and the company it represents, so it is

essential for all employees to know that following the guidelines on how to use these symbols is of significant importance for the company and its employees.

To ensure proper representation of our SORA products, we have prepared materials for the publication of a new lightweight papers product catalogue named SORA One Blink, which is currently being printed and includes the whole range of the lightweight paper grades that we produce.

In the beginning of 2022, we also plan to launch our updated website, www.goricane.si.



Environmental Report

Introduction

In 2020 and in the first six months of 2021, Papermill Goričane met all the legislative requirements concerning emissions to the environment as required by the environmental permit for waste water, emissions to air and emissions of noise into the environment.

In 2020, we started a trial operation of the biological wastewater treatment plant, which continues in 2021 as well. Also in 2020, we conducted a separate treatment of waste water from the biological treatment plant, and in 2021, an investment is being made into a continuous process of dewatering paper and biological sludge by means of a screw press. In addition to a higher concentration of extracted sludge, this dewatering method will also allow us to regularly remove the paper sludge from the primary section even in the afternoons, at night, at weekends and on bank holidays.

MATERIAL LOSS

WATER CONSUMPTION

Use of natural resources

The rational consumption of natural resources is measured with the index of material loss from the production process. Material loss calculated on the wastewater treatment plant is based on the amount of extracted sludge, and remains increased in 2021 as well - its level exceeds the target value of 0.7 and amounts to 0.82.

The consumption of well water for cooling purposes depends on the time of operation of individual boilers, Bosch and Wagner, which require different amounts of cooling water for their operation. Water used for cooling purposes by the Bosch steam boiler is treated as waste process water in the production process, whereas in the case of cogeneration and power generation, cooling water is treated as process water in thermal power plants. In the production process, we open the water loop containing waste cooling water from the Energy sector in order to keep any organic charges of waste process water within set limits.

In 2021, the same as in the year before, the consumption of fresh well water was slightly higher than the previous years due to the opening of the water loop in production. The specific consumption of water per net production amounted to 16 m³/ton and exceeded the BAT value (15 m³/ton), so we are still very far from the goal of 10 m³/ton of net production.

TABLE 1: Average material loss from production process

Indicator	Goal	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 / 1st half year
% (calculation per gross production)	0.7	0.75	0.68	0.61	0.87	0.81	0.82

TABLE 2: Consumption of energy products

Indicator	Goal	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 / 1st half year
Fresh water (water wells) 1000 m ³		2,463	2,163	1,851	1,982	1,606	859
Fresh water (cooling in the power station) 1000 m ³		1,279 <small>(cooling as thermal power plant)</small>	875 <small>(cooling as thermal power plant)</small>	552 <small>(cooling as thermal power plant)</small>	506 <small>(cooling as thermal power plant)</small>	0 <small>(cooling as thermal power plant)</small>	0 <small>(cooling as thermal power plant)</small>
		19 <small>(cooling as technological purposes)</small>	237 <small>(cooling as technological purposes)</small>	1,299 <small>(cooling as technological purposes)</small>	1,429 <small>(cooling as technological purposes)</small>	1,562 <small>(cooling as technological purposes)</small>	109 <small>(cooling as technological purposes)</small>
Fresh water (technological purpose, paper production) 1000 m ³		1,164	1,051	1,127	1,278	1,255	750
Spec. consumption of process water m ³ /net ton	10 (BAT 15)	14.3	12.7	13.5	16.2	15.4	16

TABLE 2: Consumption of energy products

ENERGY CONSUMPTION	Indicator	Goal	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 / 1st half year
	Natural gas 1.000 Sm ³		12,510	12,110	11,713	11,386	10,632	5,471
	Electricity purchased MWh		44,143	45,768	48,303	48,820	52,628	26,723
	Net consumption of electricity Net MWh/ton	0.7 to 0.9	0.627	0.624	0.625	0.671	0.646	0.567
	Net consumption of thermal energy GJ/ton	7 to 8	3.76	3.74	3.71	3.525	3.686	3.211

The energy efficiency of our production process in 2021 is again on a high level, resulting in low electricity and heat specific consumption in comparison with the BAT techniques.

Emissions

TO AIR

Emissions to air are caused during steam production as well as during paper drying and cutting. The monitoring of emissions to air is stipulated by the environmental permit and has to be conducted by an accredited external institution every third year for boiler devices and every fifth year for dust collectors. We have two medium-sized combustion plants with separate emissions to air - the Bosch steam boiler (metal chimney) and the Wagner steam boiler with electricity cogeneration (concrete chimney). With the new Decree on the Emission of Substances Into the Atmosphere from Medium-sized Combustion Plants, Gas Turbines and Stationary Engines

(OG RS 17/18), a target NO_x value of 200 mg/m³ and a mandatory annual monitoring apply to any device older than 27 years. The Bosch steam boiler is a newer combustion plant that falls under the required target values of under 150 mg NO_x/m³ of air, and a mandatory monitoring conducted once every three years.

This year, we already performed a monitoring on the Bosch boiler and confirmed compliance with the legislative targets. The rest of the mandatory measurements on the Wagner boiler and dust collectors will be conducted before the end of the year.

TO WATER

Before being discharged to the water course, process waste water is treated on the mechanical-chemical wastewater treatment plant. The 2021 monitoring shows compliance with the environmental permit requirements.

TABLE 3: EMISSIONS TO AIR

	Indicator	Environmental permit	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Emissions to air (Bosch boiler)	NO _x mg/m ³	150	72***	72***	68*****	68*****	68*****	60*****
Emissions to air (Wagner boiler)	NO _x mg/m ³	200	163****	163****	156*****	156*****	Non-operational	To be conducted before end of year
All emissions	Dust mg/m ³	150	11**	11**	8*****	8*****	8*****	To be conducted before end of year

first measurements of emissions to air on the Bosch steam boiler *monitoring 2016 *****monitoring 2018 *****monitoring 2021

TABLE 4: Emissions to water

Emissions to water	Indicator	Environmental permit (targets after 1. 1. 2013)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 / 1. polletje
Suspended solids	mg/l		8.2	6.7	9.8	12.5	8.5	10.2
	kg/t	0.4	0.10	0.1	0.12	0.17	0.11	0.18
COD	mg/l		95.2	76.3	65.4	76.7	60.5	52
	kg/t	4**	1.23	0.98	0.81	1.04	0.79	0.91
BOD ₅	mg/l	25**	17	12	9.3	13.1	8.2	6.8
	kg/t	0.5	0.22	0.15	0.12	0.18	0.12	0.12
N tot	mg/l		4.3	4.0	3.8	4.7	3.9	3.1
	kg/t	0.2	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.054	0.06
P tot	mg/l		0.07	0.09	0.09	0.034	0.11	0.173
	kg/t	0.01	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.005	0.0015	0.0034
AOX	mg/l		0.11	0.12	0.11	0.13	0.09	0.069
	kg/t	0.005	0.0013	0.0015	0.0014	0.0017	0.0013	0.0012

** target is defined for production with more than one production programme change a day

Noise

In accordance with the environmental permit, noise monitoring is conducted every third year by an accredited external institution. At the end of 2019, the level of noise was measured on three locations in the vicinity of the papermill. It was below the maximum permitted target for daytime and evening time, whereas the measurements for nighttime were within the legislative requirements in two measurement spots, and exceeded the maximum permitted value (which is 48 dB) by 3 dB on the third one.

To eliminate this non-compliance, we ordered new silencers and installed them in spring 2020. A repeated monitoring confirmed that the non-compliances are successfully removed. The level of noise during nighttime was now below the legislative target of 48 dB.

The next monitoring of noise emissions is scheduled for 2022.

Waste

Papermill Goričane has a well-established system of separating waste at its source - we have smaller containers for separate types of waste being disposed of by our employees on a daily basis. There are waste disposal units available with separate containers for different types of waste. In 2021, waste packaging management was contractually arranged with Dinos company.

TABLE 5: Waste generated on the premises of Goričane, d.d.

	Indicator	Waste management plan	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021-1st half year
Paper sludge	tons	1,600	1,809	1,769	1,494	2,058	2,969	553
Municipal waste	tons	35	30	31	34	30	32.5	23
Paper packaging	tons	600	397	500	579	702	982	506
Metal packaging	tons	130	151	120	138	134	141	60
Plastic packaging	tons	40	19	23	20.4	19.5	14.8	3.3
Composite packaging	tons						18.8	12.2
Wood packaging	tons	50	53	37	43.8	37	67	23

Hazardous substance management

In hazardous substance management, our well-kept and regularly maintained storage tanks and pumpings enabled us to retain a low risk rate. We have an established plan of hazardous chemicals management which lists all the activities that are necessary in order to harmonise our operations with the legislation. Our employees are being regularly trained for hazardous substance management and the course of conduct in cases of accidental spillage of hazardous substances.

In 2017, 2018 and 2020, an accredited institution conducted an inspection of storage facilities containing hazardous chemicals. The certificates issued to confirm legislative compliance of storage facilities operation are included in the report on inspecting the technical measures for preventing soil and groundwater pollution.

Exceptional events

No exceptional environment-related events were recorded in 2020. In 2021, however, we received a complaint from the local residents, reporting increased noise due to the safety releases of steam caused by the transformer breakdown in the Energy sector.

Environmental goals and projects

The company management regularly reviews the environmental aspects and potential risks, and implements projects to achieve the environmental goals.

Text: Petra Hunjadi

A VISIT FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Paper is one of the most widely-used materials. It is impossible to imagine life without it. Many tools and products are made of paper and they even make furniture from recycled paper.

Even though nowadays paper is produced on a machine, it used to be made manually.

Since paper is one of the topics covered in the 6th grade of Slovenian primary schools, we decided to invite the children to our paper mill and show them how we manufacture paper on an industrial level.

After the introduction in the conference room, they visited the pulping sector and then the stock preparation where pulp is refined. They continued to the paper machine where we make and dry paper, after which they were shown the slitter, the finishing sector where paper is cut, and the end product



storage hall where it "waits" to be transported to the buyer.

The children were very curious and eager to learn, and the girls especially loved the laboratory.





INTERVIEW:

Samir Tabaković

In a nutshell, what would you tell us about yourself?

I am married and I have two children. I am an adaptable, positive and very communicative person and I like to accept new tasks and challenges.

When did you get a job at Goričane, which work position do you hold and what are your responsibilities?

I got a job at Goričane in June 2017, first as an assistant to the sheet cutter operator. After two years, I was promoted to the position of the head sheet cutter operator. Operating the cutter, I have to pay attention to control methods such as measuring the format angle and dimension, as well as controlling humidity and temperature, for which I use a special measuring device. I am constantly monitoring quality and checking the mechanical properties of sheet cut paper. If I notice any flaws in paper, such as creases, canals etc., I have to take care of proper removal or classification of paper.

Where did you first hear of Papermill Goričane? Have you already known about it at that point? In your opinion, what is it most known for?

I learned about Goričane while working for my former employer because we were doing some construction work for the papermill. It is well known for papermaking.

Are there any specific sectors within the papermill that you often work closely with?

We mainly cooperate with the production sector.

What about your work motivates you the most?

In my opinion, teamwork is the best motivator.



What convinced you to accept a position at Papermill Goričane?

A new work environment and a desire for new challenges.

What are your favourite hobbies, what do you do in your free time?

Cycling is my biggest passion. I can do up to 5000 km a year on various routes across Slovenia and our neighbouring countries. I also like hiking.

What is your ideal work environment?

An environment that prioritises professional and positive relationships.

What are your best qualities?

I am energetic and have a generally positive approach to my work and my colleagues.

Your favourite book?

Kolesarske poti po Sloveniji (Cycling Routes Across Slovenia).

Favourite website?

Avto.net.



INTERVIEW:

Urban Svoljšak

Are there any specific sectors within the papermill that you often work closely with?

We collaborate with the laboratory and production sector a lot. If a laboratory trial is successful and approved by the management, it is transferred to the industrial level where we work closely with production to test new raw materials or papers being developed.

What about your work motivates you the most?

I am motivated to develop coating mixtures that would not cause any issues on the paper machine and would at the same time ensure a high-quality product.

What convinced you to accept a position at Papermill Goričane?

My father worked here for 20 years so he was very happy for me when I got this job. I did not know much about paper before so it is interesting to learn how much technology there actually is behind every sheet of paper.

What are your favourite hobbies, what do you do in your free time?

I used to train road cycling in my youth, and now it is just a hobby. In the winter I like to hike. But my favorite is spending time at the seaside.

What is your ideal work environment?

It is important to have a relaxed environment at the laboratory, otherwise we can quickly make unnecessary mistakes. Industrial trials require a good team spirit and mutual trust if we want to successfully complete the tests.

What are your best qualities?

I am kind, honest and friendly, and I like to work for the common good.

In a nutshell, what would you tell us about yourself?

My name is Urban Svoljšak and I am 26 years old. I come from the village of Svetje. I studied Chemical Engineering at the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology at the University of Ljubljana.

When did you get a job at Goričane, which work position do you hold and what are your responsibilities?

I started in April 2020 as a technologist in development. My work assignments include developing new standard coating mixtures or improving existing ones, solving issues caused by coating mixtures, testing new raw materials, contacting suppliers of raw materials, as well as revising and updating the technical norms.

Where did you first hear of Papermill Goričane? Have you already known about it at that point?

I have known Papermill Goričane since I was a child because I live nearby. When I started working here, I got to learn more about its products and paper in general.

In your opinion, what is it most known for?

Around here it is known for its long tradition and history, and it has always been a popular place of employment for many locals.



In a nutshell, what would you tell us about yourself?

I am 27 years old and I come from Dolenja vas near Polhov Gradec. I would describe myself as an honest, hard-working and kind person, and I like to spend my free time doing many different sports, hanging out with friends and traveling. At the beginning of the year, I completed my Master's Degree in Chemical Engineering from the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology at the University of Ljubljana.

When did you get a job at Goričane, which work position do you hold and what are your responsibilities?

I started in March this year, when I got a job at Goričane as a technologist in development. My work assignments are mostly focused on the paper machine, where the main goal is to learn the details of the so-called wet-end section, but they also include the wastewater treatment plant, its maintenance and efficient operation, which is why I am attending a training course on the topic of maintaining wastewater treatment plants.



INTERVIEW:

Matic Zibelnik

Where did you first hear of Papermill Goričane? Have you already known about it at that point? In your opinion, what is it most known for?

I have first learned about the papermill online. It is known for its history and quality - after all, SORA papers are available in many globally developed markets.

Are there any specific sectors within the papermill that you often work closely with?

As a technologist in development, I'm involved in many different tasks - from wet-strength paper pulping to analyzing coating mixtures, performing tests on the wastewater treatment plant and more. It is difficult to point out just one sector because as a technologist, I collaborate with maintenance, production, laboratory, purchasing, sales and the wastewater treatment plant operator.

What about your work motivates you the most?

I am motivated by a desire to learn and improve and luckily, my job allows me to work closely with numerous colleagues who can teach me a lot.

What convinced you to accept a position at Papermill Goričane?

A pleasant work environment and a stable schedule.

What are your favourite hobbies, what do you do in your free time?

Most of my time off is spent doing different sports like football, cycling and basketball. In the summer, I often take my four-legged friend on hikes to the mountains, and in the winter I like to ski on nearby slopes.

What is your ideal work environment?

My ideal work environment is a well-established environment where all employees work with each other and help each other. The possibility to improve yourself and get promoted is a welcome option as well.

What are your best qualities?

Perseverance, kindness and being a hard worker.

Text: **Andreja Kalan**

RETIREMENTS IN 2021

So far, nine employees have retired this year:

Zuhdija Abdić, Refik Joldžić, Mirsad Samardžić, Ismet Korać, Dragan Barukčić, Andrej Krajnc, Martin Kopač, Janez Zor and Kasim Avdić.

ANNIVERSARIES IN 2021

Just like before, long-time service awards for loyalty to the company were presented to some of our colleagues.

For **20 years** of employment:

Tea Rezelj, Ivan Žerovnik and Aleš Žganjar.

For **10 years** of employment:

Zora Antić, Andreja Kalan, Klemen Škofic, Borut Masle, Tome Atanasov, Tomaž Tratnik and Boštjan Perić.

Thank you, everyone!

NEW FAMILY MEMBERS OF OUR COLLEAGUES

New family members were welcomed by the following employees:

Daniel Dolderer (daughter Niki), Martina Frlan (daughter Lucija), Vanda Stenovec (son Nik), Anja Žerovnik (daughter Lucija), Tim Poljanc (son Jan), Klemen Kopač (son Žiga), Almin Čerimović (daughter Džana), Semir Duranović (daughter Anaya).

Congratulations!

KOC - Competence center for human resources

Education - and with that, the continual learning and improvement of skills and capabilities, has become a necessity in today's world. The desire for success, survival and competitiveness drives us to adjust quickly and follow the trends.

With education and training, we can gain additional skills and competences that are necessary not only for our personal growth but also as professional knowledge that can be applied to our jobs.

At Goričane, we are regularly following these trends. In 2019, we applied for the project KOC HRANA 2 (COC Food 2) in joint cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund of the Republic of Slovenia, and got selected. The project took place from October 2019 to October 2021.

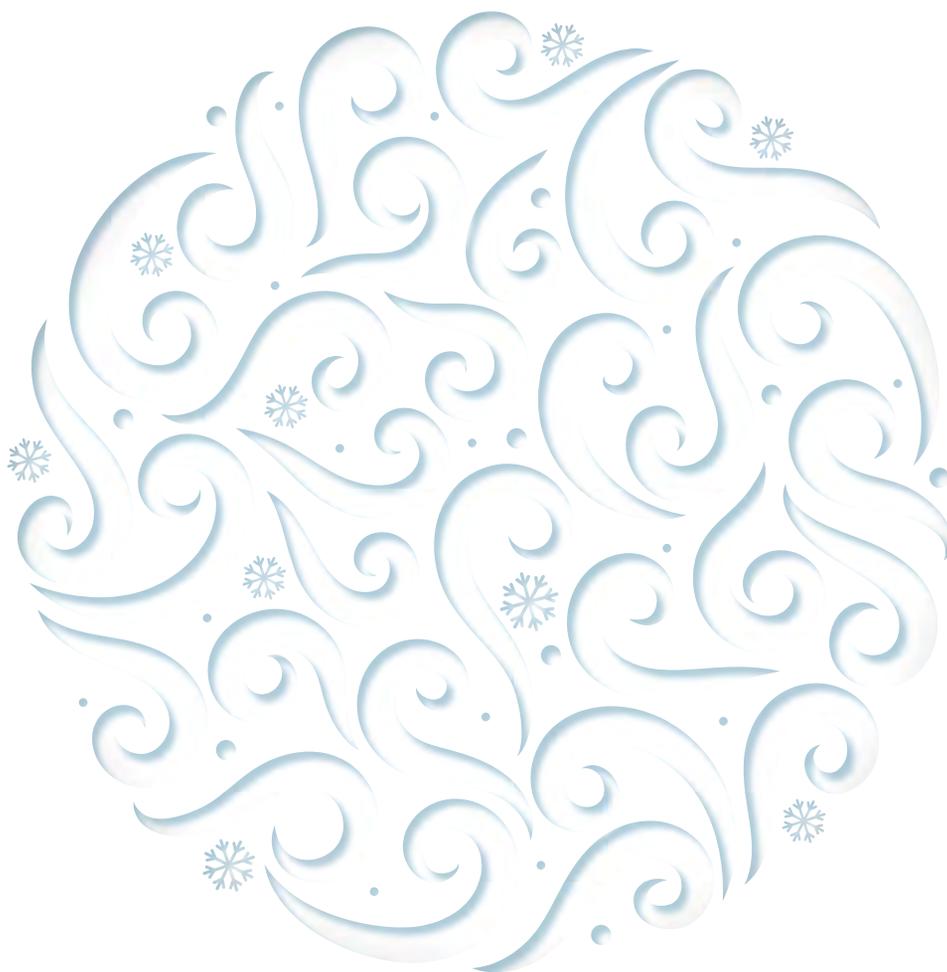
Unfortunately, last year's and this year's measures for containing the epidemic have also limited the number of seminars and conferences, with many events having been cancelled or postponed. Despite the situation, the organizers of seminars and events quickly adjusted to the new reality and we were able to attend many of the events online.

Our participation in the project provided us with partial reimbursement of resources for selected training courses.

The main goals of the project were:

- to improve the key competences of employees and thus increase their flexibility, employability and efficiency,
- to strengthen the awareness of employees and employers of the need for a lifelong approach to learning,
- to strengthen business connections and networking, and to transfer good practices in human resource development,
- to strengthen the competitiveness and innovativeness of Slovenian economy,
- to promote the scope of application as defined in S4 (Smart Specialization Strategies for Sustainability), and information and communication technology as a horizontal priority area.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2022**



GORIČANE