A Day in the Life of a Piece
of Paper

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thepaperlifecycle.org
Forests

Forests contain 70% of the world’s biodiversity and only 31% of its land cover.

Forests provide habitat and ecosystem services including flood control, soil protection and climate change mitigation.
Forests support the livelihoods of as many as 300 million people!

Deforestation is the conversion of land from forest to other uses such as agriculture, livestock, and residential development.
Forest area as percent of total land area by country, 2010
Manufacturing

Paper manufacturing is the processing of wood, recovered paper, paperboard, and other cellulose fibers into thousands of end-use products.
Paper is made in three types of manufacturing buildings; pulp mills, dedicated paper production facilities, and the integration mills which include both pulp mills and paper manufacturing.

Paper manufacturing involves energy, water, wood fiber, and other materials all of which help make the final product.
Paper making in the US and Canada involves 69% of fresh resources and 31% of recycled resources.
Use

Paper and packaging are essential components of modern life. Communication, food, and consumer products are just a few of the things that are improved upon and more easily accessible as a result of paper and packaging.
Recovery

Recovery is what makes recycling possible and is a crucial component of the paper life cycle. In 2009, 63% of paper and paperboard consumed in the US was recovered but there is more that can be done to ensure a nice long life for paper!
Exports

Approximately 70% of the recovered paper fibers stay within US and Canada but the other 30% is shipped overseas to Asian countries like China. China uses much of this limited resource to produce paper packaging for products that are then shipped to the US.
End of Life

Much of what ends up in landfills could be recovered paper. In 2008 there was 34 million tons of paper thrown away!

Extraction of usable fibers is expensive and sometimes not feasible so do your part to make sure paper is recycled and reused!