International Paper: Technologies for the Benefit of Environment

VESTI edition – August 30, 2017 – To be among the most successful, sustainable and responsible companies in the world – this is the vision of International Paper. The company started its operations in Russia in 1998 and ever since, it has been a major employer and a taxpayer in the Leningrad Region and one of the leading players in the pulp and paper industry in the country. The Executive Director of the Svetogorsk pulp & paper mill Minas Souris talked to us about the day-to-day business of the mill and about environmental initiatives, which the company have contributed to the Year of ecology.

- Every year, at the Svetogorsk Pulp and Paper mill, an outage takes place – this is when production stops and major works are carried out. Please tell us more about this process.

- Outages, during which we undertake major repair works, are conducted regularly at all International Paper facilities around the world. This is a very important time of the year when we can carry out repairs that ensure the reliability of our facilities and the smooth and continuous running of our business. Reliability – this is what allows us to operate and maintain our equipment, which produces products well-known to the Russian consumer: SvetoCopy and Ballet office paper, as well as liquid packaging board used for liquid dairy products. Our facility in Svetogorsk has about 1,600 employees, and for them the mill is like a second home. At International Paper there is nothing more important than making sure this home is safe and reliable. In this respect, it took us 10 months to plan and prepare for our last outage. Our team has put incredible effort to make sure this process is at a world-class level. This is crucial for us, because at our mill we create innovative, sustainable and recyclable products that help our customers achieve their objectives.

- How do you assess the works carried out?

The planned major repairs undertaken in June 2017 can be counted a success. The aims and objectives of our entire Outage-2017 team have been met. All works – carried out as scheduled, all costs - within the budget. It should be noted that for us safety is a key value. We want to ensure that all our employees, contractors and guests return home safe every day. Our mill in Svetogorsk has operated more than 3.7 million hours with zero workplace incidents, and in July we celebrated two years with no recordable injuries in our facility in Tikhvin, where all our forest exploitation operations are centralized. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all of my colleagues on this achievement and reiterate that safety is a culture that we create with engagement and leadership, and we can never stop working on improvement in safety.

- It appears that the outage affects only production activities?

From an ecological point of view, Outage-2017 was also a great success. Our goal of "Zero environmental incidents" is fulfilled. We made progress in implementing two major projects aiming to improve the town's air quality, where our people are live and work. One of these projects, completed during the outage, reduces
emissions of sulfur-containing substances, while the other one that will be finalized in autumn of this year, will help reduce emissions from distributed sources, or the so-called evaporation of process water. I should also not forget to mention our project that aims to treat all non-process water from our facility prior to being discharged into the Unterniska River. The first phase of this process was also done during Outage-2017. In terms of energy efficiency projects, we modernized the company’s PM1 by introducing upgrades that will eliminate unplanned power cuts. Such initiatives help us follow our mission - to improve people’s lives, the planet and our company’s performance by transforming renewable resources into products people depend on every day.

- Did the Year of Ecology declared in Russia in 2017 affect the implementation of your major projects?

Undoubtedly, the Year of Ecology is a great opportunity for everyone to get involved in various activities that improve the environment. But it may also be said without exaggeration that for International Paper every year is the year of ecology. Our company makes large investments in environmental programs, both on a global level as well as locally, at our mill in Svetogorsk. Our efforts in this direction help reduce our environmental footprint and promote the long-term sustainability of natural capital. Care for our people, the communities, and the environment is the most important part of our work, both now and for generations to come.