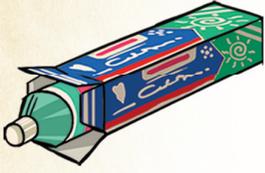
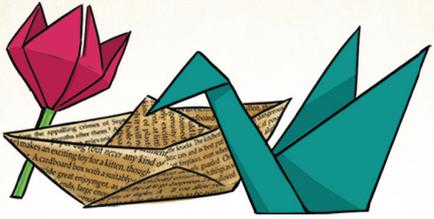


The
Story
of

PAPER



Benita Sen

From the Desk of Dr R K Pachauri

We live in a world where our concept of a good life is defined largely by the extent to which we have access to and use of a range of goods and services. We also see all around us a substantial expansion of the means by which transportation and communication make it possible for us to achieve mobility across space and gain access to information and knowledge in very short periods of time which were unimaginable several decades ago. We are living in a period of unprecedented change with major implications for the environment.

A large range of human activities have resulted in damage and degradation of our ecosystems. The Working Group-I Report which forms part of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was released in September 2013 has clearly stated “Human influence has been detected in warming of the atmosphere and the ocean, in changes in the global water cycle, in reductions in snow and ice, in global mean sea level rise, and in changes in some climate extremes. This evidence for human influence has grown since recent past. It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-twentieth century”. The term extremely likely applies to a probability of over 95 percent, which should provide compelling evidence to human society that we need to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases in order to stabilize Earth’s climate.

In particular, the youth of the world who have their lives ahead of them need to take the lead in ensuring that firstly we create awareness on the scientific reality of climate change and secondly in mobilizing action to deal with this challenge. “The story of” series deals with subjects like food, paper, cloth, computers, home, and transport. Essentially we human beings have become addicted to consuming a range of products and then throwing them away for a variety of reasons, often not even dictated by the economic life of the product involved, but for other reasons which essentially constitute our current lifestyles and are part of the inertia in our systems which inhibit change and the adoption of new directions. The youth of the world are in a unique position to make use of existing knowledge and make contributions to the protection of our ecosystems throughout their future. They have to become agents of change by conquering the inertia in our minds and established systems.



R K Pachauri

Director-General, TERI

Chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

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The Energy and Resources Institute



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PAPER EVERYWHERE

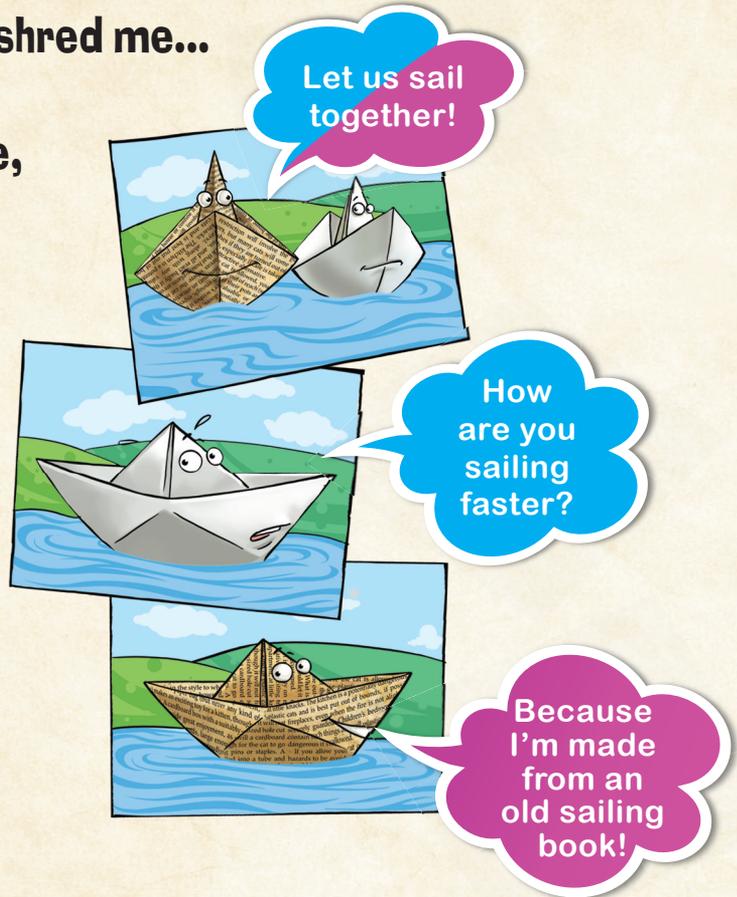
Here's a riddle for you.

Float me, fold me, rip me, shred me...
I let you do it all.
Write on me, read from me,
Or just roll me into a ball.
Who am I?

The answer is **PAPER!**

We don't give much thought to paper, maybe because it is present almost everywhere. Can you make a list of things made from paper that you can see around you right now?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



PAPER TRAIL

Cartons in which you pack your stuff when you are shifting home are made from paper. This is because it makes these boxes lighter and cheaper than, say, a metal box.



Guess what else paper gets into?

The toothpaste you use came inside a paper pack that kept the tube safe and in shape. The poster of your favourite superhero, singer, or sportsperson is printed on paper, and the receipt that the shopkeeper gave your mom when you bought this book was written on or printed on paper.

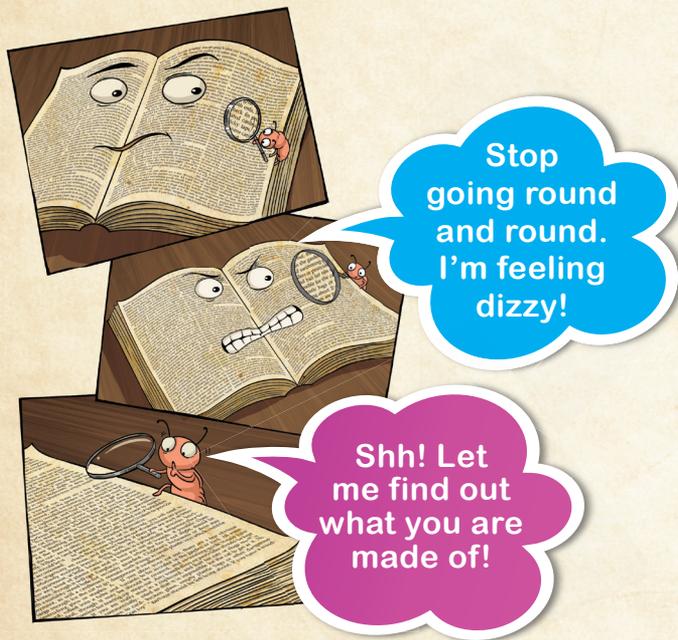


If you look carefully, you will find paper being used in many different things and for many different purposes. The calendar hanging in your room, the bag your mother gets groceries in, the newspaper your father reads every morning, your school diary, books, notebooks, and even the labels on them are all made of paper!

PAPER TAG Paper filters are used to clean water, air, oil, and even to purify medicine.

PAPUROS, POPYRUS, PAPIER

Paper is made of fibres or threads that are tightly and firmly held together. Usually, paper contains wood fibres. However, some stationery and currency notes are made from fibres of linen, cotton, or those of other plants.



Paper gets its name from the Greek word *papuros*. The Romans picked up this word from the Greeks, but they called it *papyrus*. Papyrus is the name of a plant that grows in Africa. It grows in the shallow waters of marshes, and especially along the River Nile in Egypt. The name of the Papyrus plant was also used for the writing material that was made from its tough stalks.

PAPER TRAIL

Buying paper? Remember, 25 sheets of paper make a quire. Twenty quires, or 500 sheets, make a ream. And 5,000 sheets make a bale. Well, you should also know that it takes 10 litres of water to produce a sheet of paper.



Soon the word started travelling around the world. The French called it *papier*. By about AD 1350, "paper" became an English word. It was first used as a noun and later as a verb. For example, "papering a room" meant "decorating a room with paper".

Paper, as we know it today, was invented in China. It was made from vegetable fibre, such as rice and bamboo canes.

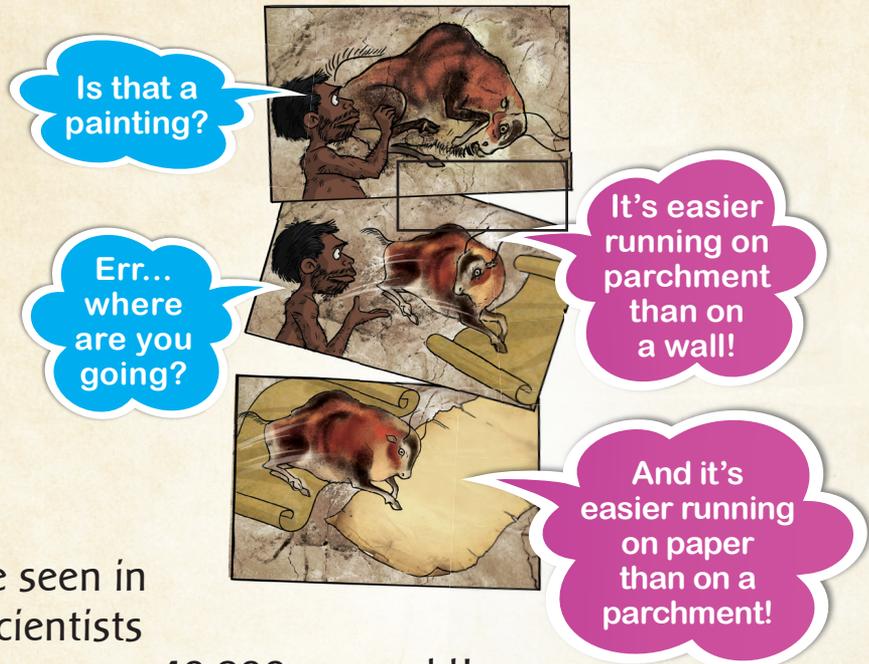


The tall green papyrus plant was called *djet* or *tjufi* by ancient Egyptians.

PAPER TAG Some parts of the papyrus plant, like the soft and spongy tissue or pith inside the stem, are eaten!

WALL TO PAPYRUS

Although papyrus was one of the earliest materials on which people drew or wrote, it was not the first. The earliest writing surface was walls and ceilings of caves, in which early man lived. The oldest cave paintings can be seen in El Castillo in Spain. Scientists believe the paintings are over 40,800 years old!



In the beginning, people chipped their writing on to rocks. But the rocks were too heavy to be carried around. It was also not easy to carve on stone. As people grew more comfortable with painting and writing, they wanted something that was easy to carry and write on. Thus, they started to clean and smoothen animal skin to make parchment. But a problem arose when they wanted to write a lot. It was difficult to find that many parchments!

PAPER TRAIL

In Egypt, the word *papyrus* originally meant "that which belongs to the house".



The Story of Paper (Save paper, save trees. Think smart, reuse it!)



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