
U.S. Book Industry Climate Impacts and Environmental Responsibility Benchmarking Survey

PROJECT INFORMATION

Introduction

The Book Industry Study Group (BISG) and Green Press Initiative (GPI) are working together, with support from a number of industry sponsors, to produce a benchmarking survey which will establish a baseline for tracking climate impacts and progress by the U.S. book industry in environmental improvements.

Project background

As consumers of roughly 1.2 million tons of varying grades of paper per year, book industry organizations interested in improving the environmental impacts of their industry are setting goals and implementing policies that create positive changes throughout the supply chain from the publisher to the printer to the mill to the forest. The result is that the book industry is reaching a "tipping point" with 130 publishers, 8 printers, and 2 paper manufacturers that either have meaningful paper policies in place or have signed the *Book Industry Treatise on Responsible Paper* (see <http://greenpressinitiative.org/industrytreatise.htm>). Two large publishers: Random House and recently Scholastic have made public commitments along these lines. As book industry stakeholders continue to take formal and meaningful steps towards using responsible paper, these trends will continue. In view of these developments, BISG and GPI believe it is the appropriate time to begin to track industry progress in environmental improvements by conducting the first benchmarking survey of the US industry.

Project scope

The environmental benchmarking survey will seek to:

1. Track shifts in tonnage of fiber including various eco attributes such as post and pre-consumer recycled fiber, FSC- certified, other Chain of Custody (COC) certified fiber, bleaching process and alternative fiber through 2004 -2006.
2. Track linkages between book paper and impacts on endangered and high conservation value forests as well as impacts on indigenous and local communities
3. Extrapolate industry climate footprint [from paper-making, book production, warehousing, transportation, office energy consumption, etc.] and quantify realistic opportunities for conservation efforts that will reduce climate-change impact

4. Track how many constituents in the U.S. book industry have environmental policies and are actively working towards implementing their policy goals. Necessary elements should be pre-determined, for example what the policy covers, its degree of transparency, and so on
5. Track recycling efforts (book lifecycle and internal corporate practices), existing energy conservation efforts, and other environmental initiatives.
6. Identify retail and reader support for environmental responsibility
7. Identify opportunities for reducing climate impacts (through energy conservation, improved efficiencies, increased purchasing of renewable power, carbon offsetting, and other strategies.

Project timeline

The project will run from May to November 2007 and will comprise five distinct phases: survey design, survey execution, data analysis, publication of findings, and presentation of findings. The project partners will announce in due course how the results and findings will be disseminated to the industry. In addition to the publication, the project partners hope to announce an event and an education program to raise awareness and stimulate debate about the findings.

Project partners

Book Industry Study Group, Inc.

The **Book Industry Study Group, Inc. (BISG)** is the US industry's leading trade association for policy, standards and research whose mission is to create a more informed, empowered, and efficient book industry supply chain. Membership consists of publishers, manufacturers, suppliers, wholesalers, retailers, librarians and others engaged in the business of print and electronic media. For over 30 years, BISG has provided a forum for all industry professionals to come together and efficiently address issues and concerns to advance the book community.

Green Press Initiative

The mission of the **Green Press Initiative (GPI)** is to work with publishers, industry stakeholders and authors to create paper-use transformations that will conserve natural resources and preserve endangered forests. GPI is a non-profit program of SEE Innovation, with fiscal sponsorship provided by Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs. It is funded primarily through grant foundations. Past and present funders include: FSC Global Fund, The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Giles and Elise Mead Foundation, Merck Family Fund, Town Creek Foundation, Wallace Global Fund, and the Weeden Foundation. In addition publishers, printers, merchants, and mills committed to improving their sector are also making contributions to GPI to support its continued work.

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