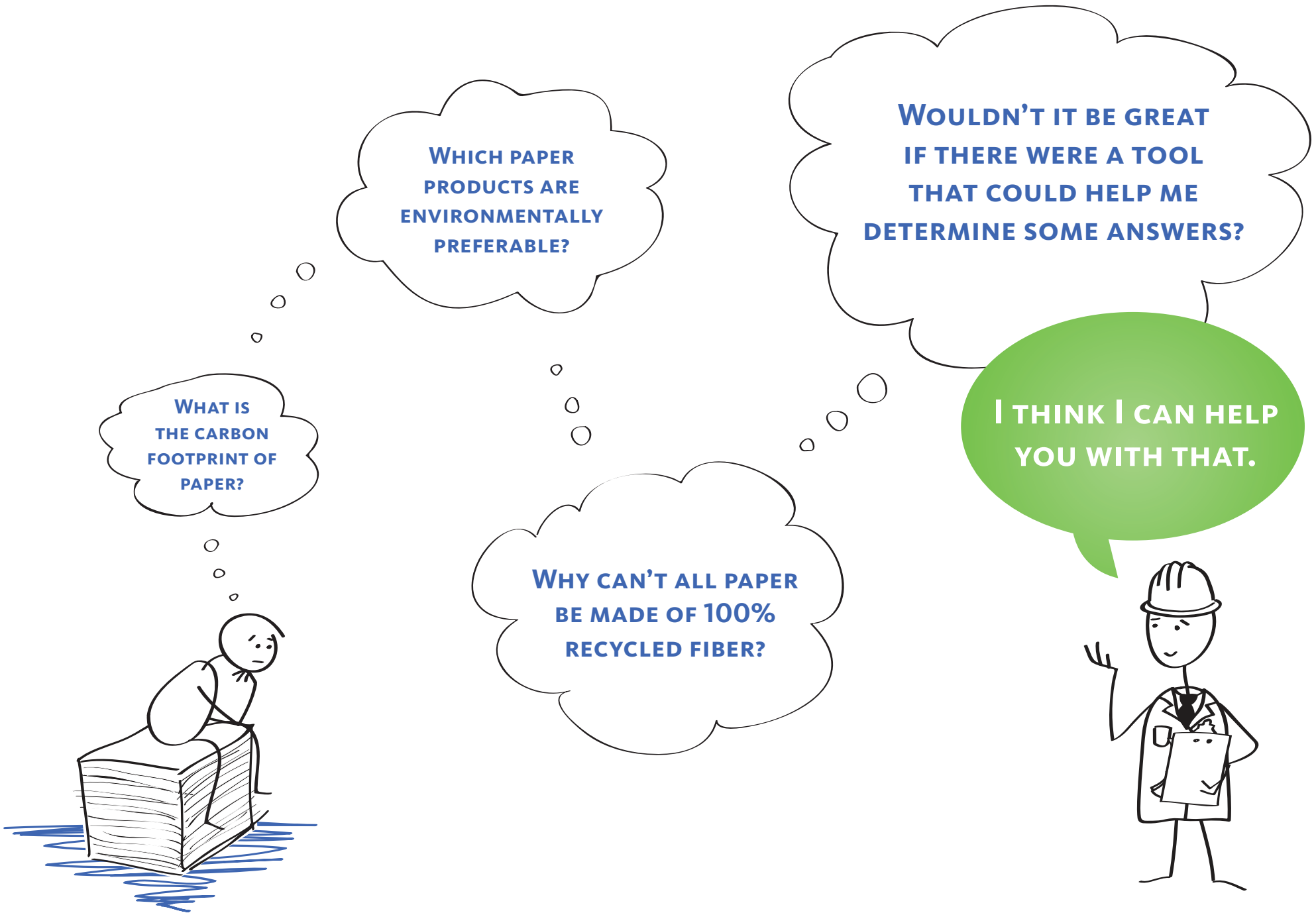
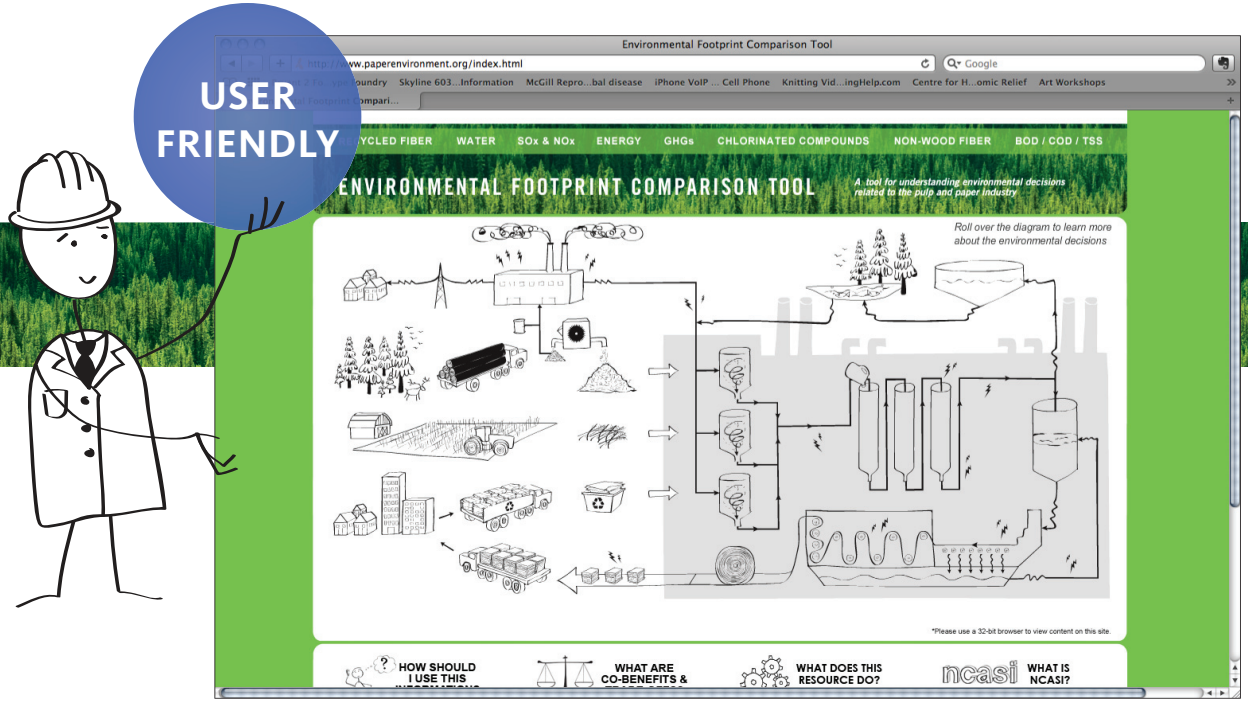

What is the carbon footprint of paper?
Which paper products are environmentally preferable?
Why can't all paper be made of 100% recycled fiber?
Wouldn't it be great if there were a tool that could help me determine some answers?
I think I can help you with that.



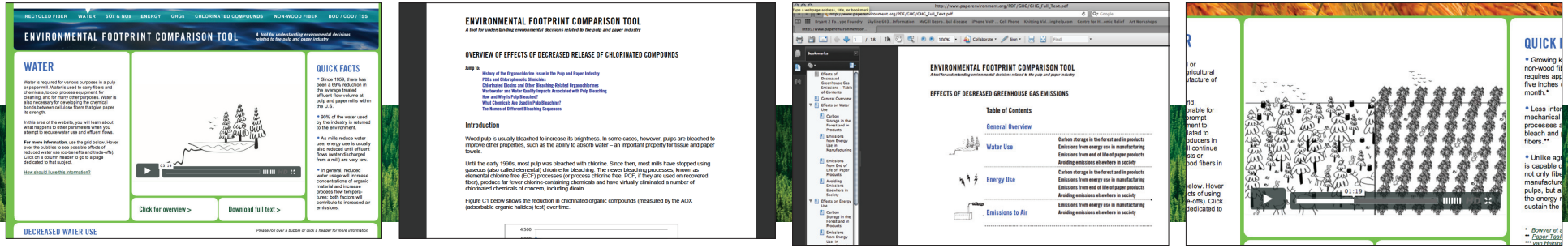
LEFT: screenshot of the home page showing interactive diagram of the paper-making process.

INTRODUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT COMPARISON TOOL {WWW.PAPERENVIRONMENT.ORG}

The EFCT is a web-based information resource (www.PaperEnvironment.org) designed to help industry stakeholders understand the challenges faced in simultaneously meeting a broad array of environmental objectives. Minimizing the environmental footprint from pulp and paper manufacturing requires understanding the interactions between various parameters. There are a number of releases to the environment associated with manufacturing, recycling, and disposing of paper products. When a company explores ways to minimize one of these releases, it may find that other types of environmental releases are minimized at the same time (co-benefits)—or it may find that other types of environmental releases become larger (trade-offs). Environmental decisions therefore become something of a balancing act, seeking to maximize co-benefits while minimizing trade-offs. This tool helps stakeholders understand these sometimes complex interactions that become the scientific backbone of decisions related to minimizing a company's or a facility's environmental footprint.

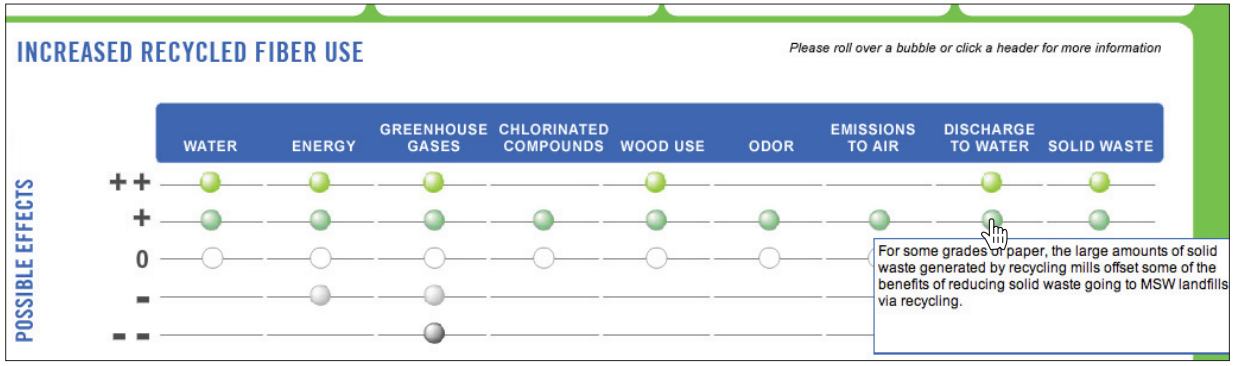
THE EFCT INCLUDES MATERIAL ON THESE MANUFACTURING-RELATED SUBJECTS:

- Recycled Fiber
- Greenhouse Gases
- Water
- Chlorinated Compounds
- SOx and NOx
- Non-Wood Fiber
- Energy
- BOD/COD/TSS



ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: screenshot showing the first level of information including "quick facts" and video content in the Water section; screenshot of second level information—the overview from the Chlorinated Compounds section; screenshot third level of information—an interactive PDF from the Greenhouse Gases section; and a screenshot honing in on the video content from the Non-Wood Fiber section.

Each subject is explored by looking at increasing its use (in the case of Recycled Fiber and Non-Wood Fiber) or decreasing its release (in the case of all other subjects) in relation to associated environmental co-benefits and trade-offs in the nine categories shown in the screenshot below: Water; Energy; Greenhouse Gases; Chlorinated Compounds; Wood Use; Odor; Emissions to Air; Discharge to Water; and Solid Waste.



ABOVE: screenshot of bubble grid showing co-benefits and trade-offs for "Increased Recycled Fiber Use."

The website incorporates three levels of detail. The first level includes video content, "quick facts", and a grid that provides short statements on the environmental trade-offs and co-benefits for each subject area. The second level of the website provides an overview of basic facts (including a definition of the given subject area, current industry performance, opportunities for improvement, and challenges to future reductions). The third level of the website drills deeper into the co-benefits and trade-offs for each of the nine categories, for each subject area, with detailed text supported by published scientific references.

This layered system allows for use of the EFCT by various types of stakeholders—including those with no knowledge of the industry through to those with very detailed knowledge of the sector.

Click here to enter

www.PaperEnvironment.org

For more information please contact paperenvironment@ncasi.org