In the Core of Circularity // Italy

As circular economy is at the heart of Smurfit Kappa's operations, and one example of that is how we participate in the recycling of old boxes to new ones.

With our expanding network of 17 recycling depots in Europe, we play our part in being a responsible producer of packaging. The latest addition to our recycling depots is Marlia, in Italy, which was acquired in 2019.

"Lucca in Tuscany has always been the heart of Italian paper production, so it's remarkable that ours is the first high-quality recycling depot in the area," says Stefano Mazzei, Manager of the SK Marlia recycling facility. The figures support his claim; 40% of Italian containerboard and 90% of Italian tissue paper is produced in the region, and the nearby plant of SK Ania covers 40% of Italian SK corrugated needs.

Location is just one of the reasons for SK's Italian Recycling Depot. This area also has the advantage that locally recovered paper can replace raw materials from far away, saving on fuel miles and overall CO_2 emissions. Furthermore, it gives a good synergy with the region in providing local employment.

SK Marlia was inaugurated in 2019, and, as Smurfit Kappa's 17th European recycling depot, shows our strong commitment to recycling and the circular economy. However, as Stefano says, "A recycling facility is always in a relationship with the local communities and institutions. We used a range of methods to raise awareness about recycling." These included:

- a cardboard Noah's Ark in the central square of the town hall (later recycled);
- school visits and presentations;
- plant employees, 21st local clean up day by cleaning a green area;
- recovery of white paper grades from hospitals and schools;
- sponsored the local Labour Festival on 1 May; and
- sponsored a balloon for the Montgolfier Bicentennial in September.

"We have worked closely with schools, the local council, supermarkets and businesses to collect used paper and board. This is transported to the SK Ania paper mill where it is used to produce new containerboard."

The information campaign was a huge success – by the end of the year 15,000 tonnes of paper had been recovered, with a target of 25-30,000 tonnes for 2020. As General Manager, Recycling Operations Italy, Luca Mannori says, "the new Marlia plant shows our commitment to the circular economy, and will ensure the availability of good-quality recovered paper to meet the needs of all our customers."

Recovered paper by the end of 2019 (tonnes)

15,000