

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Going bananas for a green investment

The Australian cleantech sector is still relatively immature and small, although 2010 and beyond is set to present a better outlook. This is the case for Papyrus Australia, a company that has found an alternative to address the global demand for fibre resources in the waste trunk of the banana palm.

ASX-listed Papyrus Australia (PPY) is the developer of a world-first technology that converts the waste trunk of the banana palm into alternatives to forest wood products to be used in the paper, packaging, furniture, building, construction and other industries. It was founded by Ramy Azer in 1995 in response to an increasingly stringent environmental and regulatory situation facing the paper industry.

It is estimated that the banana fibre segment of the veneer and board industry will be worth over US\$20 billion annually by 2020.

"There are about 10 million hectares of banana plantations with over 1,500 plants per hectare in over 160 countries, which create 2.5 billion tonnes of decomposing raw material every year," said Papyrus Australia managing director Ramy Azer.

"The Papyrus technology has the capacity to utilise this renewable and abundant source of fibre to provide both the timber and paper industries with a new, innovative, low cost and environmentally-sustainable solution," Azer added.

In addition to being much more environmentally-friendly, the Papyrus technology has significantly lower production costs when compared to traditional tree pulping technologies.

The company's achievements were recently recognised with the Investor Ready Award by South Australia's Top 20 Innovation Awards and the KPMG Excellence in Cleantech Award by the CleverGreen™ Innovators to Watch Awards.

Papyrus is part of the Australian Cleantech Index which provides a measure of the performance of the Australian listed stocks in the cleantech sectors. The index currently follows over 60 companies and represents a combined market capitalisation of over \$11 billion.

According to John O'Brien, founder of Australian CleanTech, the cleantech sector is a sensible place to be for Australian companies and investors looking forward.

"Looking at trends in the US and Europe, investment in the cleantech sectors will become more a focus in the next 10 years with the industry estimated to grow by about three and half times," said O'Brien.

“When looking at investment opportunities, it’s important to first back companies that are profitable because they provide more economically-viable solutions, as well as being more environmentally-responsible,” O’Brien added.

Papyrus Australia’s commercialisation strategy is to become a technology licensing company assisting suitable entities to establish banana veneer and banana fibre production factories in locations where banana is grown. The first step in this process is to prove the technology and validate the commercial values of banana veneer and fibre products in a production environment.

To do so, the company established its first factory in Walkamin, Far North Queensland, where it produces veneer for the furniture and building industries and chips to be converted into particleboard and other alternatives to wood-based panels. The Papyrus products are currently exported to its European representative 3W Tout Bois.

The company is looking at increasing labour resources, equipment and production at its factory as well as initiate production of fibreboard at the former Brimms chipboard factory in Brisbane.

The Papyrus process does not contribute to the destruction of natural or purpose-planted forests and does not consume any chemicals or water during manufacture.

The Papyrus products are water-repellent, fire-retardant, are stronger and lighter than most conventional fibre materials and have a distinctive look and feel.

The Papyrus patent was granted in Australia in 2007 and the technology is patent-protected in many countries around the world.

More information on Papyrus is available at [www.papyrusaustralia.com.au](http://www.papyrusaustralia.com.au).

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