

# PPI Asia

PAPER, PACKAGING AND FIBER MARKET NEWS AND PRICES FOR ASIA

## Prices for NBSK into China dip by \$25 per tonne, BHK under pressure amid slumping futures, resale levels after SHFE removes Bratsk BSK

Prices for bleached softwood kraft (BSK) and bleached hardwood kraft (BHK) pulp imports into China have continued to trend downward over the past two weeks, despite sellers' plans to hold their lines after making a big concession for May orders, Fastmarkets heard.

International suppliers were forced to cut prices drastically in May to close monthly deals, with the price midpoint for northern BSK (NBSK) falling by \$82.50 per tonne to \$715 per tonne and South American BHK plummeting by \$80-90 per tonne to \$500-510 per tonne (No. 22, p.1).

Chinese buyers' push for further price drops for both BSK and BHK continued unabated this month, in view of large amounts of pulp arriving in the country, the stubbornly high level of pulp stocks at Chinese ports, and stagnant paper and board prices in the domestic market amid the traditional summer lull.

On top of that, the decision made by the Shanghai Futures Exchange (SHFE) to remove the BSK supplied by the Ilim Group's Bratsk mill from

>>> continued on page 4

## SHFE removes Ilim's Bratsk BSK from futures deliverables

The Shanghai Futures Exchange (SHFE) has removed the bleached softwood kraft (BSK) pulp supplied by the Ilim Group's Bratsk mill in Siberia, Russia, from its list of 14 BSK certified brands, the exchange announced on Friday June 20.

The SHFE said the decision to remove the Bratsk BSK, which took effective immediately, aimed at maintaining a smooth operation on the exchange.

The other Ilim's deliverable BSK, manufactured at the Russian producer's Ust-Ilimsk mill, also in Siberia, remained on the list.

The Bratsk mill produces 735,000 tonnes per year of BSK and 240,000 tpy of bleached hardwood kraft pulp. The Ust-Ilimsk plant has a BSK capacity of 780,000 tpy and produces some 120,000 tpy of unbleached softwood kraft pulp.

>>> continued on page 12

## In This Issue:

Price Watch: China Pulp	2
Price Watch: Asia RCP	3
Price Watch: China P&B	7
India to restrict paper imports	8
Oji's board price hikes	11

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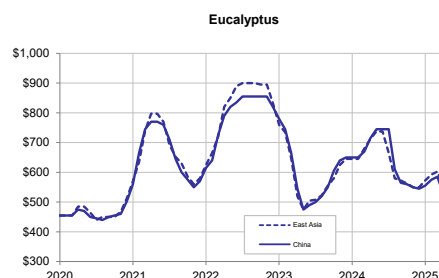
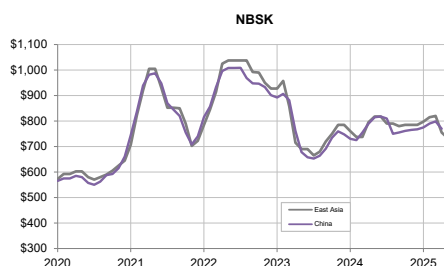
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# PRICE WATCH: Pulp

For specifications and details on how RISI determines prices, see [www.risiinfo.com/approach/methodology](http://www.risiinfo.com/approach/methodology)



## CHINA - Imports

Net prices, US\$/tonne, CIF, except as otherwise noted.

	current prices			month ago	year ago	y-o-y change <sup>1</sup>	
	27 Jun	20 Jun	13 Jun	30 May 2025	28 Jun 2024		
<b>WEEKLY</b>							
<b>Bleached softwood kraft</b>							
NBSK (from N. Amer. and Scand.)	\$690	715	715	715	810	-120	-14.8%
<b>BI-WEEKLY</b>							
<b>Bleached softwood kraft</b>							
Radiata pine (Chile)	695 - 710	710 - 730	710 - 730	710 - 730	790 - 810	-98	-12.2%
Russian BSK <sup>2</sup>	630 - 670	650 - 680	650 - 680	650 - 680	720 - 780	-100	-13.3%
<b>Bleached hardwood kraft</b>							
Eucalyptus	500 - 510	500 - 510	500 - 510	500 - 510	740 - 750	-240	-32.2%
Russian BHK <sup>2</sup>	470 - 480	500 - 510	500 - 510	500 - 510	700 - 710	-230	-32.6%
<b>Unbleached softwood kraft</b>							
From Chile and N. Amer.	550 - 620	550 - 620	550 - 620	550 - 620	600 - 690	-60	-9.3%
Russian	500 - 550	500 - 550	500 - 550	500 - 550	550 - 600	-50	-8.7%
<b>BCTMP</b>							
Hardwood (80° brightness)	430 - 450	430 - 450	430 - 450	430 - 450	500 - 510	-65	-12.9%
Softwood (75° brightness)	430 - 450	430 - 450	430 - 450	430 - 450	500 - 510	-65	-12.9%
<b>MONTHLY</b>							
<b>Specialty Grades</b>							
Fluff (US southern kraft)	970 - 1000	970 - 1000	970 - 1000	970 - 1000	880 - 920	+85	+9.4%

## CHINA - Domestic prices (WEEKLY)

Net prices, Yuan/tonne, trader's warehouse, including 13% VAT

	current prices			month ago	year ago	y-o-y change	
	27 Jun	20 Jun	13 Jun	30 May 2025	28 Jun 2024		
<b>Bleached softwood kraft</b>							
NBSK (from N. Amer. and Scand.)	YUAN 5977	6075	6142	6140	6417	-440	-6.9%
Radiata pine (from Chile)	6000	6100	6200	6200	6300	-300	-4.8%
Russian BSK	5240	5393	5467	5457	5933	-693	-11.7%
<b>Bleached hardwood kraft</b>							
Eucalyptus	4016	4122	4140	4130	5464	-1448	-26.5%
Russian BHK	4100	4100	4150	4150	5450	-1399	-24.8%
Chinese BHK <sup>3</sup>	4120	4120	4120	4350	5690	-1350	-27.6%
<b>Unbleached softwood kraft</b>							
From Chile and N. Amer.	5100	5120	5160	5230	5500	-1570	-7.3%
<b>Nonwood pulp</b>							
Chinese bamboo	4600	4600	4600	4900	5700	-400	-19.3%
Chinese bagasse	4200	4200	4200	4250	5000	-750	-16.0%

## EAST ASIA (S Korea, Japan, Taiwan, SE Asia) - Imports (MONTHLY)

Net prices, US\$/tonne, CIF, to main ports in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia.

	current prices		month ago	year ago	y-o-y change	
	May 2025		Apr 2025	May 2024		
<b>Bleached softwood kraft</b>						
NBSK (from N. Amer. and Scand.)	\$720 - 745		740 - 770	800 - 835	-85	-10.4%
Radiata pine (from Chile)	710 - 740		730 - 775	790 - 835	-88	-10.8%
Southern pine (USA)	700 - 720		730 - 740	790 - 810	-90	-12.6%
<b>Bleached hardwood kraft</b>						
Eucalyptus	510 - 530		540 - 560	730 - 745	-218	-29.5%
Acacia (Indonesia)	500 - 520		530 - 550	720 - 735	-218	-29.9%
Northern mixed hardwood	500 - 520		535 - 560	730 - 745	-228	-30.8%
Southern mixed hardwood	500 - 520		535 - 560	730 - 745	-228	-30.8%
<b>Unbleached softwood kraft</b>						
From Chile and N. Amer.	590 - 620		620 - 660	630 - 695	-58	-8.7%
<b>BCTMP</b>						
Aspen	450 - 500		460 - 500	480 - 550	-40	-7.8%
Spruce	450 - 500		460 - 500	480 - 550	-40	-7.8%

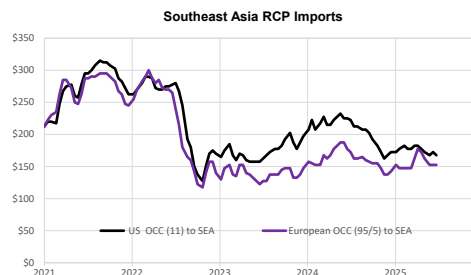
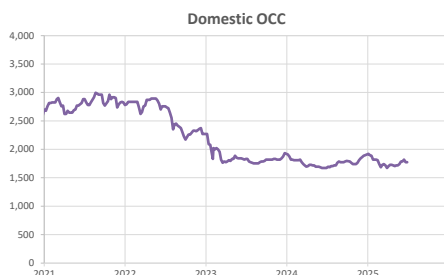
### NOTES

1. Changes calculated based on the midpoint of price ranges. 2. Russian BSK and BHK are CIF levels to Chinese main ports. 3. Made from a mix of eucalyptus, acacia and poplar wood.

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While these prices have been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, Fastmarkets RISI does not warrant or guarantee the accuracy and completeness of the information. All prices are best estimates of prices before regular volume and contract discounts and are composite prices as opposed to median or average prices. Actual transaction prices may vary.

# PRICE WATCH: Recovered Paper



## CHINA - imports (MONTHLY)

Net prices, US\$/tonne, CIF, to main ports in China

	current prices			year ago	current price - change <sup>1</sup> vs...		
	Jun. 2025	May 2025	Apr. 2025	Jun. 2024	month ago	year ago	
<b>Recycled brown pulp<sup>2</sup></b>							
US recycled pulp	290	290	290	305	+0	-15	-4.9%
Asia recycled pulp	252	252	255	290	+0	-38	-13.1%

## CHINA - domestic (WEEKLY)

Net prices, domestic collections except as noted, Yuan/tonne, delivered to buyer's warehouse in East China<sup>6</sup>, including 13% VAT

	current prices			year ago	current price - change <sup>1</sup> vs...			
	27 Jun	20 Jun	13 Jun	28 Jun	week ago	month ago	year ago	
<b>Mixed paper &amp; corrugated board<sup>3</sup></b>	YUAN 1548	1548	1593	1446	-	-45	+102	+7.1%
<b>Old newspapers</b>	2486	2497	2497	2644	-11	-11	-158	-6.0%
<b>Old corrugated containers</b>								
Post-consumer <sup>4</sup>	1661	1661	1706	1582	-	-45	+79	+5.0%
Pre-consumer and imports <sup>5</sup>	1774	1774	1819	1672	-	-45	+102	+6.1%

## SOUTHEAST ASIA - Imports (BI-WEEKLY)

Net prices, US\$/tonne, CIF, to main ports in Taiwan and Southeast Asia

	current prices			year ago	current price - change <sup>1</sup> vs...			
	20 Jun	6 Jun	23 May	21 Jun 2024	2 weeks ago	month ago	year ago	
<b>Mixed Paper &amp; Board</b>								
Mixed Paper (premium) from the US <sup>7</sup>	\$130 - 135	\$130 - 135	\$130 - 135	150 - 160	-	-	-23	-14.5%
Mixed Paper (standard) from the US <sup>8</sup>	100 - 110	100 - 110	100 - 110	130 - 135	-	-	-28	-20.8%
Mixed Paper (premium) From Europe	135 - 145	135 - 145	135 - 145	150 - 160	-	-	-15	-9.7%
<b>Old Corrugated Containers<sup>9</sup></b>								
OCC (11) from the US	165 - 170	170 - 175	165 - 170	220 - 230	-5	-	-58	-25.6%
Old Corrugated Containers (90/10) from Europe	145 - 150	145 - 150	145 - 150	170 - 175	-	-	-25	-14.5%
Old Corrugated Containers (95/5) from Europe	150 - 155	150 - 155	150 - 155	175 - 180	-	-	-25	-14.1%
OCC from Japan	160 - 165	160 - 165	160 - 165	200 - 205	-	-	-40	-19.8%

## INDIA - Imports from the US (Monthly)

Net prices, US\$/tonne, CFR Nhava Sheva

	current prices			year ago	current price - change <sup>1</sup> vs...		
	Jun. 2025	May 2025	Apr. 2025	Jun. 2024	month ago	year ago	
<b>Old Corrugated Containers<sup>10</sup></b>							
OCC (11)	\$197 - 200	\$197 - 200	\$212 - 215	\$237 - 240	-	-40	-16.8%
Double-sorted OCC (12)	\$207 - 210	\$207 - 210	\$222 - 225	\$247 - 250	-	-40	-16.1%

1 Changes calculated based on the midpoint of price ranges.

2 Prices originally published by UM Paper on the last Wednesday of the month.

3 Mixed paper and corrugated board comprises a minimum of 60% OCC; the rest is other paper and board. The OCC content is mainly old boxes made from recycled containerboard manufactured in China. The grade is mostly collected from households in residential areas.

4 Old corrugated containers (post-consumer) has a minimum of 90% OCC; the remainder is other paper and board. The grade is mainly collected from supermarkets.

5 Old corrugated containers (pre-consumer and imports) comprises a minimum of 90% OCC; the rest is other paper and board. The OCC content includes pre-consumer boxes and offcuts from converting plants, as well as some imported boxes made from kraftliner and collected in industrial areas.

6 East China includes Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces, as well as Shanghai municipality.

7 Premium denotes material with less than 2% contaminants and min. 25-30% OCC.

8 Standard denotes material with contaminants of 2-5%.

9 The maximum allowable contamination level is 0.5% in Indonesia and 1% in other Southeast Asian countries and Taiwan. Prices in Indonesia are higher by \$5-15 per tonne than other Southeast Asian countries due to extra costs for carrying out pre-shipment cargoes in the countries of origin. They are therefore excluded from the assessments.

10 Originally published in Pulp & Paper Week on or just after the 5th of the month.

## Seller offer South American BHK at \$500/t for combined volumes of 3 months

>>> continued from page 1

the list of futures deliverables on Friday June 20 had led to BSK futures prices declining on the exchange and caused resale BSK prices to edge lower, sources said (see article on page 1).

Prices for the most-traded September BSK futures contract settled at 5,070 yuan per tonne

on Thursday June 26, which was equivalent to just \$612 per tonne, excluding 13% value-added tax (VAT) and 120 yuan per tonne in logistics costs. That was far lower than the market level of BSK imports.

Resale NBSK, excluding reinforcement NBSK used in specialty paper, has sold at 5,698 yuan per tonne, which is equivalent to \$686 per

tonne, minus VAT and 150 yuan per tonne in logistics costs for resale pulp, according to Fastmarkets' survey.

Consequently, suppliers cut prices for BSK imports by \$20 per tonne to attract buyers, a trader said, adding that buyers' appetite remained limited despite the price drop.

A supplier was said to have stored hundreds of thousands of tonnes of NBSK in the bonded warehouses unsold, and offered the grade at \$685 per tonne.

In the meantime, customers reported that Shandong Huatai Paper has switched production from BHK to BSK on the new 700,000-tonne-per-year pulp line at its flagship mill in Dongying city, Shandong province, which came online on April 11, and sold BSK in slurry form on the domestic market.

A buyer said the firm priced the wet BSK at 4,600 yuan per tonne, inclusive of VAT, but customers were seeking a reduction of 300 yuan per tonne.

<b>Chinese pulp imports: May 2025</b> (tonnes)					
Grade	May 2025	April 2025	Jan-May 2025	May 2024	Jan-May 2024
Kraft pulp	2,113,693	2,035,930	11,384,263	2,028,802	12,709,505
Bleached softwood kraft pulp	721,562	757,533	3,802,346	703,566	4,428,371
Bleached hardwood kraft pulp	1,293,230	1,199,264	7,108,081	1,255,590	7,786,437
Unbleached softwood kraft pulp	98,901	79,133	473,836	69,646	494,697
Semi-chemical pulp	112,699	130,659	597,777	108,630	710,031
Dissolving pulp	387,279	337,860	1,779,821	327,187	2,019,411
Other pulp*	18,661	8,589	35,280	5,166	46,750
<b>Total pulp</b>	<b>2,632,331</b>	<b>2,513,038</b>	<b>13,797,141</b>	<b>2,469,784</b>	<b>15,485,697</b>
Recycled pulp**	383,325	379,722	1,749,253	351,258	2,355,815
*Other pulp category includes mechanical pulp, unbleached hardwood kraft pulp, cotton linter and other miscellaneous grades.					
**China Customs recorded a total of 50,532 tonnes of recovered paper imports in March, all imported via Hong Kong and Macau by special license for select Guangdong mills. Specifically, 38,869 tonnes of the total were old corrugated containers (OCC) from Hong Kong, and 3,667 tonnes of OCC were from Macau. 4,990 tonnes of the total were old newspapers and 3,005 tonnes were high grades exclusively from Hong Kong.					
Source: China Customs					

<b>Korean pulp consumption and inventories: April 2025</b> (tonnes)						
Grade	Consumption April	% change 2025/2024	Mill inventories End April	% change 2025/2024	Consumption Jan-April 2025	% change 2025/2024
Mechanical pulp	0		0		0	
Thermomechanical pulp	20,856		38,136		83,473	
Domestic	2,104	-19.1	0	nm	9,751	-21.8
Imports	18,752	12.5	38,136	-4.2	73,722	-11.4
Unbleached kraft pulp	11,473	-21.1	25,980	13.2	53,008	-7.0
Bleached kraft pulp	148,473		162,809		576,566	
Domestic	29,424	55.0	3,455	20.5	113,452	-12.7
Imports	119,049	4.2	159,354	12.6	463,114	-10.3
Semi-bleached kraft pulp	0	nm	0	nm	0	nm
Other pulp	1,812	27.7	5,111	11.1	7,034	8.2
<b>Total pulp</b>	<b>182,614</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>232,036</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>720,081</b>	<b>-10.6</b>
nm = not meaningful.						
Source: Korea Paper Association						

"The problem is not about the price. It's weak demand making clients reluctant to purchase BSK," the buyer source said, indicating that Shandong Huatai decided to switch back to producing BHK on the new line.

On June 20, Arauco revised its June list price of \$740 per tonne, announced on June 3, for radiata pine downward to \$720 per tonne for combined contract volumes of June and July (No. 23, p.1).

More sellers were forced to lower their offer prices this week, selling NBSK imports from Canada and the Nordic region at \$680-705 per tonne, Fastmarkets learned.

As of Thursday, Fastmarkets assessed prices for both Canadian and Nordic NBSK at \$680-700 per tonne, down by \$20-30 per tonne from last week, with the midpoint for the grade slumping by \$25 per tonne to \$690 per tonne.

Fastmarkets assesses prices for NBSK imports weekly, and prices for other pulp grades bi-weekly.

Radiata pine fetched \$695-710 per tonne, down by \$15-20 per tonne from \$690-710 per tonne when the grade was last assessed a fortnight earlier.

Russian BSK was sold for \$630-670 per tonne, down by \$10-20 per tonne.

**BHK stalemate:** Suppliers aimed to hold firm on South American BHK at \$500-510 per tonne for June orders and kept their offer prices at the same level.

But the Chinese BHK market faced headwinds.

Resale South American BHK prices have declined by 124 yuan per tonne over the past two weeks, clocking in this week at

4,016 yuan per tonne, equivalent to \$478 per tonne, exclusive of VAT and logistics costs.

Several buyers pointed out that BHK imported from Europe was offered at \$470-480 per tonne and the grade shipped from North America was priced at \$490 per tonne.

A merchant indicated that a major supplier has offered them South American BHK priced at \$500 per tonne for combined volumes of up to three consecutive months, from July to September, in a special deal.

"We counter offered at \$450 per tonne," the buyer source said, adding that the seller has not yet responded.

A second trader said they snatched up some European BHK tonnages in the belief that BHK prices were near the bottom.

"Suppliers are likely to cave in to pressure from buyers and cut prices soon. By the time South American BHK drops to \$450 per tonne, deep-pocketed end-users and traders may snap up all the available volumes, and smaller buyers will be left out," the second trader source said.

A major Brazilian producer stressed that after cutting prices for the grade in May, South American suppliers have managed to sell tonnages up to three months and had no stock pressure, with no incentive to cut prices further.

"The tissue sector is comfortable in paying \$500 per tonne for South American BHK, as at such a cost level most tissue mills, especially in the tissue production hub of Baoding, are making profit by selling their finished products," the producer said.

Fastmarkets assessed South American BHK prices at \$500-510 per tonne on Thursday, unchanged.

**Bratsk BSK impact:** Resale BSK prices are pegged to the BSK futures contract levels on the SHFE and resale Bratsk BSK has mostly been priced at the biggest discount.

When the exchange removed the Russian BSK from deliverables on June 20, BSK futures prices spiked on the next business day (Monday June 23), with both the September and November contracts rising by 136 yuan per tonne and the January 2026 contract jumping by 248 yuan per tonne.

A market participant explained that customers thought initially that after large amounts of Bratsk BSK currently stored in the SHFE-designated warehouses were removed, BSK futures prices were expected to climb, and they pounced on the opportunity to invest.

The source added that investors soon came to realize that those Bratsk BSK tonnages on warrant will expire only at the end of this year and most of them would continue to be used for delivery for another 6 months; in addition, Ilim would continue to export consistently around 70,000 tonnes per month of the product to China, as it has no other countries to go to.

"Investors had misjudged the situation, reckoning the removal of Bratsk BSK was a favorable factor and jumped in. After they realized that the product won't be out until the end of this year, prices for all the BSK contracts for this year declined, while their interest to the January 2026 contract remains high," the source concluded.

Prices for the January 2026 contract settled at 5,284 yuan per tonne on Thursday, which was 214 yuan per tonne higher than the settled level of 5,070 per tonne for the September contract.

The effect of the Bratsk BSK removal has also made itself felt in the resale pulp market, driving down prices for resale BSK and BHK.

The volume of BSK on warrant in the SHFE-designated warehouses amounted to 245,575 tonnes as of Thursday.

**Port stocks:** According to Fastmarkets surveys, on June 23, pulp stored at the Port of Qingdao totaled 1.53 million tonnes, down from the 1.57 million tonnes recorded on May 26.

At the Port of Changshu, pulp stocks rose from 529,000 tonnes to 543,000 tonnes.

Combining the pulp figures at the two main ports made for 2.07 million tonnes on June 23, compared with 2.1 million tonnes on May 26.

The port inventory level remaining high persistently has disincentivized buyers to stock up on pulp imports at a time when the Chinese economy is facing uncertainty stemming from the US-China trade tension, which is expected to escalate with the 90-day pause on tariffs drawing near, according to a Brazilian supplier.

### **P&B prices mostly down in China in June**

Recycled containerboard prices in China took a downturn in June after a brief rebound in the previous month, while fine paper prices continued to decline.

Packaging demand, and more importantly, market sentiment in China were boosted by a 90-day tariff truce that China and the United States reached on May 12. While Chinese manufacturers stepped up production on orders which US customers had earlier asked to freeze due to the staggering high tariffs and expedited shipments to the US, board mills in China saw recovery in sales and pushed through small price hikes in the second half of May.

But the upward momentum quickly ran out of steam because of sluggish domestic demand and the uncertainty over trade outlook. Some small and medium-sized board mills in the southern province of Guangdong in China started to offer discounts of around 30 yuan per tonne (\$4.19 per tonne) for corrugating medium in late May, and more price cuts spread to other regions in early June despite top producers' efforts to keep price stable.

In eastern China, high-strength corrugating medium's average price shifted down from 2,974 yuan per tonne in late May to 2,896 yuan per tonne as of Wednesday June 25. The average price for testliner was found at 2,990 yuan per tonne this week, down 50 yuan per tonne from a month ago.

Kraft-top liner's average price edged down by 30 yuan per tonne to 3,652 yuan per tonne this week. The average price for white-top liner declined from 5,040 yuan per tonne in late May to 4,985 yuan per tonne this week.

The persistently low prices for recycled containerboard grades in China led to a plunge in the country's imports of these grades. Chinese customs

data shows that the country's intake of medium was only 1.12 million tonnes in the first five months of this year, down 18.3% year-on-year. China's imports of recycled linerboard in the same period plummeted by 18.6% to 1.48 million tonnes.

### **KLB imports price range**

**narrowed:** For virgin fiber-based kraftliner (KLB) imports to China, Fastmarkets assessed the price at \$510-575 per tonne CIF for new orders in June. The range was narrowed from \$500-600 per tonne in May as the absence of some US supplies pressed down the top-end of the spread while the upticks in Russian KLB lifted the bottom end.

China lowered its retaliatory tariffs on US goods from 125% to 10% in May and the rate is set to remain at 10% till the 90-day pause expires on August 12. Despite the reprieve, Chinese buyers are still holding back from placing new orders for US KLB.

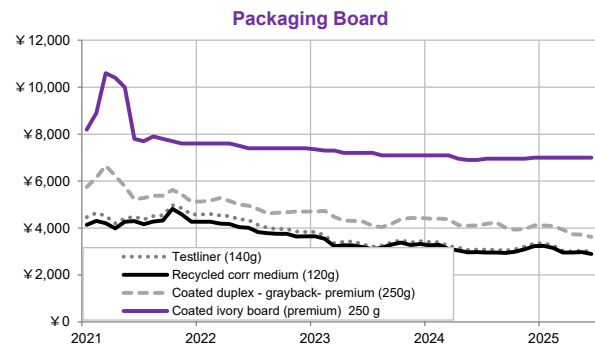
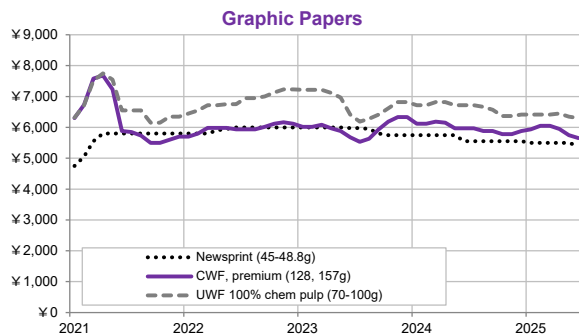
"Demand for KLB in China is quite slow and we could hardly pass on the tariff costs to local customers. We've decided to buy only the minimum [from US KLB suppliers] until there is a clearer picture about the tariffs after August 12," said a Chinese trader.

Meanwhile, Chinese traders' reluctance to place new orders for US KLB imports and US producer Georgia-Pacific's announcement of the closure of its Cedar Springs mill in Georgia, where the company produced most of its KLB exports to China, at the beginning of August, is unlikely to cause an US KLB supply crunch in the Chinese resale market any time soon. Market contacts told Fastmarkets that Chinese traders' existing inventories of US KLB together with their



## PRICE WATCH: Paper & Board China

For specifications and details on how Fastmarkets determines prices, see <https://www.fastmarkets.com/methodology/forest-products/>  
Prior to January 2011, prices were collected quarterly.



### GRAPHIC PAPERS

Prices are for domestic grades, Yuan/tonne, East China<sup>2</sup>, including taxes. Prices are delivered to customers.

	basis weight	current prices		year ago	current price - change <sup>1</sup> vs...		
		Jun 2025	May 2025	Jun 2024	month ago	year ago	
<b>Newsprint</b>							
Standard newsprint	45-48.8g	Yuan 5300 - 5500	5450 - 5550	5500 - 5600	-100	-150	-2.7%
<b>Lightweight coated paper</b>							
Reels	58-64g	6500 - 6700	6500 - 6700	6700 - 6900	-	-200	-2.9%
<b>Uncoated woodfree</b>							
Reels (100% chemical pulp)	70-100g	6300	6350	6717	-50	-417	-6.2%
Reels (mixed chemical/mechanical pulp)	70-100g	5130	5180	5870	-50	-740	-12.6%
<b>Coated woodfree (C2S)</b>							
Reels (premium)	128g, 157g	5650	5750	5967	-100	-317	-5.3%
Reels (commodity)	128g, 157g	5375	5475	5650	-100	-275	-4.9%

### PACKAGING BOARD

Prices are for domestic grades, Yuan/tonne, East China<sup>2</sup>, including taxes. Prices are delivered to customers.

	basis weight	current prices		year ago	current price - change <sup>1</sup> vs...		
		Jun 2025	May 2025	Jun 2024	month ago	year ago	
<b>Virgin fiber-based containerboard</b>							
Kraftliner <sup>3</sup>	175g	\$510 - 575	500 - 600	475 - 600	-8	+5	+0.9%
<b>Coated ivory board</b>							
Chinese exports to Southeast Asia fob <sup>4</sup>	250g	\$490 - 520	500 - 520	N/A	-5	N/A	N/A
<b>Recycled containerboard</b>							
Testliner	140g	Yuan 2990	3040	3080	-50	-90	-2.9%
Kraft-top liner	170g	3652	3682	3778	-30	-126	-3.3%
White-top liner	140g	4985	5040	5410	-55	-425	-7.9%
High-strength corrugating medium	120g	2896	2974	2970	-78	-74	-2.5%
<b>Cartonboard</b>							
Coated ivory board (premium)	250g	7000	7000	6900	-	+100	+1.4%
Coated ivory board (commodity)	250g	4200	4300	4463	-100	-263	-5.9%
Grayback coated duplex board (premium)	250g	3620	3720	4110	-100	-490	-11.9%
Grayback coated duplex board (commodity)	250g	3048	3158	3475	-110	-427	-12.3%

#### NOTES

1 Changes calculated based on the midpoint of price ranges.

2 East China includes Zhejiang, Jiangsu, and Shanghai. For cartonboard, prices delivered Guangdong are also considered.

3 Imported mainly from the US, Europe, Russia and Australasia. Prices are in \$/tonne CIF Chinese main ports.

4 Prices are in \$/tonne FOB, from Chinese main ports to Southeast Asian main ports.

\* Converting reels into sheets costs RMB 100-150/tonne in China, and prices for the grades in sheets can therefore be worked out using prices for reels

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cargoes at sea would be enough to sustain the Chinese market till the end of this year.

Russia has surpassed the US as the largest source of China's KLB intake. In the first five months of this year, China imported approximately 205,000 tonnes of Russian KLB, up 18.1% year-on-year. New orders for Russian KLB were priced at 3,650-3,900 yuan per tonne, taxes excluded, which were equivalent to around \$510-545 per tonne.

#### **Cartonboard prices down:**

Similar to their peers in the recycled containerboard segment, recycled cartonboard mills in China also had to slash prices in June in response to a slowdown in sales.

The average price for commodity grayback coated duplex board was found at 3,048 per tonne as of Wednesday June 25, down 110 yuan per tonne from the average in late May. The average price for the premium grade of grayback coated duplex board was at 3,620 yuan per tonne this week, 100 yuan per tonne lower than a month ago.

As for virgin fiber-based cartonboard, both the Chinese domestic market and the overseas markets are braced for a tsunami of new capacity of as much as 3.6 million tonnes per year that is scheduled to come online in China and Indonesia in the second half of this year.

The first wave is likely to come from Liansheng Pulp & Paper. The company started testing its second virgin cartonboard machine, which has a capacity of 1.2 million tpy, at its Zhangpu mill in Fujian province, in early June, with trial production expected in August, market sources said.

As of Wednesday June 25, the average price for commodity

coated ivory board grade was found at 4,200 yuan per tonne, down 100 yuan per tonne from a month ago. The average price for the premium grade stood stable at 7,000 yuan per tonne.

The price for China's exports of coated ivory board to Southeast Asia were assessed at \$490-520 per tonne FOB for new orders in June, down \$10 per tonne at the bottom of the spread from May.

#### **Further drops in fine paper**

**prices:** Prices for fine paper remained on the downward trend in June due to seasonal slow in demand and the earlier tumble in the prices for bleached hardwood pulp.

In eastern China, the average price for the premium grade of coated fine paper (CFP) was found at 5650 yuan per tonne as of Wednesday June 25, down 100 yuan per tonne from a month ago. Commodity CFP's average price also shifted down by 100 yuan per tonne to 5,375 yuan per tonne this week.

Prices for uncoated fine paper (UFP) mostly declined by 50 yuan per tonne this month, pressing down the average price for the UFP furnished with a mixture of chemical and mechanical pulp at 5,130 yuan per tonne and the average price for high-end UFP furnished with 100% chemical pulp at 6,300 yuan per tonne this week.

Shanghai Futures Exchange (SHFE) is preparing for the launch of uncoated woodfree paper futures contract, and is seeking feedback from the public between June 25 and July 3. According to SHFE's proposal, the futures contract will include trades of 20 tonnes per lot quoted in Chinese yuan, with the daily volatility limits

set at 4% up or down from the settlement price of the prior day.

**Newsprint prices slump:** The prices for domestic newsprint in China fell in the range of 5,300-5,500 yuan per tonne in June, after standing stable at 5,450-5,550 yuan per tonne for five months since the beginning of this year.

The slump was a result of a widening gap between the prices for domestic newsprint and imported newsprint, market contacts said.

According to Chinese customs data, the country imported around 166,000 tonnes of newsprint in the first five months of this year, down 17.2% from the previous year. Approximately 140,000 tonnes, or 84% of the total volume, was sourced from Russia.

Chinese traders told Fastmarkets that new orders for Russian newsprint imports were offered at around 3,100-3,200 yuan per tonne (taxes excluded) in June, which was equivalent to 3,678 to 3,797 per tonne after including 5% of import duty and 13% VAT, while they could sell imported newsprint to local newspaper publishers at just slightly above 4,000 yuan per tonne.

## **General News**

### **India to tighten quality rules for paper imports, impact Asian suppliers**

India will impose a stricter quality control order (QCO) on imported writing and printing (P&W), and coated paper grades, forcing foreign suppliers to meet Indian certification requirements before their products can enter the market, according to a



government notification to the World Trade Organization (WTO), filed on June 17.

The order, set to be published in the Government of India's official gazette, will require all imported W&P papers, as well as coated papers and board (art and chrome grades), to conform to specific Indian Standards (IS) and bear the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) certification mark before entering the Indian market.

A six-month deadline for general manufacturers is set for compliance with the QCO following the gazette notification, with extended compliance periods of nine months for small enterprises and 12 months for micro enterprises.

The QCO covers two main categories:

1. Writing and Printing Papers: Including both uncoated papers such as Maplitho, copier paper, and cream wove paper used for diaries, textbooks and photocopying, and coated papers, namely C1S chrome paper and C2S art paper used for magazines, calendars and brochures.

2. Coated Papers and Board: Art and chrome grades above 170 GSM, including chrome board (coated one side) and art board (coated both sides)

These products must conform to Indian Standards IS 1848 (Part 1 and 2):2018 for P&W papers, and IS 4658:2019 for coated papers and board.

Industry participants indicated that the measure primarily targets low-cost imports from Asian economies, with potentially significant impact on suppliers from South Korea, Thailand, China and Indonesia.

The P&W segment in India has been identified to be the most affected by cheap imports, sources said.

There is a roughly 7.5% price delta between imported P&W copier paper and the comparable domestic grade, according to an Indian P&W paper manufacturer.

The move could specifically be aimed at coated P&W exports from South Korea, uncoated P&W from Thailand, and both products from China and Indonesia, one source said.

"Indian consumers deserve quality products, whether manufactured domestically or imported. QCOs for different products ensure the supply of quality products to Indian consumers, prevent unfair trade practices, and [limit] the import of substandard products into the country," Rohit Pandit, secretary general of the Indian Paper Manufacturers Association (IPMA), said.

A major Asian producer of uncoated P&W paper and virgin fiber cartonboard - who exports to India - told Fastmarkets that the move would disadvantage Indian publishers, packaging end-users and eventually consumers.

However, an Indian P&W paper producer acknowledged that foreign mills often "make better paper than us."

An importer source highlighted particular concerns about stocklots - rejected or unsold material from mills sold at discounted prices, usually through biddings. These materials, primarily from Chinese and European mills, would typically sell at \$450-\$500 per tonne if the prime

material were to be sold at \$600-\$700, for example.

"There is indeed a quality issue with stocklots that Chinese and European countries dump into India," the importer source said, adding that European suppliers may be more affected by stocklot practices than their Chinese counterparts.

According to the same importer source, paper prices are currently at "one of their lowest levels," providing capacity for end-users to absorb potential price increases after the QCO comes into effect.

Additionally, logistical times are not likely to be affected because material would not be imported in the first place if it lacks BIS certification, sources told Fastmarkets.

The BIS certification requirement already exists for copier grade paper imports, with certificates requiring annual renewal, which can take up to six months, effectively removing suppliers from the market for half the year during renewal periods, sources said.

The order says BIS will be both the certifying and enforcing authority. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the commerce ministry is the responsible agency for implementation.

The measure includes two exemptions.

Firstly, the goods manufactured domestically for export are exempt from this order. Secondly, up to five tons of imported goods for research and development purposes by manufacturers, provided they are not sold commercially are also allowed.

According to IPMA, the association has been pursuing the government on the need for QCOs across different paper grades to enhance India's global competitiveness and ensure high-quality domestic manufacturing.

The notification was filed under WTO's sections governing Technical Barriers to Trade, which mandates member countries to notify proposed technical regulations that could affect trade. The 60-day comment period for WTO members ends in mid-August 2025.

The move comes amid ongoing discussions about Minimum Import Price (MIP) measures and follows industry requests dating back to January 2024 for government intervention to curb excess imports through duty hikes of up to 25% and quality control norms in the 2024 fiscal budget.

Industry associations initially approached the government seeking protection for domestic trade, citing serious negative impacts from cheap imports on the domestic paper industry. The current QCO represents a regulatory approach to address these concerns through quality standards rather than purely tariff-based measures.

### **Korea Paper Association chairman positive on export market for Korean pulp, paper producers; energy, logistics costs present barrier: sources**

During Korea's ninth Paper Day ceremony held earlier in June, Choi Hyun-Soo, Chairman of the Korea Paper Association, expressed that it was important for Korea's domestic paper industry to stay competitive through innovation in ways apart from technological ones.

The country's paper industry has faced multiple headwinds, including high energy costs and logistics hiccups stemming from compounded global issues.

In terms of energy costs, Korea has been largely reliant on imported fossil fuels, including a heavy reliance on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), which saw a sharp price spike in 2022 due to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

"Energy costs have definitely gone up in Korea and put pressure on mill operations, especially for smaller players," a Korea-based source said.

A Korean producer source said, "[energy prices are] quite high in Korea, [but] we are trying to operate at full capacity."

Apart from energy costs and logistics struggles, the former chairman of the Korea Paper Association Chairman, Lee Bok-Jin said at November's ASEAN Pulp and Paper Industries conference in Kuala Lumpur that Korea's domestic paper industry faced other major headwinds, including inconsistent government policies when it came to sustainable practices and the general perception that paper was not truly environmentally friendly.

During June's Paper Day ceremony, Chairman Choi talked about positioning Korea's paper industry as eco-friendly with an eye toward actively strengthening its exports market. Although Korea does not have natural forest resources and depends on foreign pulp for paper production, Choi noted that the country was the world's eighth-largest paper producer due to its competitive quality and world-class paper recycling technology.

According to the Korea Paper Federation, Korea produced

11 million tonnes of paper in 2024, 80% of which was from recycled paper.

"[Korea's] export demand is fairly stable, especially from Southeast Asia and India, so many mills are still pushing outbound volumes to stay competitive," the first source said, adding that exports were still manageable despite high energy and logistics costs.

The producer source said that market prices were not strong enough to allow them to increase export volumes.

"If market prices are stronger and freight costs go down, then we can expand export volumes," the producer said.

The logistics market has been volatile due to compounding issues, namely the Red Sea crisis that began at the end of 2023 and carried through 2024 and ever-changing Trump tariffs from the United States that created shipping woes and container availability crunches this year.

Korea is not the only country to be impacted by high energy costs.

In New Zealand, multiple mills closed within the recent year due to staggering energy costs. These included Winstone Pulp International and Oji Fibre Solutions.

In its newest Sustainability Report published in June, Pan Pac Forest Products talked about taking downtime at its pulp mill due to untenably high electricity prices.

New Zealand has taken concrete steps towards mitigating the energy crisis by exploring or tapping into renewable resources, including starting

new exploration into the possibility of geothermal energy sources and solar energy.

On June 23, the New Zealand government announced that it would invest NZD \$28.1 million (\$17 million) into three solar projects to ensure security of local energy supply.

### **Australian forestry industry looking to shore up self-reliance; government initiatives to support**

The Australian forestry industry has rallied to deepen self-reliance to pull away from depending on other regions, notably Europe and Asia.

This could possibly be because Australia wants to keep its forestry product sources close to avoid being at the mercy of ocean freight, which has been volatile in recent months, sources told Fastmarkets in the week to Thursday June 26.

Ocean freight price hikes and shipping uncertainty were due to multiple reasons, including the Red Sea crisis and United States tariffs.

Another reason for the self-reliance push could also be that Australia wants to ensure its timber sources align with its Illegal Logging Prohibition Rules, which were updated in March to keep illegally harvested timber out of the market, sources said.

In February, Australia's Millari Group bought the old Juken Mill in neighboring New Zealand, with the sawmill located in Gisborne.

Full production started at the end April. Millari Group subsequently raised the mill's original capacity of 130,000

cubic metres per year to more than 200,000 to feed demand.

In early May, Australia's Borg Group completed its acquisition of the Bombala Mill in New South Wales, marking further foray into expanding its footprint in the continent's timber industry. Its original owner was Dongwha Australia, part of the Korean Dongwha Group.

Australian engineering consultancy Wood Beca worked with Bombala Mill when it was still owned by Dongwha to expand softwood production, stating that capacity was 180,000 tpy.

A source close to Bombala Mill said that current annual production capacity was confidential but that the new owners planned to "build on the strong position that Dongwha has built in Australia."

At the end of May, Australia's biggest softwood sawmill business, AKD, acquired 100% of Highland Pine Products. The main asset in the acquisition was the Oberon Mill, which was processing more than half a million cubic metres of forestry products, but after the acquisition was anticipated to quadruple this amount. The transaction will be finalized on July 1.

The Forest & Wood Products Australia also recorded data showing that Australia's sawn softwood imports had risen 15.4% by the year ended February.

The Support Plantation Establishment Program (SPEP) is open for Round 3 grant applications, which are set to close on July 17. The SPEP will see \$73.76 million grant funding distributed from 2023 to 2027. The funding is to support the establishment of softwood and hardwood plantations in

response to "projected growth in demand for domestically sourced timber resources," Australia's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) stated.

According to the DAFF, log harvests have plummeted 1.59% for hardwoods when comparing 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024, and are down 0.7% for softwoods for the same period.

The DAFF also reported that the plantation area for softwood plantations is up 0.2% to 1,010,000 hectares across the continent compared with 2023 to 2023 levels, but down 0.6% for hardwood plantations, currently at 674,000 hectares. Softwood is popular in furniture production and housing construction, and generally considered more available and affordable than hardwood.

### **Oji to hike prices for various packaging board grades in Japan from October 1**

Oji Materia, the Oji Holdings subsidiary overseeing the company's production and sales of packaging paper and board, has announced price hikes of at least 10% for various packaging board grades in Japan, starting with October 1 shipments, the company said on Friday June 20.

The proposed mark-ups will cover the company's entire containerboard range in addition to its coreboard, gypsum board base paper and other miscellaneous packaging board grades.

The company said that the price adjustments are needed to absorb the elevated costs of raw materials and fuels and further expenses in chemicals, logistics and labor.

This is Oji's first price hike attempt since October 2022 when the company pushed through hikes of ¥15 per kg (\$102.75 per tonne) for the packaging grades mentioned above. At that time, other leading board producers also implemented price increases of a similar scale.

Since then, prices for major packaging board grades have remained largely stable in the Japanese market.

Other top Japanese producers are also mulling over price rise plans for their packaging board products from October this year, sources told Fastmarkets.

### **Japan's Oji Holdings acquires 9,000 hectares of plantation land in Brazil**

Oji Holdings announced on June 13 that it will expand its plantation portfolio with 9,000 hectares in Brazil, with the land set to be used to cultivate African Mahogany.

An Oji Holdings spokesperson told Fastmarkets that the company is of the view that there is demand for the "high-quality [wood] in the Japanese market.

The company plans to process the logs into lumber and other products locally, then export the finished furniture products to Japan or import lumber and manufacture products in Japan. The same source added that Oji Holdings intended to, according to its spokesperson.

This latest acquisition was for partial shares in two companies - 80% in Mogno Das Alterosas (MDA) and 45% in Mamoneira Agropastoril - made through Oji Holdings' group company Nipo-Brasileira.

The move to acquire plantation forests in Brazil is part of Oji Holdings' long-term strategy to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The producer had also set 2040 as a milestone target year for achieving its environmental and sustainability goals.

These goals include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% from fiscal year 2018 levels. A key factor is to increase absorption and storage of carbon dioxide through the company's plantation forests.

African Mahogany is noted for its superior ability to absorb and store carbon dioxide, with one mature tree being able to absorb 50 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.

Under the plan, Oji Holdings will restore 5,000 hectares of natural forest and develop technologies to make alternatives for fossil fuels from renewable wood resources.

When asked if Oji Holdings had intentions to further expand in South America, the spokesperson told Fastmarkets that the company plans to "explore business expansion, including acquisitions of forest plantations".

With these plantation forests, Oji Holdings' worldwide plantation areas will reach almost 645,000 hectares.

### **Guangxi Qingyun Paper adds 15,000 tpy tissue capacity to Guigang mill in China**

Guangxi Qingyun Paper has started up a new 15,000 tonne-per-year tissue

machine (TM) at its mill in Guigang city, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

The machine, dubbed TM 2, produced its first jumbo roll on Sunday June 22.

Domestic supplier Xi'an Weiya Machinery provided the machine, which has a trim width of 2.85 meters and a design speed of 1,400 meters per minute.

It is the second machine to come online at the plant. TM 1, which also has a capacity of 15,000 tonnes per year from the same supplier, came online in late May.

Two other identical TMs are expected to be commissioned soon around late July at the site.

### **SHFE excludes Bratsk BSK to make room for other BSK deliverables**

*>>> continued from page 1*

According to traders, BSK resale prices are pegged to the BSK contract levels on the SHFE in the Chinese domestic market, and resales of Bratsk BSK have usually been done at the biggest discount.

Bratsk BSK's low resale value prompted investors to use the product for futures delivery and, as a result, most of the stocks stored in the SHFE-designated warehouses ended up being Bratsk BSK, leading the SHFE to exclude it in a bid to make room for other BSK brands, a seller told Fastmarkets.

As of Tuesday June 24, the volume of BSK on warrant in the SHFE-designated warehouses totaled 247,624 tonnes.

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