

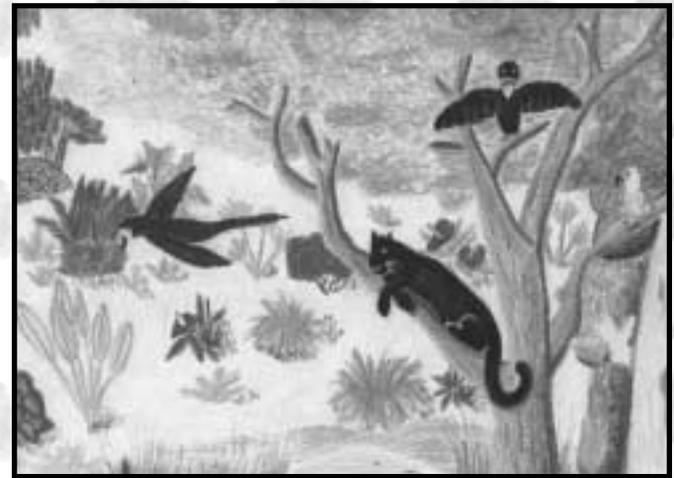


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# Tree-Free Action Guide



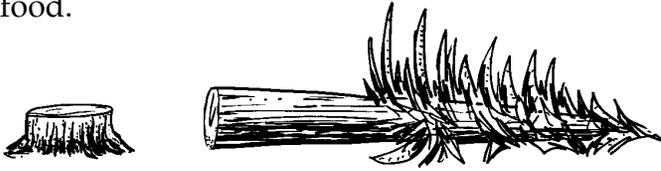
You Have the Power to Help  
Save the Rainforests  
by Going Tree-Free!



# Tree-Free Action Guide

## Introduction

People use a lot of paper. This is a problem because most paper is made out of wood-pulp, which comes from trees. About two billion trees are cut down every year just to make paper. Many of these trees are from old growth forests that have been growing for thousands of years and have not yet been disturbed. When these forests are destroyed, the native people and animals who lived in the forests lose their homes and their source of food.



Cutting down forests is harmful in many other ways, too. Forests are home to lots of plants and animals that don't live anywhere else on the Earth. Many plant and animal species disappear forever when their forest homes are destroyed. When this happens the species becomes *extinct*, just like the dinosaurs. Once that happens to a species it is gone forever, and nothing can bring it back to life. Scientists think that more than one hundred species become extinct every single day—mainly because of the destruction of rainforests. Since the rainforests contain at least half of the Earth's species, this is something to think about when we use paper and other things made from trees.

Forests are also very important because they keep the temperatures on the planet stable and help prevent *climate change*, or *global warming*. Global warming happens when gases,

## 5. Share Your Story With Us



Please write to us here at Rainforest Action Network. Tell us about your heroic efforts to use less paper and to encourage your school to use tree-free paper. If you have other ideas for ways kids can help save the forests, let us know. Remember, YOU have the power to help save the rainforests and all the animals, plants, and people that live there. Begin now, while there's still time left to save our old growth forests. Together, we CAN do it!

## For More Information:



### Tree-Free Paper Suppliers:

Green Field Paper Co.  
1330 G Sreet  
San Diego, CA 92101  
Phone: (619) 338-9432

Arbokem, Inc.  
PO Box 95014  
CSC South Vancouver  
BC, V6P 6V4 Canada  
Phone: (604) 322-1317

Vision Paper  
PO Box 20399  
Albuquerque, NM 87154  
Phone: (505) 294-0293



Living Tree Paper  
1430 Williamette St., #367  
Eugene, OR 97401  
Phone: (800) 309-2974

Fiber Options Paper Co.  
PO Box 222  
Williams, OR 97544  
Phone: (888) 290-1919

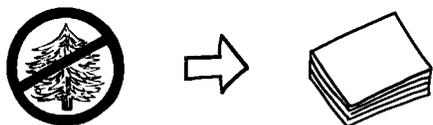
### Other Organizations:

ReThink Paper  
c/o Earth Island Institute  
300 Broadway, Suite 28  
San Francisco, CA 94133  
Phone: (415) 788-3666, Ext. 232  
[www.rethinkpaper.org](http://www.rethinkpaper.org)

You can also talk to us here at Rainforest Action Network if you have questions or need help. Call (415) 398-4404 and ask for our Education Outreach Director, or write to **Rainforest Action Network, 221 Pine Street, Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94104.**



them the signed petitions. Give them the information on the last page of this booklet so they can learn how to order tree-free paper. Explain that even though tree-free paper can be more expensive, the trees that are saved are well worth the difference in price. Remind them that they have the power to help save the forests, and thank them for doing what they can!

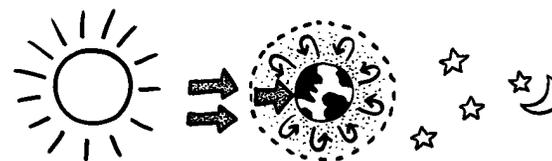


#### 4. After You're Done

It will probably take you several weeks to get organized, get the petition signed, and talk to the school officials. If they say yes to the idea, congratulate yourself, your friends, and schoolmates—you're real heroes! Call your local newspaper and ask them to do a story about your efforts. Ask the principal to print "100% tree-free paper" on the bottom of the letterhead so that everyone who sees it will realize what a great thing the school is doing. When other people see that your school is using tree-free paper, they will be encouraged to go tree-free as well.

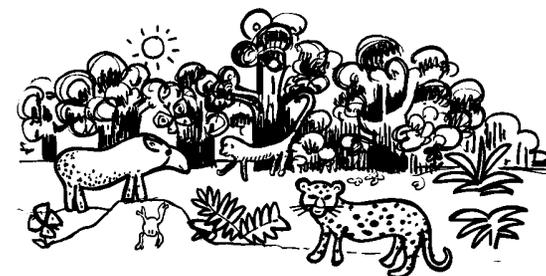
If the principal doesn't agree to switch to tree-free letterhead, don't be discouraged. Give yourself a pat on the back for all the hard work you've done. Your principal probably has a good reason for not switching to tree-free paper. Try to find out what the reason is and see if you can help come up with a solution. If your principal thinks that tree-free paper is too expensive, remind him or her that they don't have to use tree-free paper for all of the school's paper needs. Even using tree-free paper just for some things can make a big difference for the forests.

You can also try again next year. And think of all the people you've helped to educate about tree-free paper, and who now want to help save the forests. That's a huge accomplishment!



including a gas called carbon dioxide, are released into the air. Carbon dioxide is released into the air when fossil fuels such as oil and gas are burned, and when trees are burned or cut down. When there is too much carbon dioxide in the air it traps extra heat from the sun and makes our planet warm up like a greenhouse. If the planet gets too warm for a long period of time, then the weather around the world will change. Winters will get colder and summers will get hotter. And what do you think will happen to all the ice at the North and South poles if the planet gets warmer? That's right, it will melt! Forests act like giant air conditioners that help keep the planet cool, so even though we don't all live near a rainforest, rainforest destruction affects everyone.

Many people think that the forests and the planet will be all right if we just replant the trees that are cut down. This is not true because even if the trees grow back, it will take thousands of years for them to become an old growth forest. Often, the forest doesn't grow back at all because the big trees aren't there to hold the soil in place, so the little trees get washed away by the rain.



Also, an old growth forest is much more than just trees. You can't replace all the animals, insects, birds, and plants that once lived in an old growth forest. The newly-planted forest will never be the same as the old growth forest. Even if the trees grow







## 1. Get Your Friends Involved



It's best to have people help you when you try to make big changes. Tell your friends what you're doing, and ask them to join you. You can all be heroes together! Set up a time when everyone can meet—maybe after school or during lunch break. Read this booklet together. Then decide what you want to do! You'll probably want to create a petition, have people sign it, and then talk to the principal of your school.

## 2. The Petition: Get Some Support



It's important to let your principal know that lots of students and teachers care about trees and would like the school to switch to tree-free paper. One way to do this is to create a *petition*, or a list of signatures. A petition lets someone know how many people care about an issue. Everyone who agrees that your school should use tree-free paper can sign your petition. Follow the sample petition on the next page, and add whatever information you'd like. Feel free to decorate your petition, but be sure to leave lots of extra space for signatures. Don't forget to write your petition on tree-free or re-used paper!

Make copies of the petition and give one to each person who has agreed to help you. Assign each person collecting signatures a certain grade or group of kids so that you don't get the same signatures twice. Take the petitions to school and get as many teachers and kids as possible to sign them during recess or lunch.

## 3. Talk to Your Principal



Once you've gotten your petitions signed, you can go to the principal or school officials. Let them know how much the students and teachers at your school care about the forests. Tell them about the change you want the school to make and show

(Continued on page 10)



most paper has been made from trees. Only about nine out of every one hundred sheets of paper used in the world today are tree-free. And this is mostly because some places don't have any more trees to cut down, so they have to make paper from other materials. In the United States and Canada, where we still have some trees left, only about one percent of our paper is tree-free.



In the United States, you can buy paper made from a lot of interesting things other than trees like shredded-up old money, agricultural waste (like leftover corn stalks or wheat straw), and old pieces of denim cloth, which is what jeans are made out of! If these things weren't used to make paper, they would be burned (which causes air pollution), buried, or headed for a landfill instead. Even though tree-free paper may be more expensive and takes some extra effort to find, using it instead of regular wood-pulp paper will help save our old growth forests.

100%



PCW

You may have also seen recycled paper in stores, or even used it yourself. The best kind of recycled paper to use is one hundred percent post-consumer waste (PCW) recycled paper. This means that the paper is made completely from materials which have been used by people before, so no new trees had to be cut down to make it. Some paper is made from a mixture of recycled post-consumer waste and other materials. Unless the other materials are tree-free, the higher the amount of post-consumer waste in the paper, the better. Using recycled paper is a great way to save trees and landfill space too!





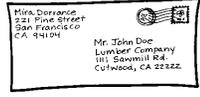
## Tree-Free Action



You have the power to help save the Earth's old growth forests! It may seem like a huge job to save the world's forests, but there are a lot of simple things you can do. Every little action we take adds up to make a big difference!

An easy and important first step you can take is to use less paper, and to use recycled and tree-free paper when you can. You or your parents may have to order tree-free paper specially by calling the phone numbers listed at the end of this booklet. By making these changes in your own life you can teach others to do so as well. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- ◆ Reduce your paper use by writing on both sides of each piece of paper, using half-sheets of paper, and using scrap paper instead of using new, un-used sheets of paper.
- ◆ Use recycled or tree-free paper whenever possible for your schoolwork, art, letters, etc.
- ◆ Always recycle paper—if there isn't a paper recycling box in your classroom or house, start one!
- ◆ Ask your parents to use canvas bags when they go to the grocery store, and to reuse and recycle paper bags.
- ◆ Use cloth napkins and cloth towels instead of paper ones at home and at school.
- ◆ Take your lunch to school in a lunch box or a reusable bag instead of a paper bag.
- ◆ Ask your family not to buy paper cups and plates.
- ◆ Talk to your family and friends! Tell them what you're doing and ask them to do the same.



## Write a Letter!



Writing letters to companies that harm forests is a powerful way to speak up for the trees, people, and animals that live in the forests. Call or write Rainforest Action Network (our address and phone number are given at the end of this booklet) and ask for our most recent kid's action alert. The action alert will tell you about a company that is harming the rainforests. You can also visit our website at [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org) to learn where to write. Then you and your friends can write letters to the company and tell them how you feel. Companies need to hear from you because you represent their customers, and companies always care what their customers think. If enough people write, they'll listen!



## Get Your Parents Involved!



If you're really excited about saving forests, you can do even more to help. Ask your parents or other adults you know who work in an office to talk to people there about recycling and using post-consumer waste recycled or tree-free paper. They might want to use kenaf or another type of tree-free paper for their business cards and stationery. You can also visit local stores that sell paper products and ask them to carry tree-free paper for customers like you who care about the forests.



## Help Your School Save Forests!



Another great thing you can do is to ask your principal to use tree-free paper for the school's letterhead. Letterhead is what schools and companies print letters and important papers on. On the next few pages, we'll tell you how to do this step by step.

