

SAPPI LTD

Form 20-F

December 20, 2005

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on December 20, 2005

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 20-F

☐ REGISTRATION STATEMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 12(b) OR (g) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

OR

☒ ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended October 2, 2005

OR

☐ TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from _____ to _____

Commission file number 1-14872

SAPPI LIMITED

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

Not Applicable

(Translation of Registrant's name into English)

Republic of South Africa

(Jurisdiction of incorporation or organisation)

48 Ameshoff Street
Braamfontein
Johannesburg 2001
Republic of South Africa
(Telephone: +27-11-407-8111)

(Address and telephone number of principal executive offices)

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act.

American Depositary Shares, evidenced by
American Depositary Receipts, each representing
1 Ordinary Share

(Title of each class)

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

New York Stock Exchange
Ordinary Shares, par value R1.00 per Share*

(Name of each exchange on which registered)

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act.

None

Securities for which there is a reporting obligation pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Act.

None

Indicate the number of outstanding shares of each of the issuer's classes of capital or common stock as of the close of the period covered by the annual report.

239,071,892 Ordinary Shares

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

YES ☒ **NO** ☐

If this report is an annual or transition report, indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

YES ☐ **NO** ☒

Note: Checking the box above will not relieve any registrant required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 from their obligations under those Sections.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

YES ☒ **NO** ☐

Indicate by check mark which financial statements item the registrant has elected to follow.

ITEM 17 ☐ **ITEM 18** ☒

If this is an annual report, indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

YES ☐ **NO** ☒

* Not for trading but only in connection with the registration of the American Depositary Shares, pursuant to the requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Our Use of Terms and Conventions in this Annual Report</u>		Page
<u>Accounting Periods and Principles</u>		ii
<u>Currency of Presentation and Exchange Rates</u>		iv
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>		iv
	PART I	
<u>Item 1.</u>	<u>Identity of Directors, Senior Management and Advisers</u>	1
<u>Item 2.</u>	<u>Offer Statistics and Expected Timetable</u>	1
<u>Item 3.</u>	<u>Key Information</u>	1
<u>Item 4.</u>	<u>Information on the Company</u>	9
<u>Item 5.</u>	<u>Operating and Financial Review and Prospects</u>	43
<u>Item 6.</u>	<u>Directors, Senior Management and Employees</u>	94
<u>Item 7.</u>	<u>Major Shareholders and Related Party Transactions</u>	103
<u>Item 8.</u>	<u>Financial Information</u>	105
<u>Item 9.</u>	<u>The Offer and Listing</u>	107
<u>Item 10.</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>	109
<u>Item 11.</u>	<u>Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk</u>	126
<u>Item 12.</u>	<u>Description of Securities Other than Equity Securities</u>	126
	PART II	
<u>Item 13.</u>	<u>Defaults, Dividend Arrearages and Delinquencies</u>	127
<u>Item 14.</u>	<u>Material Modifications to the Rights of Security Holders and Use of Proceeds</u>	127
<u>Item 15.</u>	<u>Controls and Procedures</u>	127
<u>Item 16A.</u>	<u>Audit Committee Financial Expert</u>	128
<u>Item 16B.</u>	<u>Code of Ethics</u>	128
<u>Item 16C.</u>	<u>Principal Accountant Fees and Services</u>	129
<u>Item 16D.</u>	<u>Exemptions from the Listing Standards for Audit Committees</u>	129
<u>Item 16E.</u>	<u>Purchases of Equity Securities</u>	130
	PART III	
<u>Item 17.</u>	<u>Financial Statements</u>	131
<u>Item 18.</u>	<u>Financial Statements</u>	131
<u>Item 19.</u>	<u>Exhibits</u>	132

OUR USE OF TERMS AND CONVENTIONS IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT

Unless otherwise specified or the context requires otherwise in this Annual Report on Form 20-F (Annual Report):

- references to Sappi , Sappi Group , Group , we , us and our are to Sappi Limited together with its subsidiaries;
- references to southern Africa are to the Republic of South Africa, the Kingdom of Swaziland, the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Republic of Namibia and the Republic of Botswana;
- references to North America are to the United States, Canada and the Caribbean;
- references to Latin America are to the countries located on the continent of South America and Mexico;
- references to Rand , ZAR and R are to South African Rand and references to SA cents are to South African cents, the currency of South Africa;
- references to US dollar(s) , dollar(s) , US\$, \$ and US cents are to United States dollars and cents, the currency of the United States;
- references to euro , EUR and are to the currency introduced at the start of the third stage of the European Economic and Monetary Union pursuant to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, as amended by the Treaty on the European Union;
- references to Guilders and NLG are to Dutch Guilders, the former currency of the Netherlands;
- references to Deutsche marks and DEM are to German Deutsche marks, the former currency of Germany;
- references to UK pounds sterling and GBP are to United Kingdom pounds sterling, the currency of the United Kingdom;
- references to m² are to square metres and references to hectares or ha are to a land area of 10,000 square metres or approximately 2.47 acres;
- references to tonnes are to metric tonnes (approximately 2,204.6 pounds or 1.1 short tonnes);
- references to market share are based upon sales volumes in a specified geographic region during the fiscal year ended September 26, 2004; and
- references to the Potlatch acquisition are to the acquisition on May 13, 2002 of Potlatch Corporation's coated fine paper business in an asset purchase. The acquisition included Potlatch's Cloquet, Minnesota pulp and paper mill as well as the brands, order book and working capital of the Cloquet mill and the brands, order book and inventories of Potlatch's Brainerd, Minnesota paper mill for an aggregate purchase price of \$483 million. We did not acquire Potlatch's Brainerd mill, which Potlatch has closed.

Except as otherwise indicated, in this Annual Report the amounts of capacity or production capacity of our facilities or machines are based upon our best estimates of production capacity at the date of filing of this Annual Report. Actual production by machines may differ from production capacity as a result of products produced, variations in product mix and other factors.

Certain market share information and other statements presented herein regarding our position relative to our competitors with respect to the manufacture or distribution of particular products are not

based on published statistical data or information obtained from independent third parties, but reflect our best estimates. We have based these estimates upon information obtained from our customers, trade and business organisations and associations and other contacts in our industries.

Unless otherwise provided in this Annual Report, trademarks identified by ® are registered trademarks of Sappi Limited or our subsidiaries.

iii

ACCOUNTING PERIODS AND PRINCIPLES

Unless otherwise specified, all references in this Annual Report to a fiscal year and year ended of Sappi Limited refer to a twelve-month financial period. All references in this Annual Report to fiscal 2005, fiscal 2004, fiscal 2003, fiscal 2002 or fiscal 2001 or the year ended September 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002 or 2001 refer to Sappi Limited's twelve-month financial periods ended on October 2, 2005, September 26, 2004, September 28, 2003, September 29, 2002 and September 30, 2001, respectively; references in this Annual Report to fiscal 2006 refer to the period beginning October 3, 2005 and ending October 1, 2006. Our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report have been prepared in conformity with South African generally accepted accounting principles (South African GAAP or SA GAAP), which differ in certain significant respects from United States generally accepted accounting principles (United States GAAP or US GAAP); see note 42 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report. On May 13, 2002, we acquired the coated fine paper business of Potlatch Corporation. Our Group annual financial statements for the year ended September 2002 include the results for the acquired coated fine paper business since its acquisition.

CURRENCY OF PRESENTATION AND EXCHANGE RATES

We publish our Group annual financial statements and all financial data presented in this Annual Report in US dollars on a nominal (non-inflation adjusted) basis. For information regarding the conversion to US dollars in fiscal 2005, 2004 and 2003, see note 2 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

In order to utilise the Safe Harbor provisions of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 (the Reform Act), we are providing the following cautionary statement. Except for historical information contained herein, statements contained in this Annual Report may constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Reform Act. The words believe, anticipate, expect, intend, estimate, assume, positioned, will, may, should, risk and other similar expressions, which are predictions of or indicate future events and future trends which do not relate to historical matters identify forward-looking statements. In addition, this document includes forward-looking statements relating to our potential exposure to various types of market risks, such as interest rate risk, foreign exchange rate risk and commodity price risk. You should not rely on forward-looking statements because they involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which are in some cases beyond our control and may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to differ materially from anticipated future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements (and from past results, performance or achievements). Certain factors that may cause such differences include but are not limited to: the highly cyclical nature of the pulp and paper industry; pulp and paper production, production capacity, input costs (including raw materials, energy and employee costs) and pricing levels in North America, Europe, Asia and southern Africa; any major disruption in production at our key facilities; changes in environmental, tax and other laws and regulations; adverse changes in the markets for our products; any delays, unexpected costs or other problems experienced with any business acquired or to be acquired and achieving expected savings and synergies; consequences of our leverage; adverse changes in the South African political situation and economy or the effect of governmental efforts to address present or future economic or social problems; and the impact of future investments, acquisitions and dispositions (including the financing of investments and acquisitions) and any delays, unexpected costs or other problems experienced in connection with dispositions.

These factors are fully discussed in this Annual Report. For further discussion on these factors, see Item 3 Key Information-Selected Financial Data , Item 3 Key Information-Risk Factors , Item 4 Information on the Company , Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Operational Results , Item 10 Additional Information Exchange Controls and note 37 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are made as of the date of the filing of this Annual Report and are not intended to give any assurance as to future results. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any of these forward-looking statements, whether to reflect new information or future events or circumstances or otherwise.

v

PART I

ITEM 1. IDENTITY OF DIRECTORS, SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND ADVISERS

Not applicable.

ITEM 2. OFFER STATISTICS AND EXPECTED TIMETABLE

Not applicable.

ITEM 3. KEY INFORMATION

Selected Financial Data

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

The selected financial data set forth below has been derived from our Group annual financial statements and are qualified by reference to, and should be read in conjunction with, our Group annual financial statements and the notes thereto, which are included elsewhere in this Annual Report, and Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects .

We prepare our Group annual financial statements according to South African generally accepted accounting principles. There are significant differences between these principles and those applied in the United States. You can read about the principal differences in note 42 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

	Year Ended September				
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
	(US\$ million, except per share and number of shares data)				
Consolidated Income Statement Data:					
South African GAAP:					
Sales(1)	5,018	4,728	4,299	3,729	4,184
Operating (loss) profit(4)	(137)	188	272	402	239
Net (loss) profit(5)	(213)	95	143	217	132
Basic (loss) earnings per share (US cents)(5)	(94)	42	62	94	57
Diluted (loss) earnings per share (US cents)(5)	(94)	42	62	93	56
Dividends per share (US cents)(3)	30	30	29	28	26
United States GAAP:					
Sales(1)	5,018	4,728	4,299	3,729	4,184
Operating (loss) profit(2)(7)	(232)	120	272	402	273
Extraordinary items(2)				6	5
Net (loss) profit(7)	(332)	46	148	237	130
Basic (loss) earnings per share (US cents)(7)	(148)	20	65	103	56
Diluted (loss) earnings per share (US cents)(7)	(148)	20	64	102	56
Dividends per share (US cents)(3)	30	30	29	28	26
Consolidated Balance Sheet Data:					
South African GAAP:					
Total assets(5)	5,708	6,144	5,855	4,752	4,594
Operating assets(4)	5,269	5,576	5,192	4,468	4,046
Total long-term borrowings	1,600	1,693	1,742	1,455	1,012
Shareholders' equity(5)	1,881	2,157	1,983	1,622	1,537
United States GAAP:					
Total assets(7)	5,808	6,419	6,090	4,931	4,766
Operating assets(5)(7)	5,369	5,889	5,465	4,672	4,258
Total long-term borrowings(7)	1,643	1,904	1,869	1,559	1,111
Shareholders' equity(7)	1,579	1,979	1,908	1,581	1,561

Other Information:

South African GAAP:

EBITDA(6)	353	653	667	740	590
Weighted average number of ordinary shares in issue (in million)	225.8	226.3	229.1	230.2	232.8

United States GAAP:

EBITDA(6)(7)	239	570	656	745	618
Weighted average number of ordinary shares in issue (in million)	224.7	225.0	227.6	228.8	231.0

- (1) Sales are defined in note 2 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.
- (2) Certain items, which are included under Operating profit under SA GAAP, are included under Extraordinary items for US GAAP. For more information refer to note 42 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.
- (3) The dividends per share were, in each case, declared after the end of the year indicated. For further information on our dividend policy, see Item 8 Financial Information Dividend Policy .
- (4) Operating assets are defined in note 38 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.
- (5) Net (loss) profit, basic (loss) earnings per share, diluted (loss) earnings per share, total assets and shareholders' equity has been restated under SA GAAP to take into account the requirements of AC 501 Accounting for Secondary Tax on Companies (STC) which became effective from the beginning of the current financial year. The effect on net (loss) profit is a decrease of US\$3 million, US\$4 million and US\$6 million for 2004, 2002 and 2001 respectively. The effect on basic (loss) earnings per share is a decrease of 1 US cents, 2 US cents and 2 US cents for 2004, 2002 and 2001 respectively. The effect on diluted (loss) earnings per share is a decrease of 1 US cents, 2 US cents and 3 US cents for 2004, 2002 and 2001 respectively. The effect on total assets and shareholders' equity is an increase of US\$38 million, US\$38 million, US\$25 million and US\$40 million for 2004, 2003, 2002 and 2001 respectively.
- (6) In connection with the U.S. Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) rules relating to Conditions for Use of Non-GAAP Financial Measures , we have reconciled EBITDA to net profit rather than operating profit and recalculated EBITDA. As a result our definition has been amended to retain non-trading profit/loss and minority interest as part of EBITDA. EBITDA represents earnings before interest (net finance costs), tax, depreciation and amortisation (including fellingings). We use EBITDA as an internal measure of performance and believe it is a useful and commonly used measure of financial performance in addition to operating profit and other profitability measures under SA GAAP or US GAAP. EBITDA is not a measure of performance under SA GAAP or US GAAP. EBITDA should not be construed as an alternative to operating profit as an indicator of the company's operations in accordance with SA GAAP or US GAAP. EBITDA is also presented to assist our shareholders and the investment community in interpreting our financial results. This financial measure is regularly used as a means of comparison of companies in our industry by removing certain differences between companies such as depreciation methods, financing structures and taxation regimes. However, EBITDA is presented on a Group basis, and there are regulatory and contractual limitations on our businesses' ability to transfer funds among each other. We may also incur tax costs with these transfers. As a result, EBITDA generated by one business may not be

available to make payments on borrowings by another business. Different companies and analysts may calculate EBITDA differently, so making comparisons among companies on this basis should be done very carefully. See the Group income statement to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report for an explanation of the computation of net finance costs.

(7) Operating (loss) profit, net (loss) profit, basic (loss) earnings per share, diluted (loss) earnings per share, total assets, operating assets, total long-term borrowings, shareholders' equity and EBITDA under US GAAP have been restated for certain changes identified under US GAAP. For more information on this restatement refer to Item 15 of this Annual Report and note 42 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

The following table reconciles net (loss) profit to EBITDA.

	Year Ended September				
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
	(US\$ million)				
South African GAAP:					
Net (loss) profit	(213)	95	143	217	132
Add back:					
Depreciation and amortisation (fellings)	490	465	395	338	351
Net finance costs	87	110	111	102	92
Taxation	(11)	(17)	18	83	15
EBITDA	353	653	667	740	590
United States GAAP:					
Net (loss) profit	(332)	46	148	237	130
Add back:					
Depreciation and amortisation (fellings)	470	450	385	349	350
Net finance costs	55	93	90	74	92
Taxation	46	(19)	33	85	46
EBITDA	239	570	656	745	618

Risk Factors

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

In addition to other information contained in this Annual Report, you should carefully consider the following factors before deciding to invest in our ordinary shares and American Depositary Shares (ADSs). There may be additional risks that we do not currently know of or that we currently deem immaterial based on the information available to us. Our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially adversely affected by any of these risks, resulting in a decline in the trading price of our ordinary shares and ADSs.

Risks Related to Our Industry.

We operate in a highly cyclical industry, which has in the past resulted in substantial fluctuations in our results.

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

The markets for our pulp and paper products are significantly affected by changes in industry capacity and output levels and by cyclical changes in the world economy. As a result of periodic supply/demand imbalances in the pulp and paper industry, these markets historically have been highly cyclical, with volatile pulp and paper prices. The timing and magnitude of price increases or decreases in the pulp and paper market have generally varied by region and by type of pulp and paper.

The selling prices of the majority of the products manufactured and purchase prices of many of our raw materials used generally fluctuate in line with commodity cycles; however, as occurred in fiscal 2005, we may not be able to increase selling prices sufficiently or in time to offset the effects of increased costs,

which has an adverse impact on our profitability. Other than maintaining a high level of pulp integration, no hedging techniques related to our raw materials and products are applied. Movements in prices of pulp and paper products are difficult to predict. Also, there may be periods during which demand for our products is insufficient to enable us to operate our production facilities in an economical manner. A sustained period of weak demand or excess supply would be likely to adversely affect pulp and paper prices which could have a material adverse effect on our operating rates and financial results.

Despite a relatively high level of pulp integration on a Group-wide basis, a significant increase in the prices for pulp or pulpwood could adversely affect our non-integrated and partially integrated operations if they are unable to raise paper prices sufficiently to offset the effects of increased costs.

The majority of our fine paper sales consist of sales to merchants. The pricing of products for merchant sales can generally be changed upon between 30 to 90 days advance notice to the merchant. Sales to converters may be subject to longer notice periods for price changes. Such notice periods generally would not exceed 6 to 12 months. In southern Africa, we have entered into longer-term fixed-price agreements of between 6 to 12 months duration for primarily packaging paper and newsprint sales with domestic customers. Such agreements accounted for less than 5% of consolidated sales during fiscal 2005.

Most of our chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) sales contracts are multi-year contracts. The pricing is generally based on a formula linked to the NBSK price and reset on a quarterly basis.

For further information, see Item 4 Information on the Company Business Overview The Pulp and Paper Industry .

The markets for pulp and paper products are highly competitive, and many of our competitors have advantages that may adversely affect our ability to compete with them, particularly in North America.

We compete against a large number of pulp and paper producers located around the world. A recent trend towards consolidation in the pulp and paper industry has created larger, more focused pulp and paper companies. Some of these companies benefit from greater financial resources or operate mills that are lower cost producers of pulp and paper products than our mills. We cannot assure you that each of our mills will be competitive. Furthermore, we cannot assure you that we will be able to take advantage of consolidation opportunities which may arise, or that any failure to exploit opportunities for growth would not make us less competitive. Increased competition, including import duties decrease in accordance with the terms of free trade agreements, could cause us to lose market share, increase expenditures or reduce pricing, any of which could have a material adverse effect on the results of our operations. In addition, competition may result in our being unable to increase selling prices of our products sufficiently or in time to offset the effects of increased costs without losing market share, as occurred in Europe in fiscal 2005, which has an adverse impact on profitability.

Our North American business has experienced significant losses in recent years due to competition, and it may face additional competitive challenges to returning to profitability. There was a significant amount of coated fine paper capacity added in China in 2005. Some of this capacity may be exported to the US, depressing domestic operating rates and potentially also depressing prices. While we believe our North American business is competitive compared to our US competitors, the assets of our North American business are small in comparison to new world-scale coated fine paper machines. The cost position of our machines in relation to imports from both Asia and Europe may be less competitive due to a variety of factors including currency, fuel costs, shipping charges, duties and market pulp prices. A significant strengthening of the US dollar in comparison to the euro could attract a significant amount of imports from Europe.

The cost of complying with environmental regulation may be significant to our business.

Our operations are subject to a wide range of environmental requirements in the various jurisdictions in which we operate. We expect to continue to incur significant expenditures and may face operational constraints to maintain compliance with applicable environmental laws, to upgrade equipment at our mills and to meet new regulatory requirements, including those in the United States, South Africa and Europe. Expenditures to comply with future environmental laws and regulations could have a material adverse effect on our business and financial condition.

For further information, see Item 4 Information on the Company Business Overview Environmental and Safety Matters Environmental Matters and Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Operating Results .

The availability and cost of Insurance cover can vary considerably from year to year as a result of events beyond our control, and this can result in our paying higher premiums and periodically being unable to maintain the levels or types of insurance carried.

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

The events of September 11, 2001, and more recently the Asian Tsunami and hurricanes in the United States have resulted in substantial property damage losses seriously affecting the insurance industry, which has led to significant increases in premiums and self-insured deductibles over the last few years in some of the components of our insurance structure and may lead to future increases.

Although we have successfully placed the renewal of our 2006 insurance cover at rates lower than 2005 and self-insured deductibles for any one property damage occurrence have remained at \$25 million, with an unchanged aggregate limit of \$40 million, we are unable to predict whether past or future events will result in less favourable terms. For property damage and business interruption, there generally does not seem to be cost effective cover available to full value, however, the directors believe that the loss limit cover of \$1 billion should be adequate for what they have determined as the reasonably foreseeable loss for any single claim.

While we believe our insurance provides adequate coverage for reasonably foreseeable losses, we continue working on improved enterprise risk management to lower the risk of incurring losses from uncontrolled incidents. We are unable to assure you that actual losses will not exceed our coverage or that such excess will not be material.

New technologies or changes in consumer preferences may affect our ability to compete successfully.

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

We believe that new technologies or novel processes may emerge and that existing technologies may be further developed in the fields in which we operate. These technologies or processes could have an impact on production methods or on product quality in these fields. Unexpected rapid changes in employed technologies or the development of novel processes that affect our operations and product range could render the technologies we utilise or the products we produce obsolete or less competitive in the future. Difficulties in assessing new technologies may impede us from implementing them and competitive pressures may force us to implement these new technologies at a substantial cost. Any such development could materially and adversely impact our revenues or net profits or both.

Consumer preferences may change as a result of the availability of alternative products or of services such as electronic media or the internet, which could impact consumption of our products.

Risks Related to Our Business

Our indebtedness may impair our financial and operating flexibility.

Our ratio of total interest-bearing borrowings to shareholders' equity has improved significantly in recent years, from 142% at September 1999, to 99% at September 2005. At September 2005, our total interest-bearing borrowings were \$1,870 million. While reduction of borrowings is a priority, opportunities to grow within our businesses will continue to be evaluated, and the financing of any future acquisition may include the incurrence of additional indebtedness.

We are subject to South African exchange controls, which partially inhibit the free flow of funds from South Africa and can restrict activities of subsidiaries of the Sappi Group. These exchange controls have affected the geographic distribution of our debt. As a result, acquisitions in the United States and Europe were financed with indebtedness incurred by companies in those regions. The level of our debt has important consequences. For example, our ability to obtain additional financing may be limited, which could limit, among other things, our ability to exploit growth opportunities; a substantial portion of our cash flow from operations may be required to make debt service payments; we are exposed to increases in interest rates because a portion of our debt bears interest at variable rates; we may be more leveraged than certain of our competitors; we may be more vulnerable to economic downturns and adverse changes in our business; and our ability to withstand competitive pressure may be more limited.

In addition, certain of our financing arrangements contain covenants and conditions that restrict the activities of certain Group companies.

Exchange control restrictions may restrict the transfer of funds directly or indirectly between our subsidiaries or between the parent company and our subsidiaries. We may also incur significant tax costs in connection with these transfers of funds. As a consequence, the ability of Sappi Limited or any of our subsidiaries to make scheduled payments on its debt will depend on its financial and operating performance, which will depend on various factors beyond our control, such as prevailing economic and competitive conditions. If Sappi Limited or any of our subsidiaries is unable to achieve operating results or otherwise obtain access to funds sufficient to enable it to meet its debt service obligations, it could face substantial liquidity problems. As a result, it might need to delay investments or dispose of material assets or operations. The timing of and the proceeds to be realised from any such disposition would depend upon circumstances at the time.

Labour agreements are under negotiation at several of our mills.

The Westbrook, Somerset and Muskegon Mills United Steelworkers union contracts that expired in May 2002, June 2003 and August 2005 respectively are under negotiation, and the Cloquet USW contract expires in April 2006. Collective labour agreements have been renegotiated for all sites in Europe during the fiscal 2004, with minor disruption to operations at only one site. At our southern African mills wage negotiations occur annually and in 2005 negotiations were conducted without any industrial action, despite several industry wide wage related strikes. While we hope to reach agreements on new contracts at all affected sites, in the event that agreements cannot be reached and a prolonged work stoppage that results in a curtailment of output ensues at any or all such sites, our business could be adversely affected.

Fluctuations in the value of currencies, particularly the Rand and the euro, in relation to the US dollar have in the past had and could in the future have a significant impact on our earnings in these currencies.

Exchange rates fluctuations have in the past, and may in the future, affect the competitiveness of our products in relation to the products of pulp and paper companies based in other countries.

Fluctuations in the exchange rate between currencies, particularly the Rand and euro, in relation to the US dollar have in the past significantly affected and could in the future significantly affect our earnings.

Since the adoption of the euro by the European Union on January 1, 1999 (when the euro was trading at approximately \$1.18 per euro), it has fluctuated against the US dollar to approximately \$1.20, \$1.23 and \$1.15 per euro at the end of fiscal 2005, 2004 and 2003, respectively. It reached a low of approximately \$0.83 per euro on October 25, 2000 and, on December 7, 2005, was trading at approximately \$1.17 per euro.

In recent years, the value of the Rand against the US dollar has fluctuated considerably. It has moved against the US dollar to approximately R6.37, R6.43 and R7.13 per US dollar at the end of fiscal 2005, 2004 and 2003, respectively. The Rand reached a low of approximately R13.90 per US dollar on December 21, 2001. Since then, it has appreciated and on December 7, 2005 was trading at approximately R6.30 per US dollar.

For further information, see notes 21 and 37 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report and Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Operating Results Foreign Exchange, Inflation and Interest Rates .

There are risks relating to South Africa that could affect your investment in our Company.

We are incorporated in South Africa and own operations in southern Africa. As a result, there are risks relating to South Africa, that could affect an investment in our Company. These risks arise from the fact that we are subject to various economic, fiscal, monetary, regulatory, operational and political policies and factors that affect South African companies and their subsidiaries generally. See Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects South African Economic and Political Environment and Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects South African Exchange Controls . While certain of these risks, for example regulatory and operational risks, are limited by the fact that in fiscal 2005, 26% of our sales emanated from southern Africa, 45% from Europe and 29% from North America, and 36% of our operating assets were located in southern Africa, 37% in Europe and 27% in North America, in fiscal year 2005 our operations outside southern Africa had an operating loss of \$194 million and our operations in southern Africa had an operating profit of \$57 million.

We face certain risks in dealing with HIV/AIDS which may have an adverse effect on our southern African operations.

There is a serious problem with HIV/AIDS infection among our southern African workforce, as there is in southern Africa generally. Although the HIV/AIDS infection rate of our southern African workforce is significantly lower than the national average, it is expected to increase over the next decade. While we have several programmes designed to mitigate the impact of the disease on our business, the costs and lost workers time associated with HIV/AIDS may adversely affect our southern African operations.

Several customers account for a significant amount of our revenues.

We sell a significant portion of our products to several major customers, including PaperlinX Ltd which acquired Buhrmann Paper Merchant Division in November 2003, Unisource Worldwide Inc. and International Paper Company. Any adverse development affecting our principal customers or our relationships with our principal customers could have an adverse effect on our business and results of

operations. See Item 4 Business Review Marketing and Distribution Sappi Fine Paper Customers and Item 4 Business Review Marketing and Distribution Sappi Forest Products Customers .

Because of the nature of our business and workforce, we are facing challenges in the retention and succession planning of management that could adversely affect our business.

We are facing an aging demographic work profile among our management due to the mature nature of our industry and the rural and often remote location of our mills, together with generally long tenure of employees at the mills. As a result we are likely to experience groups of employees leaving the company within a relatively short space of time of one another and may have difficulty attracting qualified replacements. The potential risks we face are a loss of institutional memory, skills, experience and management capabilities. Although we have put in place a number of initiatives to mitigate this risk, including implementing programs to promote phased retirement and transfer of knowledge, creating flexibility in career and job design and focussing greater effort on succession planning and talent review and effective skills training and leadership development we may be unable to attract and retain sufficient qualified replacements when and where necessary to avoid an adverse impact on our business.

Risks Related to Our Shares

Your ability to sell a substantial number of ordinary shares may be restricted by the limited liquidity of shares traded on the JSE Limited.

The principal trading market for the ordinary shares of Sappi Limited is the JSE Limited (JSE) (formerly the JSE Securities Exchange South Africa). Historically, trading volumes and liquidity of shares listed on the JSE have been low in comparison with other major international markets. In fiscal 2005, 264 million ordinary shares of Sappi Limited were traded on the JSE and 83 million ADSs were traded on the New York Stock Exchange. See Significant shareholders may be able to influence the affairs of our Company , Item 7 Major Shareholders and Related Party Transactions Major Shareholders , Item 9 The Offer and Listing Offer and Listing Details and Item 9 The Offer and Listing Markets .

Significant shareholders may be able to influence the affairs of our Company.

Although our investigation of beneficial ownership of our shares identified only four beneficial owners of more than 5% of our ordinary shares, holding approximately 25.1%, as shown in our shareholders register at September 30, 2005, the five largest shareholders of record, four of which are nominees that hold shares for a multitude of beneficial owners, owned approximately 94.7% of our ordinary shares. See Item 7 Major Shareholders and Related Party Transactions Major Shareholders .

ITEM 4. INFORMATION ON THE COMPANY

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPANY

Sappi Limited is a public company incorporated in the Republic of South Africa. Its principal executive offices are located at 48 Ameshoff Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg 2001, Republic of South Africa and its telephone number is +27-11-407-8111.

Sappi Limited was founded and incorporated in 1936 in South Africa and is a corporation organised under the Companies Act 61 of 1973 of the Republic of South Africa.

Until 1990, we primarily expanded our operations within southern Africa. Since 1990, we have grown through acquisitions outside of southern Africa. In December 1994, Sappi and a group of financial investors acquired S.D. Warren Company, the market leader in the United States in coated fine paper and a major producer of other speciality paper products. It now conducts business as Sappi Fine Paper North America. In December 1997, we acquired a 91.5% ownership interest in KNP Leykam, the leading European producer of coated fine paper. KNP Leykam now conducts business as Sappi Fine Paper Europe. On May 13, 2002, we acquired Potlatch Corporation's coated fine paper business and have integrated it in Sappi Fine Paper North America.

In December 2004 we acquired 34% of Jiangxi Chenming Paper Company, a joint venture which commissioned in mid-2005 a coated mechanical paper machine, mechanical pulp mill and deinked pulp mill in China.

For information on our principal investments and capital expenditures, see the description of our business in [Business Overview](#) and [Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Liquidity and Capital Resources](#).

We currently have our primary listing on the JSE and have secondary listings on the New York and London Stock Exchanges.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Business Strategy

Our objective for the coming years is to build on our position as the global leader in the coated fine paper market, which was from the beginning of the 1990's one of the fastest growing market sectors in the paper industry, and to explore opportunities across the broad spectrum of coated paper to utilise our experience in paper coating as well as the chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) market and to support this with a high level of economic pulp integration. These represent our core products and sectors in the paper and forest products industry. We will continue to invest in our southern African businesses which have important market shares. The key elements of our business strategy are and have been as follows:

Strengthen our leadership position in our core businesses through organic growth and selective acquisitions.

We believe that opportunities for further consolidation remain in our sector. We intend to be at the forefront of this consolidation, aiming to strengthen our position in Europe, North America, and eventually Asia. We intend to focus on investment and acquisition opportunities that fit our strategies, that offer a potential return that exceeds our expected cost of capital and that in the medium term are more advantageous than buying back our shares.

Maintain a global presence.

One of Sappi's key strengths is our geographically diverse business base. We have a significant presence in each of Europe, North America and Africa, and a modest presence in Asia. The presence in Europe and North America has been built up over the past ten years, largely through strategic acquisitions. We will continue to pursue a strategy of geographic diversification supported by leading market positions.

Maintain a high level of economic pulp integration.

We intend to maintain a high level of economic pulp integration, which helps reduce the impact of pulp price volatility on our earnings.

Maintain cost efficient asset base and invest to increase efficiency/productivity.

We believe our asset base has some of the lowest cost and most efficient assets in the coated fine paper sector in the world. We maintain a rigorous focus on costs, and actively manage our asset base, including divesting or closing non-performing assets. We have closed 13 paper machines since 1995, including the recent closure of the Number 4 paper machine at Muskegon Mill.

We maintain an investment policy that is focused on high return projects. A significant portion of our investments are designed to increase production capacity, reduce costs and improve product quality.

Drive growth through market focus and innovation.

The Sappi Group operations represent the originators of many of the major innovations in the industry in the last century. We continue to maintain a focus on innovation through our research and development centres in Europe, North America and South Africa and have established multi-regional, multi-discipline teams to ensure that we transfer knowledge throughout the Group and implement best practice and that our research and development efforts are market oriented. We intend to allocate additional resources to marketing, innovation and technology. This includes the recent creation of multi-regional marketing teams and their links with the relevant technology teams.

Through our partnership with a leading global software provider, we are focused on developing unique information technology solutions that satisfy our customers' requirements and production capabilities, resulting in improved service delivery and operational efficiency.

The Pulp and Paper Industry

The paper industry is generally divided into the printing and writing paper segment, consisting of newsprint, groundwood paper and fine paper, and the packaging segment, consisting of containerboard, boxboard and sackkraft.

Long-term, paper and board consumption has grown in line with overall economic growth, but consumption patterns are also influenced by short-term economic developments. Pricing largely is influenced by the supply/demand balance for individual products, which is partially dependent on capacity and inventory levels in the industry. The ability to adapt capacity changes in response to shorter-term fluctuations in demand is limited, as large amounts of capital are required for the construction or upgrade of production facilities and as lead times are long between the planning and completion of new facilities. Industry-wide over-investment in new production capacity has in the past led to situations of significant oversupply, which has caused product prices to decrease. This has been exacerbated by inventory speculation, as purchasers have sought to benefit from the price trend. As a result, financial performance has deteriorated during periods of significant oversupply to again improve when demand has increased to levels that support the implementation of price increases.

In recent years the industry has experienced significant strategic changes. The high costs associated with building new paper mills and establishing and growing market share has led to companies focusing on acquisition, rather than construction, of new capacity. This development has led to a reduction in events of significant dislocations in the supply/demand balance typically associated with the entry of new production capacity into established markets. Another result of this trend has been a greater concentration of production capacity among fewer producers. Many leading industry producers now focus on fewer core grades and have divested non-core assets that are not part of the industry or which have been considered not consistent with long-term strategies. The regional and global market shares of leading producers have increased significantly over the past decade.

The following table shows a breakdown and description of the major product categories Sappi participates in the products in these categories and the typical uses for such products. We have produced and sold each of these products in each of our last three fiscal years.

Major Product Categories	Description and Typical Uses
<i>Fine Paper:</i>	
Coated paper	Higher level of smoothness than uncoated paper achieved by applying a coating (typically clay based) on the surface of the paper. As a result, higher reprographic quality and printability is achieved. Uses include brochures, catalogues, corporate communications materials, direct mail promotions, educational textbooks, luxury advertising, magazine covers and upscale magazines.
Uncoated paper	Uses include business forms, business stationery, general printing paper, tissue and photocopy paper.
Speciality paper	Can be either coated or uncoated. Uses include bags, labels, packaging and release paper for casting textured finishes (e.g., artificial leather).
<i>Packaging products:</i>	
Packaging paper	Heavy and lightweight grades of paper and board primarily used for primary and secondary packaging of fast moving consumer goods, agricultural and industrial products. Products include containerboard (corrugated shipping containers), sack kraft (multi-walled shipping sacks) and machine glazed kraft (grocers bags). Can be coated to enhance barrier and aesthetics properties.
<i>Groundwood products:</i>	
Newsprint	Manufactured from groundwood and bleached chemical pulp. Uses include advertising inserts and newspapers. Demand is highly dependent on newspaper circulation and retail advertising.
Coated groundwood paper	A coated groundwood fibre based paper, primarily used for magazines, catalogues and advertising material. Manufactured from mechanical pulp.
<i>Pulp:</i>	
Paper pulp	Main raw material used in production of printing, writing and packaging paper. Pulp is the generic term that describes the cellulose fibre derived from wood. These cellulose fibres may be separated by mechanical, thermo-mechanical or chemical processes. The chemical processes involve removing the glues (lignins) which bind the wood fibres to leave cellulose fibres. Paper made from chemical pulp is generally termed woodfree. Uses include paper, paperboard and tissue.

Chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) Manufactured by similar processes to paper pulp, but purified further to leave virtually pure cellulose fibres. Chemical cellulose is used in the manufacture of a variety of cellulose textile and non-woven fibre products, including viscose staple fibre (rayon), solvent spun fibre (lyocell) and filament. It is also used in various other cellulose-based applications in the food, cigarette, chemical and pharmaceutical industries. These include the manufacture of acetate tow microcrystalline cellulose, cellophane, ethers and moulding powders. The various grades of chemical cellulose are manufactured in accordance with the specific requirements of customers in different market segments. The purity of the chemical cellulose is one of the key determinants of its suitability for particular applications with the purer grades of chemical cellulose generally supplied into the speciality segments.

Timber products: Sawn timber for construction and furniture manufacturing purposes.

The following table sets forth selected pulp and paper prices in certain markets for the periods presented.

	Year Ended September		Year Ended September		Year Ended September	
	2005 Low	High	2004 Low	High	2003 Low	High
Coated Fine Paper						
100 gsm delivered Germany (euro per metric tonne) ⁽¹⁾	845	845	820	855	845	906
60 lb. delivered US (US\$ per short tonne) ⁽²⁾	870	920	735	840	740	755
Uncoated Fine Paper						
50 lb. delivered US (US\$ per short tonne) ⁽³⁾	700	770	575	750	590	730
Paper Pulp						
NBSK (US\$ per metric tonne) ⁽⁴⁾	585	655	540	660	420	560
Chemical cellulose						
92 alpha (US\$ per metric tonne) ⁽⁵⁾	600	780	600	780	500	630

- (1) 100 gsm sheets, Pulp & Paper International (PPI).
- (2) 60 lb. Coated Web, PPI.
- (3) 50 lb. Offset, PPI.
- (4) Northern Bleached Softwood Kraft Pulp CIF Northern Europe, PPI.
- (5) Selected indicative prices, Sappi.

Fine Papers

Our fine paper activities are divided into coated and uncoated fine paper and speciality paper grades. Our coated fine paper market share in the United States, Europe and southern Africa is approximately 24%, 20% and 60%, respectively, making us the largest producer of coated fine paper in the world.

Coated Fine Paper. Coated fine paper has been one of the fastest growing market sectors in the paper industry through the 1980s and 1990s. Major end uses include high-end magazines, catalogues, brochures, annual reports and commercial printing. Coated fine paper is made from chemical pulp and is coated on one or both sides for use where high reprographic quality is required. The majority of coated fine paper production is coated on two sides, permitting quality printing on both sides of the paper. Paper

that is coated on one side is used in special applications such as consumer product and mailing label applications.

Our 2005 North American coated fine paper sales volume was 31% in sheet form and 69% in reel form. The sheet volume is largely influenced by brochure and general commercial printing activities and printers using mainly sheetfed offset lithographic printing processes, which are not particularly seasonal, and corporate annual reports, which result in heaviest demand during the first calendar quarter. Reels volume is heavily influenced by catalogue and text book activity, which results in heaviest demand during the third calendar quarter, and publication printer activity, which is not particularly seasonal. These printers principally use heatset web offset printing processes.

Our 2005 European business sales volumes of coated fine paper were 74% in sheet form and 26% in reels form. Due to the diversity in languages in the European market, the print editions of brochure and general commercial printing activities are considerably smaller than in the US market. This translates into a significantly higher volume in sheets. The seasonal patterns of both sheets and reels are mostly influenced by the catalogue business. This segment has its highest seasonal activity in the spring, when the fashion catalogues come out, and the autumn, when the Christmas catalogues and holiday brochures are printed. Commercial print and publishing business provide a more steady demand in this market.

See Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Markets .

Uncoated Paper. Uncoated fine paper represents the largest industry fine paper grade in terms of both global capacity and consumption. Uncoated fine paper is used for bond/writing and offset printing papers, photocopy papers, writing tablets (e.g., legal pads), speciality lightweight printing paper (e.g., bibles) and thin paper.

The market for uncoated paper products generally follows cyclical trends, which do not necessarily coincide with cycles for coated paper but are impacted by capacity changes in uncoated fine paper output levels.

Speciality Paper. The high value-added speciality paper markets in which Sappi Fine Paper operates generally follow trends in the respective end use sectors in addition to changes in production capacity, output levels and cyclical changes in the world economy. Largely due to the highly specialised nature of speciality paper, price fluctuations have historically tended to lag and be less precipitous than price changes in the uncoated fine paper market.

Packaging Products

Our range of forest products comprises a variety of packaging papers produced in southern Africa at the Tugela, Cape Kraft and Ngodwana mills. We are one of the two major suppliers of packaging papers in South Africa.

Packaging Paper. As with fine paper, the market for packaging papers is affected by cyclical changes in the world economy, local economic growth, retail sales and by changes in production capacity and output levels. The southern African containerboard market has been positively affected by gross domestic product growth and corresponding growth in retail sales. Demand for sack kraft is largely driven by the demand for cement, potatoes, sugar and milling products. Sappi's market share was negatively affected by lower priced imported products and production constraints in 2005.

Over the past decade, kraft linerboard prices have ranged from \$325 to \$685 per metric tonne (CIF) in Northern Europe. As of October 2005, kraft linerboard prices were approximately \$448 per metric tonne in Northern Europe. In the southern Africa domestic market, we have entered into medium-term contractual commitments with converters of boxes, sacks and bags. These commitments include certain volume targets and, in some cases, as is customary in the market, fixed prices for periods of 12 months.

Groundwood Products

Newsprint. The Ngodwana mill produces newsprint. The worldwide market for newsprint is a low growth sector in the paper industry and was adversely affected during the early 1990s by substantial increased capacity and stagnating demand from, and cost-cutting measures imposed by, major newsprint end-users. Over the past decade, the price of newsprint has ranged from a low of \$420 per metric tonne in the second quarter of 1992 to a high of \$750 per metric tonne in the fourth quarter of 1995 and the first quarter of 1996. In recent years, a significant increase in industry consolidation has stabilised the newsprint market and reduced segment over-capacity. As a result of the slowing economy, newsprint prices started to decline in the middle of 2001 from a peak of \$625 in April 2001, to a low of \$445 in July 2002. As of October 2005, the price of newsprint (delivered East Coast USA) had increased to approximately \$630 per metric tonne.

Coated Groundwood. Coated groundwood paper, primarily used for magazines, catalogues and advertising materials, has been one of the fastest growing paper grades in the paper industry in recent years. The segment is also one of the most consolidated segments of the paper industry. Demand for coated magazine paper is influenced by magazine circulation and demand for advertising, and by the price difference relative to coated fine paper and to uncoated groundwood paper as substitution between these grades is possible, depending on quality requirements and price levels. Western European producers are the leading producers of coated groundwood globally. Rapid capacity expansion by leading producers in the early 1990s led to volatile pricing and the development of a significant export business from Europe, primarily to North America and Asia. Pricing development has been more stable in the past three years, but prices have declined recently due to weaker demand and the start-up of new capacity in the industry.

Pulp

We produce chemical cellulose, as well as a wide range of paper pulp grades, including groundwood pulp used in newsprint, unbleached kraft pulp, bleached kraft pulp and bleached sulphite pulp.

Paper Pulp. The market pulp industry is highly competitive and is sensitive to changes in industry capacity, producer inventories, demand for paper and cyclical changes in the world economy. The market price per metric tonne of northern bleached softwood kraft (NBSK) pulp, a pulp principally used for the manufacture of fine paper, is a benchmark widely used in the industry for comparative purposes. Over the past decade, the price of NBSK has ranged from \$395 per metric tonne in November 1993 to \$925 per metric tonne in September 1995, only to decline to \$450 per metric tonne by March 1996.

NBSK market pulp prices, which increased steadily through the second half of fiscal 1997, were adversely affected during fiscal 1998 by declining pulp demand resulting from the Asian economic crisis. Pulp prices at the end of 1998 were 22% lower than at the beginning of the year. During the first quarter of 1999, pulp prices remained relatively stable at \$460 per metric tonne, the lowest level since 1993. Since the end of March 1999, pulp prices increased significantly based on improved demand and limited net capacity growth. At the start of the third quarter of 2000, the NBSK market pulp price in Europe reached \$710 per metric tonne. In line with the global economy, pulp demand has been low throughout 2002 and 2003 and price fluctuations have been driven primarily by supply management and the consequent impact on inventories. Accordingly, pulp prices fluctuated considerably with a difference of \$125 per metric tonne between the high and low of the NBSK price during fiscal 2003. The NBSK price fluctuated between \$540 and \$660 in fiscal 2004 compared to \$435 and \$560 in fiscal 2003. Indications are that the pulp market is improving as a result of production discipline and declining market pulp inventories with the NBSK price edging up to \$601 per metric tonne in November 2005.

Market unbleached kraft pulp (UKP) is used in the production of packaging papers, including kraft linerboard and sack kraft and for certain niche products such as oil and air filters. The market price of UKP generally follows the price trends of other paper pulp grades.

Chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp). The viscose staple fibre (VSF) industry which manufactures textile and non-woven fibres is the largest market segment for chemical cellulose. Prices of VSF grade chemical cellulose generally follow those of the European NBSK. Over the past decade, the price of VSF grade chemical cellulose has ranged from a high of over \$1,000 per metric tonne in the fourth quarter of 1995, to a low of \$470 per metric tonne in the second quarter of 2002. During the past year, prices of VSF grade chemical cellulose continued to trend upwards from this 2002 low, reaching a high of \$788 per metric tonne in the quarter ended June 2005 but they have subsequently begun to retreat from that level. Prices of the higher purity chemical cellulose used in applications other than for VSF products tend to be more stable and are largely unrelated to the price of NBSK. The manufacture of cellulose acetate flake (used in the manufacture of acetate tow for cigarette filter tips) is the second largest application for chemical cellulose after viscose staple fibre. The market price for chemical cellulose used for cellulose acetate flake production has increased to levels above \$900 per metric tonne and is set by competitive forces within this specific market.

Timber Products

Our timber products operations are concentrated in South Africa and consist of sawn timber for the building industry and components for the furniture and packaging industry.

Business Review

We are the world's largest producer of coated fine paper, with a market share of approximately 24% in the United States, 20% in Europe and greater than 60% in southern Africa. In addition, we are the world's largest producer of chemical cellulose, with a market share of approximately 15%.

We are a geographically diverse global paper company with significant manufacturing operations on three continents and sales in over 100 countries. During fiscal 2005, we had sales of \$5,018 million, operating loss of \$137 million and net loss of \$213 million. We currently have a paper production capacity of approximately 5.1 million metric tonnes per annum, chemical cellulose production capacity of 600,000 metric tonnes per annum and paper pulp production capacity of 3.4 million metric tonnes per annum.

Our operations are currently structured around two business units (segments):

- Sappi Fine Paper, which has fine paper and related paper pulp businesses in North America, Europe and South Africa. Pursuant to the reorganisation of our North American and European fine paper shareholding, our fine paper interests are now held by Sappi Papier Holding GmbH in Austria; and
- Sappi Forest Products, which produces commodity paper products (newsprint and packaging papers), pulp (including chemical cellulose and hardwood and softwood pulp) and forest and timber products (including pulpwood, sawlogs and sawn timber) for southern Africa and export markets. Sappi Forest Products is based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

We also operate a trading network for the international marketing and distribution of our products outside our core operating regions of North America, Europe and southern Africa. Our trading operation, which we refer to as Sappi Trading, co-ordinates our shipping and other logistical functions for exports from southern Africa, Europe and North America through subsidiaries in South Africa, Europe and in the United States, respectively. All sales and costs associated with Sappi Trading are allocated to the two business units.

The markets for our pulp and paper products are significantly affected by changes in industry capacity and output levels and by cyclical changes in the world economy. For further information, see [Information on the Company Business Overview The Pulp and Paper Industry](#) and [Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Operating Results](#).

The chart set forth below represents the operational rather than the legal or ownership structure of Sappi as of November 2005. Units shown are not necessarily legal entities.

The following table sets forth certain information with respect to our operations for, or as at the end of, the year ended September 2005.

	Sappi Fine Paper North America	Europe	South Africa	Sappi Forest Products	Corporate And Other	Total
	(US\$ million, metric tonnes in thousands)					
Sales volume (metric tonnes)	1,433	2,427	317	3,302		7,479
Sales	1,458	2,239	323	998		5,018
Operating profit	(270)	76	(12)	73	(4)	(137)
Operating assets ⁽¹⁾	1,426	1,963	215	1,558	107	5,269

(1) Operating assets as defined in note 38 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

SAPPI FINE PAPER

Overview

Sappi Fine Paper is the largest business sector of Sappi and contributed over 80% of our sales in fiscal 2005. It has the capacity to produce 4.2 million metric tonnes of paper per annum at its 15 paper and related paper pulp mills located on three continents. Sappi Fine Paper manages its business in three principal regions: Sappi Fine Paper North America, Sappi Fine Paper Europe and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa. Sappi Fine Paper also manages the Nash mill in the United Kingdom, which operates as a separate business.

The following chart sets forth certain information with respect to the mills and principal products of Sappi Fine Paper as of November 2005.

The following table sets forth approximate annual production capacity with respect to Sappi Fine Paper's products.

	Annual Production Capacity			
	North		South	
	America(1)	Europe(2)	Africa	Total
Production capacity (000s metric tonnes):				
Fine paper				
Coated(3)	1,190	2,585	80	3,960
Uncoated(4)		70	270	340
Total	1,190	2,655	350	4,195
Paper pulp	900	670	160	1,730
Percentage paper pulp integration(5)	102 %	44 %	62 %(6)	65 %

(1) Excludes the Number 4 paper machine and the mothballed pulp mill at Muskegon.

(2) Includes the Nash mill under uncoated.

(3) Includes coated fine paper, coated groundwood paper and speciality papers.

(4) Includes 30,000 metric tonnes of tissue manufactured at the Stanger mill in South Africa and 14,000 metric tonnes of kraft manufactured at the Enstra and Adamas mills in South Africa.

(5) Includes pulp used internally and pulp sold.

(6) Sappi Forest Products provides most of the additional pulp requirements of our South African fine paper operations.

Facilities and Operations

Sappi Fine Paper North America

Sappi Fine Paper North America is a leading producer and supplier of coated fine paper in the United States with a market share of approximately 24%. Sappi Fine Paper North America also produces a variety of other fine paper, including coated speciality paper.

Sappi Fine Paper North America is headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and operates four paper mills in the United States in Somerset, Maine; Muskegon, Michigan; Westbrook, Maine; and Cloquet, Minnesota. These four mills have a total annual production capacity of approximately 1.2 million metric tonnes of paper and a capacity of approximately 0.9 million metric tonnes of paper pulp, which represents approximately 102% of Sappi Fine Paper North American pulp requirements. This significantly reduces Sappi Fine Paper North America's exposure to fluctuations in the price of market pulp that are not driven by fluctuations in wood or other major raw material prices. In July 2005, we announced the closure of the Number 4 paper machine and the mothballing of the pulp mill at Muskegon, which had an annual production capacity of 105,000 metric tonnes of paper and 110,000 metric tonnes of pulp, respectively.

Coated paper accounted for approximately 79% of Sappi Fine Paper North America's sales in fiscal 2005. Speciality paper and pulp accounted for the remaining 21%.

The following table sets forth sales by product for our North American operations, including contribution from the closed Muskegon assets.

	Year Ended September		
	2005	2004	2003
Sales (US\$ million):(1)			
Coated fine paper	1,148	1,068	1,061
Speciality paper and other(2)	310	305	323
Total	1,458	1,373	1,384

(1) Includes sales for the Number 4 paper machine at Muskegon mill.

(2) Other consists primarily of market pulp.

For the year ended September 2005, Sappi Fine Paper North America sold approximately 1,433,000 metric tonnes of paper and pulp products. The following table sets forth, as of September 2005, the production capacity, number of paper machines, products, pulp integration and capital expenditures at each of our continuing mills in North America.

Production capacity (000s metric tonnes)	Mill Locations			
	Somerset	Muskegon	Westbrook	Cloquet
Paper	760	170	30	260
Market pulp	70			280
Number of paper machines	3	1	1	2
Products:				
Paper	Coated Fine Paper	Coated Fine Paper	Casting release paper	Coated fine paper
Market pulp	Bleached kraft pulp			Bleached kraft pulp
Percentage pulp integration(1)	87 %	None	None	231 %
Capital expenditures (October 2002-September 2005) (US\$ million)	67	29	16	67

(1) Includes pulp sold to third parties.

Cloquet. The Cloquet mill has two paper machines and an offline coater, producing premium coated paper. The newest machine and coater were installed in 1988 and 1989, respectively. The pulp mill started up by the previous owner in 2000 at a total cost of \$525 million and is the newest pulp mill in the United States. The Cloquet paper machines have an annual production capacity of 260,000 metric tonnes of coated paper, and the state-of-the-art pulp mill has an annual production capacity of 410,000 metric tonnes.

Somerset. The Somerset mill is a low-cost producer and has an annual production capacity of approximately 760,000 metric tonnes of paper and approximately 490,000 metric tonnes of pulp. The pulp mill was built in 1976, and Somerset became an integrated facility with the completion of Paper Machine 1 (PM1) in 1982. Each of the three paper machines at the Somerset facility employs Sappi Fine Paper North America's patented on-line coating and finishing technology. This technology combines the three steps (paper making, coating and finishing) in the manufacture of coated paper into one continuous process. It is well suited for the lightweight coated papers produced at Somerset, because it allows the production of high gloss, consistent quality products at high speeds.

Muskegon. The Muskegon mill consists of one continuing paper machine with an annual winder capacity of approximately 170,000 metric tonnes of text and cover weight coated paper using Sappi Fine Paper North America's on-line finishing technology. On July 28, 2005, we announced the closure of the Number 4 paper machine and the mothballing of the pulp mill at Muskegon, which had an annual production capacity of 105,000 metric tonnes of paper and 110,000 metric tons of pulp, respectively.

Westbrook. Westbrook is Sappi Fine Paper North America's original mill, with origins dating back to 1854. After the closure of one of its paper machines, the mill is primarily a speciality paper production facility with an annual capacity of 30,000 metric tonnes of coated fine and casting release paper. Its paper machine primarily produces base paper, which is coated off-line. Westbrook also has six speciality coaters, including four employing Sappi Fine Paper North America's patented Ultracast® process. This process uses an electron beam to cure coating against a finely engraved steel roll, resulting in a virtually exact replication of the roll pattern. Sappi Fine Paper North America also has a research and development facility at Westbrook.

Sappi Fine Paper North America also operates a coated paper sheeting and distribution facility in Allentown, Pennsylvania, which was completed in 1994 and has an annual sheeting capacity of approximately 100,000 metric tonnes. The Allentown facility produces sheet paper primarily for the Cloquet mill.

Sappi Fine Paper Europe

Sappi Fine Paper is a leading producer of coated fine paper in Europe with a market share of approximately 20% and a producer of commercial printing paper, coated groundwood paper and speciality paper used in packaging, labelling and laminating and a branded range of uncoated printing and business paper. Sappi Fine Paper Europe's operations consist of seven mills with an aggregate annual production capacity of approximately 2.7 million metric tonnes of paper and 670,000 metric tonnes of related paper pulp. Sappi Fine Paper Europe's headquarters are located in Brussels, Belgium.

The following table sets forth sales by product for our Sappi Fine Paper Europe operations, including contribution from the Nash mill.

	Year Ended September		
	2005	2004	2003
Sales (US\$ million): ⁽¹⁾			
Coated fine paper ⁽²⁾	1,934	1,869	1,663
Uncoated fine paper	35	33	33
Speciality coated paper and other	270	225	207
Total	2,239	2,127	1,903

(1) Includes sales for the Nash mill, which contributed \$42 million of sales (31,651 metric tonnes) in fiscal 2005, \$44 million of sales (33,650 metric tonnes) in fiscal 2004 and \$41 million of sales (33,820 metric tonnes) in fiscal 2003.

(2) Includes coated mechanical paper produced at Lanaken mill.

For the year ended September 2005, Sappi Fine Paper Europe sold approximately 2,427,000 metric tonnes of paper and pulp products. The following table sets forth the annual production capacity, number of paper machines, products, pulp integration and capital expenditures at each of Sappi Fine Paper Europe's mills in Europe.

	Mill Location							
	Germany		Austria		Netherlands		Belgium	United Kingdom
	Alfeld	Ehingen	Gratkorn	Maastricht	Nijmegen	Lanaken	Blackburn	
Paper capacity (000s metric tonnes)	360	235	860	320	240	490	120	
Number of paper machines	5	1	2	2	1	2	1	
Products	Coated fine paper, coated specialties and uncoated fine paper	Coated fine paper and uncoated fine paper	Coated fine paper and uncoated fine paper	Coated fine paper and coated specialty paper	Coated fine paper	Coated groundwood paper and coated fine paper	Coated fine paper	
Percentage pulp integration ⁽¹⁾	59	%	75	%	58	%	None	None
Capital expenditures (October 2002 - September 2005) (US\$ million)	38	52	88	33	17	58	6	

(1) Includes pulp sold to third parties.

Alfeld. The Alfeld mill is located to the south of Hannover, Germany, and its origins date back to 1706. It has a paper production capacity of approximately 360,000 metric tonnes and a pulp production capacity of approximately 120,000 metric tonnes per annum. It produces coated fine and specialty paper products, which are mainly coated and have a variety of finishes. In 1995 a major rebuild of Alfeld's Paper Machine 3 (PM3) was completed, enhancing the production of low substance flexible packaging papers. Alfeld's PM3 employs a fully integrated concept of in-line coating and calendaring. The Alfeld mill produces totally chlorine-free (TCF) bleached sulphite pulp for its own use. In early 2002, a rebuild of Alfeld's Paper Machine 2 (PM2) was completed. Alfeld spent approximately \$50 million on the rebuild of PM2.

Ehingen. The Ehingen mill is located to the southeast of Stuttgart, Germany, and was acquired by Hannover Papier, predecessor entity to Sappi Alfeld, in 1987. A paper machine with a capacity of 180,000 metric tonnes per annum of coated fine paper was commissioned in July 1991, expanding Ehingen from a market pulp mill into an integrated pulp and paper mill. During 1994 the construction of a high-rack warehouse was completed. As a result of upgrades during 1994 and 1996, Ehingen's total paper capacity was increased to 235,000 metric tonnes per annum. The pulp mill's capacity is currently 135,000 metric tonnes per annum of TCF bleached sulphite pulp. The pulp is produced mainly for internal use, but is also sold to third party customers.

Gratkorn. Paper has been produced at the Gratkorn, Austria, site for more than four centuries. In course of a major expansion and renovation project the Gratkorn mill has been transformed from a five-machine mill into a two-machine mill. As a result of this project, Gratkorn now has an annual capacity of 860,000 metric tonnes of triple-coated fine paper on just two paper machines and 250,000 metric tonnes of

TCF chemical pulp. The machines at Gratkorn are among the largest and most efficient paper machines in the world. After recent extension of Gratkorn's sheeting plant it also has an annual sheet finishing capacity of 800,000 metric tonnes.

Maastricht. The Maastricht, Netherlands, mill has the capacity to produce over 320,000 metric tonnes per annum of coated fine paper and board and one-side coated paper used primarily for printing labels. Paper was first produced in Maastricht in 1852. Paper Machine 6 (PM6), which was installed at Maastricht in 1962, was first rebuilt in 1977. In 1996, PM6 underwent an extensive NLG224 million (€102 million) rebuild. Maastricht specialises in high basis-weight triple-coated fine paper and board for graphics applications. PM6's production complements that of the Gratkorn mill, which produces lower weight coated fine paper. Paper Machine 5 (PM5) at Maastricht was constructed in 1952. It underwent a rebuild in 1995, when it was reconfigured at a total cost, including the related upgrade of PM5's entire line, of \$13 million and a further upgrading in 2001. Following the reconfiguration, PM5 is utilised as a dedicated one-side coated speciality paper machine.

Nijmegen. The Nijmegen, Netherlands, mill began operations in 1955 and operates one paper machine. The mill specialises in the production of reels of coated fine paper for web offset printing. It also produces special coated fine paper for use in digital printing. The Nijmegen mill was upgraded in 2001. The upgrade increased its capacity by 40,000 metric tonnes per annum. With an annual production capacity of 240,000 metric tonnes, the Nijmegen mill is one of Europe's largest suppliers of coated fine web offset paper. Rotary, or web, offset paper is used for commercial printing and publishing.

Nijmegen and Neusiedler AG, an Austrian, paper company, terminated their joint venture to operate an 80,000 metric tonnes capacity sheeting centre in the course of 2001 and have closed the related facility.

Lanaken. The Lanaken, Belgium, mill began commercial operations in 1966. It produces coated groundwood paper and lower weight wood-containing coated paper for offset printing. Coated groundwood paper for web offset presses is used primarily in the production of advertising materials and magazines. Lanaken's two paper machines have a total annual capacity of 490,000 metric tonnes. One machine principally produces coated groundwood paper. It was completely overhauled in 1992, and an additional off-line coater was installed to provide triple coating capability. The other paper machine produces lower-weight wood-containing paper. Its capacity was increased to 285,000 metric tonnes per annum as a result of an optimisation process during the mid-1990s. Lanaken produces chemo-thermo-mechanical pulp (CTMP) in an integrated plant which has been extended to an annual capacity of 165,000 metric tonnes in 2003. This enables the mill to supply approximately 52% of its fibre requirements for paper production.

Blackburn. The Blackburn, England, mill was established in 1875, and has been a major producer of cast coated paper. The Blackburn mill was rebuilt completely in 1996. In May 2000, we sold our Astralux brand of cast coated papers produced at the mill to the Favini Group in Italy. The production of cast coated papers at the Blackburn mill ceased at the end of May 2000. The Blackburn mill will continue to focus on its main business, the production of coated fine paper in reels.

Nash. The Nash mill in Hemel Hempstead, England, has been operating as a paper mill since the 1800s and manufactures a variety of different grades of paper and board. The mill's principal products are its branded and watermarked business papers, sold under the Croxley brand name, and its wide range of white and coloured boards, sold under the Vanguard brand name. The mill has the capacity to produce 30,000 metric tonnes of paper and board per annum.

Mill Ownership. Until mid-2003 we held our German mills through a 99.9% interest in Sappi Alfeld, formerly known as Hannover Papier. Sappi Ehingen, which owned the Ehingen mill, was 95% owned by Sappi Alfeld. Notwithstanding that the remaining interests were publicly held, an agreement between Sappi Alfeld and Sappi Ehingen provided us

with effective control over the cash flow in these businesses.

22

In mid-2003, we acquired the minority holdings in the German mills and now hold 100% ownership interests in the Alfeld, Ehingen, Gratkorn, Lanaken, Maastricht, Nijmegen, Blackburn and Nash mills.

Sappi Fine Paper South Africa

Sappi Fine Paper, through Sappi Fine Paper South Africa, produces and markets a wide range of coated, uncoated and speciality papers as well as crêped tissue and fibreboard in South Africa. Sappi Fine Paper South Africa is headquartered in Johannesburg. In the uncoated fine paper sector, where we have approximately 53% market share, Sappi Fine Paper operates one integrated pulp and uncoated paper mill, Enstra (located near Johannesburg). Stanger (located north of Durban) uses bagasse (the fibrous residue of sugar cane) to produce coated fine paper and tissue. A smaller paper mill, Adamas (located in Port Elizabeth) utilises pulp from our pulp mills and waste paper to produce speciality paper and some kraft products. Sappi Fine Paper South Africa is the only producer of coated fine paper in South Africa.

The following table sets forth sales by product for our Sappi Fine Paper South Africa operations.

	Year Ended September		
	2005	2004	2003
Sales (US\$ million):			
Coated fine paper	67	58	46
Uncoated fine paper	188	192	172
Speciality paper and other	68	61	52
Total	323	311	270

The following table sets forth the annual paper production capacity, number of machines, products, pulp integration and capital expenditures at each of the mills of Sappi Fine Paper South Africa.

	Mill Locations			
	Enstra	Stanger	Adamas	
Paper capacity (000s metric tonnes)	200	110	40	
Number of paper machines	3	2	2	
Products	Uncoated fine paper	Coated fine paper, coated label paper and tissue	Prestige stationary, envelope paper and corrugated medium	
Percentage pulp integration	66	%	76	%
Capital expenditures (October 2002-September 2005) (US\$ million)	23	17	4	

Enstra. The Enstra mill is the largest mill of Sappi Fine Paper South Africa, with a capacity of approximately 200,000 metric tonnes of elemental chlorine-free uncoated fine paper products per annum. In 1996, the Enstra mill completed a \$96 million capital expenditure programme. This programme increased capacity by 50,000 metric tonnes per annum and has resulted in improved production efficiency and product quality. The product range at the Enstra mill caters to the business forms, scholastic, office, envelope and general printing industries. The mill has a capacity of 100,000 metric tonnes per annum of bleached hardwood pulp. The mill uses an oxygen bleaching process, which is a process that was developed at the mill in the 1970s and has since become the industry standard.

Stanger. The Stanger mill commenced operations in 1976. It is unique in South Africa in that it uses bagasse as its basic raw material to produce high quality matte and gloss coated art papers and tissue. Art paper is used for high quality books and magazines, brochures, annual reports and labels. A \$26 million upgrade of the mill's paper machine was completed in August 2001, increasing the coated paper capacity to

80,000 metric tonnes per annum. The mill also produces 30,000 metric tonnes of tissue per annum and has a capacity of 60,000 metric tonnes of bleached bagasse pulp per annum.

Adamas. The Adamas mill is a small speciality mill. It produces high quality, uncoated prestige papers and boards in a variety of colours and embossing patterns. The mill also produces packaging and industrial grades from waste paper. The mill has a capacity of 40,000 metric tonnes of paper per annum. This mill purchases wastepaper and bleached pulp from other mills in the Sappi Group.

Marketing and Distribution

Overview

The further integration of our international marketing and distribution efforts is one of our main strategic objectives. In order to attain this objective, we have adopted a system whereby the marketing and distribution of our fine paper products is performed by our operating business in the respective region, supplemented by a trading network outside these core regions.

Our trading network, Sappi Trading, co-ordinates the international marketing and distribution of our fine paper products outside our core regions. Sappi Trading operates in Hong Kong (China), Sydney (Australia), Johannesburg (South Africa), Shanghai (China), Singapore, Zurich (Switzerland), Sao Paulo (Brazil), Mexico City (Mexico), Kenya and Zimbabwe. It also manages a network of agents around the world handling exports to over 100 countries.

We sell the vast majority of our coated and uncoated fine paper through merchants. We also sell paper directly to converters. We generally deliver products sold to converters from the mill or via a distribution warehouse. Electronic business-to-business interaction has become more important to us, and we will continue to focus on increasing service and efficiency through business-to-business interaction. The systems and structures have been put in place to actively continue these efforts.

Merchants are authorised to distribute Sappi Fine Paper's products by geographic area and to carry competitors' product lines to cover all segments of the market. Merchants perform numerous functions, including holding inventory, sales promotion and marketing, taking credit risk on sales and delivery, and distribution of the products. Merchants buy paper from Sappi Fine Paper and resell it, placing a mark-up on their purchase price. A merchant may either deliver to the customer from its own stock or arrange for delivery directly from the mill or one of Sappi Fine Paper distribution warehouses.

Sappi Fine Paper North America

Sappi Fine Paper North America's coated paper sales structure is organised in 6 regions with sales representatives located in all major market areas, and 7 technical representatives located in different regions in North America supporting the sales effort.

Approximately 6.0% of Sappi Fine Paper North America's coated fine paper sales for fiscal 2005 were outside North America. Sappi Fine Paper North America's sales outside North America are handled in southern Africa by Sappi Fine Paper South Africa, in Europe by Sappi Fine Paper Europe and by Sappi Trading outside those regions.

In 2005, the Sappi Fine Paper North America sales force sold coated graphic paper to approximately 400 merchant distribution locations. By selling exclusively through merchant channels, Sappi Fine Paper North America believes it has created a loyal group of merchant customers. Rather than competing with merchant distributors, the Sappi Fine Paper North America sales force focuses on generating demand with key printers, publishers and end users, which are then serviced by the merchant distributors.

In the United States, we market speciality paper through a dedicated speciality paper sales team directly to customers. Sappi Fine Paper North America also sells paper directly to large users of coated

technical products utilising a dedicated sales team. The special end-use requirements often require a paper made to fit the customer's specific application.

Sappi Fine Paper Europe

As part of the formation of Sappi Fine Paper in April 1998, the sales and marketing operations of Sappi Fine Paper Europe were reorganised into graphic paper, comprising printing and writing paper, and speciality paper, comprising paper for labelling, packaging and other speciality uses.

The sales division of the graphic paper unit is responsible for all sales of coated fine and groundwood papers in Europe. This includes European sales on behalf of Sappi Fine Paper North America and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa. It is also responsible for export sales to markets outside Europe. Sappi Fine Paper Europe's graphic products are distributed primarily by merchants. The export sales office manages exports to markets outside Europe through Sappi Trading, Sappi Fine Paper North America and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa.

Sappi Fine Paper Europe's centralised logistics department was formed in early 1998. It is responsible for the development and optimisation of the logistics of the graphic and speciality papers business units and the re-engineering of the supply chain.

Sappi Fine Paper South Africa

Sappi Fine Paper South Africa has a marketing and sales and technical support team based in four major centres in South Africa. Approximately 22% of the sales of Sappi Fine Paper South Africa in fiscal 2005 were outside of southern Africa to markets in Europe, Africa, Asia and North and Latin America. The products of Sappi Fine Paper South Africa are distributed in southern Africa primarily through merchants. In addition, some large volume orders are sold directly to printers and converters.

Customers

Sappi Fine Paper sells its products to a large number of customers, many of whom have long-standing relationships with us. These customers include merchants, converters and other direct consumers.

The most significant merchant customers, based on sales during fiscal 2005, include:

North America: Xpedx (a division of International Paper Company), Unisource Worldwide, Inc. (a majority interest of which was sold to Bain Capital Corporation) and Lindenmeyr Paper Company (owned by Central National Gottesman Inc.) and a select number of regionally strong merchants;

Europe: **PaperlinX (acquired the Buhrmann Paper Merchant Division in November 2003), IGEPA (Germany), Antalis Limited (a subsidiary of the Worms & Cie) and IGEPA group (including Pap de France and Scaldia NL); and**

Southern Africa: **Antalis SA (Pty) Limited, Peters Papers and Finwood Papers (a division of Buhrmann Paper Merchant Division).**

Only one of these merchant distributors, PaperlinX (who acquired the Buhrmann Paper Merchant Division in November 2003), represented more than 10% of our total sales during fiscal 2005. See note 37 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report for more information.

Sappi Fine Paper's converter customers include both multinational and regional converters. The most significant converter customers, based on sales during fiscal 2005, include: VanLeer, Fasson, Jackstadt, VAW Flexible Packaging, Alcan, UCB Transpac, Lawson Mardon Packaging and Perstop. These customers use our products in the production of pressure sensitive and other types of labels as well as flexible packaging. Nampak, the CTP Group of companies, Paarl Media:Lithotech, Merpak and Freedom

and Silvery are also significant converter customers. These companies use our products in the production of packaging products. No converter customer, however, represented more than 10% of our total sales during fiscal 2005.

Merchant sales constitute the majority of our fine paper sales. Pricing of fine products is generally subject to change upon notice of 30 days with longer notice periods (typically 3 to 6 months) for some large end-use customers. Sales to converters may be subject to longer notice periods, which would generally not exceed 12 months. We have long-standing relationships with most of our customers, with volume and pricing generally agreed on a quarterly basis.

Competition

Overview

Although the markets for pulp and paper have regional characteristics, they are highly competitive international markets involving a large number of producers located around the world.

Pulp and paper are subject to relatively low tariff protection in major markets, with existing tariff protections being further reduced under the World Trade Organization (*WTO*). In South Africa, for example, no tariffs are imposed on imports of pulp and newsprint. Tariffs on most other paper products under the WTO are 7% and will decline to 5% over time.

In 1999, South Africa entered into a free trade agreement with the European Union, which is intended to remove tariffs on 90% of bilateral trade over a twelve-year period. The implementation of this agreement has commenced. We do not anticipate that the agreement will have any material impact on our business in the short term. In the long term, however, we expect that the agreement will lead to increasing pricing pressure from imports, which could have a material impact on our pricing structure in South Africa. Pursuant to the agreement, import duties on coated and uncoated woodfree fine products from member states of the European Union currently stands at 0%, as per the current Jacobsens Import Tariffs. Corresponding duties on South African products imported in member states of the European Union will also be phased out over a period of seven to twelve years.

Competition in markets for our products is primarily based on price, quality, service, breadth of product line, product innovation and sales and distribution support. The speciality paper market puts greater emphasis on product innovation and quality as well as technical considerations. The packaging paper and newsprint markets place more emphasis on price.

North America

The major domestic coated fine producers which compete with Sappi Fine Paper in North America are NewPage (formerly part of MeadWestvaco and now owned by Cerberus), Stora Enso and International Paper Company. In addition, approximately 29% of US consumption is supplied by foreign producers, primarily Asian and European.

Europe

Recent merger and acquisition activity in the European pulp and paper industry includes: in 2004, the merger of Italian papermakers Cartiere Burgo and Holding Gruppo Marchi, now known as the Burgo-Marchi Group, and in 2002, M-real's (previously Metsä-Serla) consolidation of its ownership of Zanders to 100%; the Italian Marchi Group's acquisition of more than 23% equity stake in Cartiere Burgo, M-real's sale of its 50% share in Albruck paper mill to Myllykoski; and UPM-Kymmene's acquisition of Haindl (a German magazine paper producer).

The market leaders in coated fine paper production in Europe are Sappi, M-real, Stora Enso, Burgo-Marchi Group, UPM-Kymmene and CVC Partners (Lecta).

Southern Africa

Mondi Paper Company Limited is a significant competitor of Sappi Fine Paper in southern Africa in the uncoated fine paper sector. Coated fine imports, primarily from Europe and Asia, have gained an increased share of the southern African fine paper market, after the lifting of sanctions and boycotts against South Africa in the early 1990s and as a result of declining import duties. A substantial part of the imports originate from Sappi Fine Paper's European mills.

SAPPI FOREST PRODUCTS

Overview

Sappi Forest Products, headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, is an integrated pulp, packaging paper and timber products producer. Sappi Forest Products operates five pulp and paper mills and one sawmill and is managed in three operating divisions: Sappi Saiccor, Sappi Kraft and Sappi Forests.

Sappi Forest Products is a major pulp and paper producer in Africa with a production capacity of 830,000 metric tonnes of paper, 600,000 metric tonnes of chemical cellulose and 1,090,000 metric tonnes of paper pulp per annum. It is also a major timber grower and manages approximately 541,000 hectares of forestland, of which, approximately 395,000 hectares is planted with primarily pine and eucalyptus. This represents about 28% of the southern African timberlands and supplies approximately 78% of our southern African pulpwood and sawlog requirements.

The following chart sets forth certain information with respect to the mills and principal products of Sappi Forest Products as of November 2005.

The following table sets forth sales by product for Sappi Forest Products operations:

	Year Ended September		
	2005	2004	2003
Sales (US\$ million):			
Commodity paper products ⁽¹⁾	430	401	339
Chemical cellulose ⁽²⁾	360	349	267
Paper pulp ⁽²⁾	118	97	83
Timber and timber products	90	70	53
Total	998	917	742

(1) Includes newsprint and packaging products.

(2) Excludes sales related to paper pulp produced by Sappi Fine Paper facilities.

Sappi Forest Products sold approximately 3,302,000 metric tonnes of paper, pulp and forest products during the year ended September 2005.

The following table sets forth annual production capacity with respect to Sappi Forest Products products:

Production capacity (000s metric tonnes):	
Paper products	
Packaging paper	690
Newsprint	140
Total	830
Pulp	
Chemical cellulose	600
Paper pulp ⁽¹⁾	1,090
Total	1,690
Timber products	41 (2)
Percentage paper pulp integration	141 % ⁽³⁾

(1) Excludes production capacity related to paper pulp produced by Sappi Fine Paper facilities.

(2) Represents 78,000 cubic metres.

(3) Excludes pulp produced by Sappi Saiccor. Our southern African operations are net sellers of pulp.

Facilities and Operations

Sappi Saiccor

Sappi Saiccor was established in 1951 and acquired by us in 1988. It is a low-cost producer and the world's largest single producer of chemical cellulose. In 1995, we completed an approximately \$221 million expansion project to increase capacity by one third to approximately 600,000 metric tonnes per annum. Capital expenditures during the period from October 2002 to September 2005 were approximately \$39 million.

Virtually all of Sappi Saiccor's chemical cellulose production is exported from South Africa and marketed and distributed internationally by Sappi Trading. The pulp we principally produce is the type used in the manufacture of a variety of cellulose products, including viscose staple fibres (rayon) and solvent spun fibres (lyocell). Both viscose and lyocell fibres are used in the manufacture of fashion and decorating textiles which have a soft, natural feel and excellent breathing properties. Given their

particularly high absorbency properties, these fibres are also used in non-woven applications in the healthcare, industrial and disposable product markets. Chemical cellulose is also used in the manufacture of acetate flake, which is used in products such as filter tow for cigarette filters, and high quality yarns and fabrics. It is also used to manufacture microcrystalline cellulose, which is used as a rheological modifier in the food industry, a tableting agent in the pharmaceutical industry, and in various ethers for the chemical industry. It is also used to manufacture cellophane film for use in a variety of packaging applications.

The mill's timber consumption is comprised primarily of eucalyptus hardwoods. These fast growing trees are grown in relatively close proximity to the mill, which contributes to Sappi Saiccor's position as a low cost producer of chemical cellulose.

Sappi Kraft

Based upon volume sold in fiscal 2005, Sappi Kraft supplies approximately 55% of South Africa's packaging paper requirements, other than cartonboard, from its Ngodwana, Tugela and Cape Kraft mills.

The following chart sets forth the annual paper production capacity, number of machines, products, pulp integration and capital expenditures at each of Sappi Kraft's mills in South Africa.

	Mill Locations in South Africa				
	Ngodwana	Tugela		Cape Kraft	
Paper capacity (000s metric tonnes)	380	390		60	
Number of paper machines	2	4		1	
Products	Newsprint, kraft linerboard, white top linerboard, plasterboard and bleached and unbleached market pulp	Kraft linerboard, corrugating medium, sackkraft and machine glazed kraft		Linerboard, corrugating medium and coated products	
Percentage pulp integration ⁽¹⁾	134	%	100	%	None (2)
Capital expenditures (October 2002-September 2005) (US\$ million)	89	43		3	

(1) Excludes pulp produced from recycled paper by the respective plants at the mills.

(2) Cape Kraft's raw material requirements are met from waste fibre supplied by Sappi Waste Paper.

Ngodwana. Ngodwana was expanded between 1981 and 1985 from an unbleached kraft mill with a capacity of 100,000 metric tonnes per annum to a modernised mill with a capacity of approximately 240,000 metric tonnes of linerboard and 140,000 metric tonnes of newsprint per annum. The linerboard machine also produces White Top Liner (included in total linerboard capacity). The mill produces nearly 410,000 metric tonnes of bleached and unbleached pulp and 100,000 metric tonnes of groundwood pulp annually. The mill markets paper and excess pulp locally and in the export market. The mill is a large consumer of waste paper, which is used in the production of packaging paper. In 1995 the mill commissioned the world's first ozone bleaching plant, thus eliminating the use of elemental chlorine and significantly reducing mill effluent.

Tugela. Tugela is Sappi Kraft's largest integrated unbleached kraft mill, with a capacity of approximately 390,000 metric tonnes of packaging paper per annum. The mill supplies kraft linerboard and corrugating medium and most of South Africa's requirements for sackkraft, used in the production of multiwall sacks. Machine glazed packaging papers are also produced at the mill. The Kraft Linerboard

machine was upgraded in 1996 at a cost of approximately \$81 million and the Sack Kraft machine and components of the pulp plant were upgraded in 2003/4 at a cost of approximately \$50 million. It is the only mill in South Africa to offer high performance containerboard packaging and extensible Sack Kraft.

Cape Kraft. The Cape Kraft mill was built during 1980, commissioned in 1981 and upgraded in 1995. The mill presently has a capacity of 60,000 metric tonnes of linerboard and corrugating medium per annum, which it sells principally to the corrugating industry in the Western Cape. The mill uses approximately 67,000 metric tonnes per annum of waste paper to produce 60,000 metric tonnes per annum of paper. The fact that the mill's product is produced from 100% recycled paper can provide a competitive edge in our markets, which are becoming increasingly environmentally aware.

Usutu Pulp. As of October 2000, we have a 100% ownership interest in the Usutu Pulp Company Limited. Usutu Pulp began production in 1961 and has been managed by us since 1989. The mill was upgraded during 1995 and 1996 at a cost of approximately \$69 million. During the period from October 2002 to September 2005, an additional \$16 million was invested. The mill has a capacity of 230,000 metric tonnes of unbleached kraft pulp and supplies approximately 9% of the world market for unbleached market kraft pulp (based upon tonnes sold in 2005). The mill is situated in Swaziland and is surrounded by 70,000 hectares of forestlands, which it leases from the Swazi nation under a long-term lease extendable to 2089. The location of these forestlands, combined with the very compact areas the trees are planted on, provides for low wood delivery costs. See -Supply Requirements-Southern Africa-Wood for more information.

Sappi Kraft also manages Sappi Waste Paper. Sappi Waste Paper collected approximately 217,000 metric tonnes of waste paper in fiscal 2005. Most of the waste paper collected was supplied to our mills. Waste represents approximately 30% of the fibre requirements of our packaging grades.

Sappi Forests

Sappi Forests, together with Usutu Forests, supplies or procures all of Sappi Forest Products' and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa's domestic pulpwood requirements of approximately 6 million metric tonnes per annum. 87% of the pulpwood comes from owned or contracted sources. Together they manage or control, through contracts, about 541,000 hectares of land situated in Mpumalanga (44%), KwaZulu-Natal (43%) and Swaziland (13%). Securing raw material for the future is a vital element in the long-term planning of Sappi Forest Products' business. Sappi Forests has an extensive research operation which concentrates on programmes to improve the yield per hectare of forestland used. Significant progress has been made in developing faster-growing trees with enhanced fibre yields. Sophisticated nurseries have been developed to accommodate the seedling requirements of Sappi Forest Products' operations. Approximately 48 million seedlings are grown annually at Sappi Forests' and Usutu Forests nurseries.

Sappi Forests and Usutu Forests have invested approximately \$127 million in maintaining, acquiring and expanding plantations and an additional \$9 million in other capital expenditure projects in the period from October 2002 to September 2005.

As of October 1, 2000, following the sale of Novobord, Sappi Timber Industries ceased to exist, and the mining timber and sawmill divisions were incorporated into Sappi Forests. The sawmill division operates one mill with a total production capacity of 78,000 cubic metres per annum of structural timber for the building industry and components for the furniture and packaging industry.

Pursuant to our strategy of disposing of non-core assets, the mining timber division, which produced mine support systems for the South African mining industry, was sold on October 1, 2000 to Business Venture Investment No. 336 (Pty) Ltd, a company owned by the mining timber division management. We

also sold Boskor sawmill on February 10, 2003 to a Cape-based door and window manufacturer and shut down Clan sawmill on September 30, 2003.

Marketing and Distribution

Overview

Each of Sappi Forest Products' divisions with major South African markets has its own marketing and sales team. Sappi Trading manages the exports of the Sappi Forest Products' divisions, in particular the marketing and distribution of the market pulp produced at Saiccor and Usutu.

Customers

Sappi Forest Products sells its products to a large number of customers, including merchants, converters, printers and other direct customers, many of whom have long-standing relations with us.

The most significant converter customers, based on sales in fiscal 2005, include: The CTP Group and Media 24, which uses Sappi Forest Products' newsprint; Nampak Limited; Mondipak; APL (Pty) Ltd and Houers Co-operative. A significant number of the viscose staple fibre manufacturers around the world purchase chemical cellulose from Sappi Forest Products, including large groups such as the Aditya Birla Group and the Lenzing Group. Most of our chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) sales contracts are multi-year contracts with pricing generally based on a formula linked to the NBSK price and reset on a quarterly basis.

Approximately 51% of the total sales of Sappi Forest Products during fiscal 2005 consisted of export sales.

Competition

Mondi Paper Company Limited is a significant competitor in most of the markets in which Sappi Forest Products operates in southern Africa. In recent years the regional recycled containerboard capacity has increased by approximately 60,000 metric tonnes. Due to exchange rate fluctuations a number of offshore containerboard suppliers have also entered the southern African packaging markets. In respect of chemical cellulose, competitors include Borregaard ChemCell Atisholz, Tembec Inc., Western Pulp Inc., Buckeye Technologies Inc. and Rayonier Inc.

SUPPLY REQUIREMENTS

Overview

The principal supply requirements for the manufacture of our products are wood, pulp, energy and chemicals. Large amounts of water are also required for the manufacture of pulp and paper products. See [Environmental and Safety Matters](#) [Environmental Matters](#) [Southern Africa](#) . We believe that we have adequate sources of these and other raw materials and supplies necessary for the manufacture of pulp and paper for the foreseeable future.

North America

Wood

In connection with the 1998 sale of our US timberlands to Plum Creek Timber Company L.P., Sappi Fine Paper North America and Plum Creek are parties to a fibre supply agreement with an initial term expiring in December 2023 and with three five-year renewal options. Under the supply agreement, Sappi Fine Paper North America is required to purchase from Plum Creek and Plum Creek is required to sell to Sappi Fine Paper North America a guaranteed annual minimum of 318,000 metric tonnes of hardwood pulpwood, or approximately 10% of Sappi Fine Paper North America's annual requirements, at prices calculated based on a formula tied to market prices. Sappi Fine Paper North America has the option to purchase additional quantities of hardwood pulpwood harvested from these timberlands at prices generally higher than the ones paid for the guaranteed quantities. The remainder of Sappi Fine Paper North America's wood requirements is met through market purchases.

Pulp

Sappi Fine Paper North America's mills, taken together, are fully integrated on an economic basis with respect to hardwood pulp usage. Mills that are not fully integrated make market purchases, and mills that produce more pulp than they utilise make market sales.

Sappi Fine Paper North America currently offers recycled products in most coated grade lines. It uses reprocessed fibres recovered from its existing operations and purchases de-inked post consumer waste pulp to meet market requirements for recycled products.

Sappi Fine Paper North America manufactures, in aggregate, pulp and fibre equivalent to approximately 98% of its own pulp and fibre requirements. This vertical integration reduces its exposure to fluctuations in the market price for pulp.

Energy Requirements

Sappi Fine Paper North America's energy requirements are satisfied through wood and by-products derived from the pulping process, coal, oil, purchased electricity, purchased steam, natural gas and other sources.

A substantial majority of Sappi Fine Paper North America's electricity requirements are satisfied through its own electricity generation or co-generation agreements. In July 2002, Sappi Fine Paper North America entered a series of contracts with Central Maine Power (CMP) and a third party energy provider. The contracts provide that Somerset sell all of its excess generated power to CMP and purchase all of its power needs beyond its generation capacity from the third party provider, each at market rates. The agreements expire in 2012. Sappi Fine Paper North America also has an agreement, expiring on February 28, 2007, with a third party pursuant to which the Westbrook mill sells any excess electricity it co-generates.

The Cloquet mill, is supplied partly with internally generated electricity. The Cloquet mill includes a hydroelectric facility that is licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. In addition to generating a portion of its own power, the Cloquet mill has entered into a take-or-pay agreement to purchase a portion of its power from Minnesota Power, which terminates in 2008.

Chemicals

Major chemicals used by Sappi Fine Paper North America include clays, carbonates, latices and plastic pigments, titanium dioxide, caustic soda, other pulping and bleaching chemicals and chemicals for the specialty business. Sappi Fine Paper North America purchases these chemicals from a variety of suppliers. There are generally adequate sources of supply, and in no case is Sappi Fine Paper North America dependent upon a sole source of supply. However, chemical supplies have tightened due to the rationalization of capacity over the last several years. In addition, some suppliers have limited supplies of chemicals as a result of the hurricanes in the south eastern United States during the fall of 2005. Most of these chemicals are subject to price fluctuations based upon a number of factors, including energy and crude oil prices and transportation costs, and commodity demand vs. supply imbalances.

Europe

Wood

Sappi Fine Paper Europe purchases approximately 2,500,000 cubic metres of pulpwood per annum for its pulp mills. The wood is purchased both on contract and in the open market. Wood supply contracts are fixed for one year in terms of volumes. Price agreements range from three months for wood chips to one year for logwood.

The wood logs and wood chips used in the Gratkorn TCF pulp mill are purchased through the Papierholz Austria GmbH joint venture arrangement amongst Sappi, the Norske Skog Bruck mill and the Frantschach Group. We hold a 42.5% ownership interest in Papierholz.

The wood chips used in the Lanaken CTMP plant are purchased through Sapin S.A. (Sapin), a 50%-50% joint venture company operated together with Norske Skog. Sapin was initially formed on November 25, 1986, pursuant to a joint venture agreement between Sappi Lanaken and Parenco. Under the agreement, as amended in September 2003, the parties agree to utilise Sapin exclusively to furnish the entire wood requirements of the joint venture partners' affiliated mills.

Pulp

Sappi Fine Paper Europe produces approximately 45% of its pulp requirements. The remainder is supplied through open market purchases and, to a lesser extent, supply agreements.

Energy Requirements

Sappi Fine Paper Europe's energy requirements are generally met by internally generated sources and purchases of electricity, gas and, to a lesser extent, oil. In Germany, Sappi Fine Paper Europe internally generates approximately 65% of the electricity used at its mills. Approximately 45% of the energy requirements for the Gratkorn mill are internally generated. The remaining requirements are met by purchasing electricity, oil, coal and gas in accordance with various supply agreements.

Substantially all of the electricity requirements of the Maastricht mill are satisfied by a 60 megawatt combined heat/power plant operated through a joint venture with Essent. All surplus electrical energy is supplied to the public electricity grid. We hold an ownership interest of 50% in the VOF Warmte/Kracht Maastricht Mill, the joint venture, which was formed in 1992, and are obligated to purchase all of the steam and electricity requirements of the Maastricht mill from the joint venture facility under a long-term

supply agreement. Essent purchases the surplus electrical energy of the VOF. The Maastricht mill also purchases natural gas pursuant to a contract with a natural gas supplier.

Nijmegen mill's electricity requirements are largely satisfied by its co-generation power plant. The Nijmegen mill additionally purchases natural gas from Gasunie, a local supplier.

Lanaken mill's energy requirements are generally met by purchases of natural gas and electricity. Certain of the energy requirements of the Lanaken mill are furnished by a combined heat and power unit constructed and operated pursuant to the Albertcentrale N.V. joint venture arrangement between Sappi, the Belgian power company Electrabel and Rabo Energy. Sappi holds a 49% ownership interest in the Albertcentrale facility and is obligated to purchase 85% of the plant's energy requirements from the joint venture facility under a long-term supply agreement. The facility commenced operations in April 1997.

Chemicals

Major chemicals used by Sappi Fine Paper Europe include clays, carbonates, latexes and starches and chemicals for the specialty business. Sappi Fine Paper Europe purchases most of these chemicals from a portfolio of suppliers, and in only one case is Sappi Fine Paper Europe dependent on a sole source of supply. There are generally adequate sources of supply in the market. Most of these chemicals are subject to price fluctuations based upon a number of factors, including energy and crude oil prices and transportation costs, and commodity demand vs. supply imbalances.

Southern Africa

Wood

Sappi Forest Products manages approximately 541 000 hectares of forestland in southern Africa, of which approximately 395 000 hectares are forested, which produces approximately 78% of the timber required for its operations. Sappi Forests owns approximately 373,000 hectares and manages the majority of the remainder. Usutu Pulp owns 55,000 hectares of pine on 70,000 hectares of land that is leased from the Swazi nation on a long-term lease, which we have the option to extend until 2089. Sappi Forests presently has supply contracts for the timber from approximately 90,000 hectares of plantations planted by small growers with our technical and financial support. Approximately 10% of the timber requirements of Sappi Forest Products is bought under a long-term contract with Safcol, the South African state-owned forestry company which is in the process of privatising. The remaining timber requirements are met through a number of significant medium-term contracts and open market purchases. The privatisation of Safcol is still subject to Competition Commission approval. We are unable to predict whether the privatisation of Safcol or the purchase of Safcol's plantations in KwaZulu Natal by another bidder will have an adverse impact on our ability to continue to purchase timber from Safcol.

Pulp

Sappi Forest Products and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa in aggregate manufacture all of the pulp required in their respective papermaking operations, except minimal quantities of specialised pulps, and together are a net seller of bleached and unbleached paper pulp. This vertical integration substantially reduces our exposure to fluctuations in the market price for pulp.

Energy Requirements

Our energy requirements in southern Africa are met principally by purchases of coal and electricity supplemented by purchases of fuel oil and gas. Much of the energy demand is met by internally generated biomass and spent liquors from the pulping process. Electricity is supplied by Eskom, the state-owned electricity company, or generated internally. The electricity generated by our plants in southern Africa is

equivalent to approximately 43% of our total electricity requirements. Coal, both for steam raising and gas production, and oil are purchased on contract.

Chemicals

Major chemicals used by Sappi Forest Products and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa include caustic soda, calcium carbonates, latexes and starches and sulphur and sulphuric acid. Sappi Forest Products and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa purchase these chemicals from a variety of South African and overseas suppliers. There are generally adequate sources of supply, and in only one case is Sappi Fine Paper South Africa dependent upon a sole source of supply. Most of these chemicals are subject to price fluctuations based upon a number of factors, including energy and crude oil prices and transportation costs, and commodity demand vs. supply imbalances.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SAFETY MATTERS

Environmental Matters

We are subject to a wide range of environmental laws and regulations in the various jurisdictions in which we operate, and these laws and regulations have tended to become more stringent over time. Environmental compliance is an increasingly important consideration in our businesses, and we expect to continue to incur significant capital expenditures and operational and maintenance costs related to reductions in air emissions (including greenhouse gases), wastewater discharges and waste management. We constantly monitor the potential for changes in the laws regulating air emissions and other pollution control laws and take actions with respect to our operations accordingly. See note 41 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report for more information.

North America

Sappi Fine Paper North America is subject to stringent environmental laws in the United States. These laws include the Federal Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and their respective state counterparts. In December 2003, Sappi Fine Paper North America received a notice of violation and a finding of violation from the US Environmental Protection Agency, alleging violations of the Clean Air Act's new source performance standards in connection with repairs performed at the Muskegon pulp mill in the early 1990s. In July 2005, Sappi announced its decision to cease operations at the Muskegon pulp mill. Sappi Fine Paper North America is currently in settlement discussions with the US Environmental Protection Agency, and expects to settle the matter pursuant to a consent decree in which Sappi agrees (i) to more stringent permit requirements should the pulp mill ever start up again and (ii) to pay a fine of approximately \$580,000.

The US is a non-signatory of the Kyoto Protocol, but we maintain a watching brief on State and Federal Greenhouse Gas (GHG) initiatives.

Europe

Our European facilities are subject to extensive environmental regulation in the various countries in which they operate. For example:

- In Germany, where two Sappi Fine Paper Europe mills are located, the Federal Emission Control Act, the Federal Water Act and the Federal Ground Act regulate air emissions, wastewater discharges and liability for contaminated sites, respectively.
- In the Netherlands, where two Sappi Fine Paper Europe mills are located, paper manufacturers, including Sappi, have made an agreement with the national government to improve environmental management and further limit emissions.
- In Austria and Belgium, water emissions and waste disposal requirements similar to those in Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands apply to our facilities.
- In the United Kingdom, our mills received permits required under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations, which were enacted to implement the EC Directive 96/61/EC on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control.
- At our Nijmegen mill, we are subject to a potential damage charge of approximately \$203,611 (euro 208,000), representing the alleged cost of cleaning up contaminated pulp from the local sewer system. The proposed charge relates to a discharge of pulp from our Nijmegen mill in 2000. We are pursuing a settlement of this matter with the local authorities.

- The Sappi Fine Paper Europe organisation is certified according to the international standard of environmental management systems (ISO 14001), and seven mills are certified according to the European EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme). We expect that the Lanaken mill will be certified in 2006. All the European mills publish their environmental reports on an annual basis.
- The countries within which we operate in Europe are all signatories of the Kyoto Protocol and we have developed a GHG strategy in line with this protocol. Our European mills have been set CO₂ emission limits for the allocation period 2005 to 2007. Based upon in depth analysis of our mill production by a Sappi Fine Paper Europe task force it is unlikely that Sappi will exceed their CO₂ emission limits. Consequently in July 2005 Sappi Fine Paper Europe sold 90,000 surplus CO₂ credits to the value of \$2.5 million (euro 2.0 million) on the European Climate Exchange.

South Africa

The primary South African environmental laws affecting our operations have been substantially revised. For example:

- The National Water Act, effective October 1998, addresses the water shortages in South Africa in a manner that we believe will not significantly impact our manufacturing and forestry operations. Abstraction of water, discharge of effluent and management of forests are all regulated under a new license system in which first allocations go to, among other things, human consumption, before allocations are made to agriculture, industry and forestry. All water use is now subject to a charge. We expect to incur additional costs over the next decade to comply with the National Water Act, but are unable to quantify these at this time.
- The National Environmental Management Act, effective January 1998, adopted the philosophy of integrated environmental management, which provides for the integration of environmental considerations into all stages of any development process. The Act includes a number of significant principles, such as private prosecution of companies in the interest of the protection of the environment and the establishment of aggressive waste reduction goals. We expect to incur additional costs to comply with the National Environmental Management Act, which is not expected to be material.
- The National Environmental Management Act (Air Quality Bill) was promulgated in the beginning of 2005. The Air Quality Act will eventually replace the 1965 Atmospheric Pollution Prevention Act and will impose stringent compliance standards on our operations when implemented, including those related to carbon dioxide and sulphur dioxide air emissions. Limited sections of the Act were implemented in September 2005. We expect to incur additional costs to comply with the Air Quality Act, which we believe will not be material.
- South Africa is also a signatory of the Kyoto Protocol. We are initiating Clean Development Mechanism projects at various of our mills.

The requirements under these statutes may result in additional expenditures and operational constraints. Although we are in frequent contact with regulatory authorities during the phasing in of the legislation, we are uncertain as to the ultimate effect on our operations. Our current assessment of the legislation is that any compliance expenditures or operational constraints will not be material to our financial condition.

Safety Matters

The forestry, timber and pulp and paper industries involve inherently hazardous activities including, among other things, the operation of heavy machinery. Nearly all countries in which we have significant manufacturing operations including South Africa, the United States and European countries, regulate

health and safety in the workplace. We actively seek to reduce the frequency of accidents in our workplaces and to improve health and safety conditions by extensive training and educational programmes.

During March 2005, we launched Project Zero, a concerted safety drive. Project Zero symbolises the goal of no injuries and involves standardising behaviour-based safety programmes throughout the group and focusing on the particular activities which have resulted in injuries or fatalities.

In the United States, Sappi Fine Paper North America must comply with a number of federal and state regulations regarding health and safety in the workplace. The most important of these regulations is the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act.

In Europe, we participate in various governmental worker accident and occupational health insurance programmes. In Austria, Belgium, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, these programmes are funded by mandatory contributions by employers and employees. In Germany, we participate in a similar mandatory contribution scheme controlled by the German government, which permits employer and employee participation in its administration. The Safety and Health issues are integrated into the management systems.

In South Africa, we must comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Number 85 of 1993) and related regulations. Our South African businesses have instituted safety rating system, which sets standards for safety and facilitates the monitoring of compliance with applicable governmental laws and regulations.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Sappi Limited is the ultimate holding company of the Sappi Group. The following table sets forth the more significant subsidiaries and joint ventures owned directly or indirectly by Sappi Limited.

Name of Company	Trading Name	Country of Incorporation	Type of Company	% Holding and Voting Power
North America				
S.D. Warren Company	Sappi Fine Paper	United States	Operating	100
Sappi Cloquet LLC	Sappi Fine Paper	United States	Operating	100
Europe				
Sappi Alfeld GmbH	Sappi Fine Paper	Germany	Operating	100
Sappi Austria Produktions GmbH & Co KG	Sappi Fine Paper	Austria	Operating	100
Sappi Ehingen GmbH	Sappi Fine Paper	Germany	Operating	100
Sappi Esus Beteiligungs-verwaltungs GmbH	Sappi Esus	Austria	Holding	100
Sappi Europe SA	Sappi Fine Paper	Belgium	Operating	100
Sappi Holding GmbH	Sappi Holding	Austria	Holding	100
Sappi International SA	Sappi International	Belgium	Finance	100
Sappi Lanaken NV	Sappi Fine Paper	Belgium	Operating	100
Sappi Lanaken Press Paper NV	Sappi Fine Paper	Belgium	Operating	100
Sappi Maastricht BV	Sappi Fine Paper	Netherlands	Operating	100
Sappi Nijmegen BV	Sappi Fine Paper	Netherlands	Operating	100
Sappi Papier Holding GmbH	Sappi Papier Holding or Sappi Fine Paper	Austria	Holding and Operating	100
Sappi U.K. Ltd.	Sappi Fine Paper	United Kingdom	Operating	100
Southern Africa				
Sappi Management Services (Pty) Ltd.	Sappi Management Services (Pty) Ltd.	South Africa	Management	100
Sappi Manufacturing (Pty) Ltd.	Sappi Manufacturing or Sappi Forest Products or Sappi Fine Paper or Sappi Saiccor or Sappi Kraft or Sappi Forests or Sappi Waste Paper	South Africa	Operating	100
Usutu Pulp Co. Ltd.	Sappi Usutu	Swaziland	Operating	100
Asia				
Jiangxi Chenming Paper Co Ltd	Jiangxi Chenming Paper Co Ltd	China	Operating Joint Venture	34
Guernsey				
Lignin Insurance Co. Ltd.	Lignin Insurance Co. Ltd.	Guernsey	Finance	100

PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

For a description of the production capacity of our mills, see Sappi Fine Paper Facilities and Operations and Sappi Forest Products Facilities and Operations .

For a description of the timberlands we own or have recently sold, see Sappi Fine Paper Facilities and Operations Sappi Fine Paper North America , Sappi Forest Products Facilities and Operations Sappi Forests and Supply Requirements .

For a description of our capital expenditures, see Item 5 Operating and Financial Review and Prospects Liquidity and Capital Resources .

The following table sets forth the location and use of our principal headquarters, manufacturing and distribution facilities. These facilities are owned unless otherwise indicated.

Location	Use	Approximate Size(1)
Sappi Limited		
Johannesburg, South Africa	Sappi Headquarters ⁽²⁾	15,078 m ²
Sappi Fine Paper		
Sappi Fine Paper North America⁽³⁾		
Boston, Massachusetts	Headquarters ⁽⁴⁾	38,620 sq ft
Skowhegan, Maine (Somerset Mill)	Manufacturing facility: coated paper, softwood and hardwood pulp	2,355 acres
Muskegon, Michigan	Manufacturing facility: coated paper and a warehouse ⁽⁵⁾	5,185,000 sq ft
Westbrook, Maine	Manufacturing facility: speciality and high bulk coated paper and research and development facility	275 acres
	Storage and shredding facility	13,446 sq ft
	Roll coating facility	13,575 sq ft
Allentown, Pennsylvania	Coated paper sheeting facility	30 acres
Dayton, New Jersey	Distribution centre ⁽⁶⁾	607,489 sq ft
Alsip, Illinois	Distribution centre ⁽⁷⁾	392,618 sq ft
Cloquet, Minnesota	Manufacturing facility: coated paper and pulp ⁽¹⁰⁾	650 acres
South Portland, Maine	Shared financial and customer service office ⁽¹¹⁾	48,433 sq ft
Sappi Fine Paper Europe		
Brussels, Belgium	Headquarters ⁽⁹⁾	3,836 m ²
Gratkorn, Austria	Manufacturing facility: coated paper and pulp	999,053 m ²
Maastricht, Netherlands	Manufacturing facility: coated paper and research and development facility	14.7 ha
Nijmegen, Netherlands	Manufacturing facility: coated paper	10.7 ha
Lanaken, Belgium	Manufacturing facility: coated paper and pulp	35.0 ha
Alfeld, Germany	Manufacturing facility: coated paper, uncoated paper and pulp	332,503 m ²
Ehingen, Germany	Manufacturing facility: coated paper and pulp	358,092 m ²
Blackburn, England	Manufacturing facility: coated paper	36.0 ha
Wesel, Germany	Distribution centre ⁽⁸⁾	6.2 ha

Hemel Hempstead, England (Nash Mill)	Manufacturing facility: business paper and printing paper and board	5.0 ha
Sappi Fine Paper South Africa		
Enstra, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: uncoated paper and hardwood pulp ⁽¹⁰⁾	582.7 ha
Stanger, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: coated paper, tissue and bagasse pulp ⁽¹⁰⁾	55.4 ha
Adamas, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: uncoated paper and recycled packaging paper	7.2 ha
Sappi Forest Products		
Johannesburg, South Africa	Headquarters	Included under Sappi Limited headquarters
Sappi Saiccor		
Umkomaas, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: chemical cellulose ⁽¹⁰⁾	159.4 ha
Sappi Kraft		
Ngodwana, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: linerboard, newsprint and kraft pulp	1,282.9 ha
Tugela, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: linerboard, corrugating medium, sackkraft and industrial kraft	914.4 ha
Cape Kraft, South Africa	Manufacturing facility: linerboard and corrugating medium	9.5 ha
Bunya, Swaziland (Usutu Pulp Mill)	Manufacturing facility: kraft pulp	45.0 ha
Sappi Forests		
Barberton, South Africa (Lomati Sawmill)	Sawmill	24.6 ha

- (1) The approximate size measurement relates to, in the case of manufacturing and distribution facilities, the perimeter of the property on which the principal manufacturing or distribution facilities are situated and, in the case of offices, the interior offices space owned or leased.
- (2) Subject to a lease expiring in 2015.
- (3) All of Sappi Fine Paper North America principal properties are pledged as collateral under Sappi Fine Paper North America's credit facilities.
- (4) Subject to a lease expiring in 2006.
- (5) Subject to a lease that operates on a month-to-month basis.
- (6) Subject to a lease expiring in 2010.
- (7) Subject to a lease expiring in 2006.
- (8) Of the total 6.2ha, 8,800m² is subject to a lease expiring at the end of 2005.
- (9) Subject to leases expiring in 2008.
- (10) Substantial assets are leased pursuant to capital lease agreements.

(11) Subject to a lease expiring in 2015.

42

ITEM 5. OPERATING AND FINANCIAL REVIEW AND PROSPECTS

You should read the following discussion and analysis together with our Group annual financial statements, including the notes, included elsewhere in this Annual Report. Certain information contained in the discussion and analysis set forth below and elsewhere in this Annual Report includes forward-looking statements that involve risk and uncertainties. See Forward-Looking Statements , Item 3 Key Information Selected Financial Data , Item 3 Key Information Risk Factors , Item 4 Information on the Company , Item 10 Additional Information Exchange Controls and notes 2, 3, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 42 and 43 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report for a discussion of important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the results described in or implied by the forward-looking statements contained in this Annual Report. The following discussion and analysis are based on the results of operations prepared in accordance with South African Statements of Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (SA GAAP), which differ from United States Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (US GAAP).

Fiscal 2005 included 53 accounting weeks, compared to 52 accounting weeks in fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2003. Our fiscal years operate on a 52 accounting week cycle, except every 6th fiscal year which includes an additional accounting week (additional accounting week). The following discussion of our operating and financial review and prospects refers to the impact of the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 on our sales, raw material and other input costs of manufacturing, operating expenses and, selling, general and administration expense (SG&A expense), based on average sales and costs.

Company and Business Overview

We are a global Company that through acquisitions in the 1990s has been transformed into the global market leader in coated fine paper. Two acquisitions were pivotal in establishing us as a global Company, namely the acquisition in 1994 of S.D. Warren Company, now known as Sappi Fine Paper North America, and the acquisition in 1997 of KNP Leykam, now integrated into Sappi Fine Paper Europe. Opportunities to grow within our core businesses will continue to be evaluated.

We have integrated our fine paper acquisitions into a single fine paper business, which operates under the name Sappi Fine Paper. We are organised into two operating business units: Sappi Fine Paper and Sappi Forest Products. We also operate a trading network called Sappi Trading for the international marketing and distribution of chemical cellulose and market pulp throughout the world and of the group's other products in areas outside our core operating regions of North America, Europe and southern Africa.

Sappi Fine Paper generated approximately 80% of our sales during fiscal 2005 and fiscal 2004. Of our sales for fiscal 2005 and fiscal 2004, approximately 84% were made in US dollars, euro and other non-Rand denominated currencies. Our South African business sells approximately 42% of its products in US dollars. See Inflation and Foreign Exchange and note 37 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report. Our sales by source and destination in fiscal 2005 and fiscal 2004 were as follows:

	Sales by Source 2005		Sales by Source 2004		Sales by Destination 2005		Sales by Destination 2004	
North America	29	%	29	%	30	%	31	%
Europe	45	%	45	%	40	%	41	%
Southern Africa	26	%	26	%	15	%	15	%
Far East and others					15	%	13	%
Total	100	%	100	%	100	%	100	%

Sappi Fine Paper has a total paper production capacity of 4.2 million metric tonnes per annum. We are the global leader in the coated fine paper business with a capacity of 3.9 million metric tonnes of coated fine paper per annum and with a market share of approximately 24% in the United States,

approximately 20% in Europe and greater than 60% in southern Africa. Our market share in the United States declined during fiscal 2003 as a result of our long-term branded merchant distribution rationalisations, following the Potlatch acquisition, which resulted in discontinuing certain products and merchant relationships, as well as pricing actions of competitors in response to difficult market conditions. Our market share stabilised in fiscal 2004 and after declining earlier during fiscal 2005, our North American market share increased towards the end of fiscal 2005 to slightly above fiscal 2004 levels. After also declining during fiscal 2005, our European market share increased in recent months to similar levels as at the end of fiscal 2004. In addition, we are the world's largest producer of chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp), with a market share of approximately 15%. The Sappi Group is now more than 100% integrated on a net basis in terms of pulp usage, meaning that, while some of our facilities are market buyers of pulp and others are market sellers, in the aggregate we produce slightly more pulp than we utilise. By region, the southern African operations are net sellers of pulp, Sappi Fine Paper North America is fully integrated and the European operations are approximately 44% self-sufficient for pulp in Continental Europe, but entirely dependent on market pulp in the United Kingdom. We supply approximately 78% of the wood requirements for our South African businesses from sources we own or manage. Both our North American and European operations are dependent on outside suppliers of wood for their production requirements.

In recent years, we have sought to internationalise our shareholder base and increase our exposure in the world's major financial markets. On November 5, 1998, our American Depositary Receipts commenced trading on the New York Stock Exchange. We believe that, as at the end of fiscal 2005, based on registered addresses and disclosure by nominee companies, 46% of our shares excluding the shares owned by a subsidiary of Sappi, were held beneficially in North America, 42% of our shares were held beneficially in southern Africa and 12% of our shares were held beneficially in Europe and elsewhere. We believe that, compared to the shareholding of our shares at the end of fiscal 2004, the North American shareholding of our shares has increased from 36% and the southern African shareholding has decreased from 51%, while the European shareholding remained unchanged.

Principal Factors Impacting on our Results

The results of operations of our business are affected by numerous factors. Given the high fixed cost base of pulp and paper manufacturers, industry profitability is highly sensitive to changes in prices. Prices are significantly affected by changes in industry capacity and output levels, customer inventory levels and cyclical changes in the world economy. Profitability in our industry is, however, also influenced by factors such as sales volume, the level of raw material and other input costs, exchange rates, and operational efficiency.

The principal factors that have impacted our business during the financial periods presented in the following discussion and analysis and that are likely to continue to impact our business are:

- a) cyclical nature of our industry and its impact on sales volume;
- b) movement in market prices for our products;
- c) sensitivity to currency movements;
- d) movement in market prices for raw materials and other input costs of manufacturing; and
- e) other significant factors impacting costs, including new acquisitions, restructuring and cost reduction initiatives.

Because many of the factors are beyond our control and certain of these factors have historically been volatile, past performance will not necessarily be indicative of future performance and it is difficult to predict future performance with any degree of certainty.

Markets

The markets for our pulp and paper products are cyclical, with prices significantly affected by factors such as changes in industry capacity and output levels, customer inventory levels and cyclical changes in the world economy. The pulp and paper industry has often been characterised by periods of imbalances between supply and demand, causing prices to be volatile. Prices also vary significantly by geographic region and product while our core coated paper products are used for many types of publications. The highly cyclical advertising market is a major driver of our business.

Coated Fine Paper

Paper demand has fluctuated significantly in recent years. From fiscal 2002 to fiscal 2004, the upswing in world economic growth and advertising markets resulted in a significant increase in demand for coated fine papers. The increase in demand was particularly pronounced in Europe where coated fine paper demand remained buoyant with a growth rate of 8.2% during fiscal 2004 despite their retreating rate of economic growth. North American demand growth improved during this period and reached 4.7% in fiscal 2004, reflecting the growth in the wider economy. However, growth rates were very volatile due to end-user inventory movement, increasing from negative 13.1% in the first quarter of fiscal 2004 to positive 18.0% in the third quarter of fiscal 2004.

Increases in industry capacity in Europe and North America were limited during this period, with companies reluctant to undertake major new capital projects in these regions due to the large amount of excess capacity already present. Despite global overcapacity, high Asian demand growth rates and freely available funding led to significant coated fine paper capacity additions between fiscal 2000 and fiscal 2005 in Asia, particularly in China. This wave of expansion finished by the end of calendar 2005 and as of early December 2005 no new machines were under construction or in the final stages of planning anywhere in the world.

Despite increased demand, operating rates were low in fiscal 2002 through the first half of fiscal 2004 due to excess capacity, causing price erosion in both Europe and North America. Despite the weakening US dollar during this period, net imports into the United States continued to grow, putting further pressure on prices. Prices in North America, however, did start to improve in the latter half of fiscal 2004 due to a sharp increase in demand which was probably spurred by inventory increases at the end-user level. These tight supply/demand conditions in North America continued into the first quarter of fiscal 2005, and further price increases were achieved. In the second quarter, growth rates turned sharply negative and this persisted until the end of fiscal 2005. End-use indicators such as advertising pages and printer consumption of coated fine paper were largely positive through this period, suggesting that actual demand did not decline in line with apparent demand. In total, North American apparent consumption grew by 1.0% in fiscal 2005.

In Europe, demand for coated fine paper grew by 4.4% in fiscal 2005, a significant decline on the previous years' growth of 8.2%. Despite demand growth and sharp increases in input costs, our attempt to increase prices in the European market in fiscal 2005 was unsuccessful due to intense competition for market share.

US vs Total European Apparent Consumption of Coated Fine Paper

Source: AF&PA & Cepifine

US short tonnes converted to metric tonnes

Edgar Filing: SAPPI LTD - Form 20-F

The recent price history for benchmark coated woodfree grades in North America and Europe is shown in the following chart:

US and European Fine Paper Prices

Prices are list prices. Actual transaction prices could differ from prices depicted in graph

Source: PPI

Pulp

Pulp prices tend to display higher volatility than paper prices. The price of the benchmark pulp grade, Northern Bleached Softwood Kraft pulp (NBSK) has ranged from a low of \$395 (Nov-1993) to a high of \$925 (Sept-1995) per metric tonne.

Throughout fiscal 2003 and fiscal 2004, global demand for pulp was low in comparison to fiscal 2002 and price fluctuations were driven primarily by currency changes and inventory movement.

High pulp demand during the first half of fiscal 2005 resulted in an increase of \$55 per metric tonne, but resulted in prices retreating during the latter part of the year due to destocking and a seasonal demand slowdown.

The traditional softwood pulp price premium to hardwood was disrupted in fiscal 2005 as a result of pulp mills shifting from hardwood to softwood production, and hardwood pulp mills closing temporarily. This led to hardwood pulp prices exceeding that of softwood in the final quarter of fiscal 2005. However, during October 2005 softwood price premiums were restored as some softwood mills closed in Eastern Canada, while hardwood supply increased during the latter part of fiscal 2005 as an additional 1.9 million metric tonnes came on stream with large expansions at Hainan Island in China and Veracel in Brazil.

Since Sappi sells roughly as much pulp as is purchased, fluctuations in market pulp prices have a negligible direct impact on the company's overall profitability. At a divisional level, pulp prices do, however, affect profitability since Sappi Fine Paper is a net buyer of hardwood pulp and Sappi Forest Products is a net seller of softwood pulp.

The price of NBSK and Northern Bleached Hardwood Kraft pulp (NBHK) pulp is depicted in the following chart:

Northern Bleached Softwood and Hardwood Kraft Pulp

Source: PIX

Chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) accounts for the majority of Sappi's third party pulp sales. The chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) we produce is used principally as an input in the production of various synthetic textiles and acetate flake used in the manufacturing of acetate tow for cigarette filter tips.

The movement in price of certain chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) grades is linked to the price of NBSK. Higher technical specifications allow chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) to typically trade at a premium to NBSK. BHK (bleached hardwood kraft) generally sells at a lower price than NBSK.

We diversified our range of chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) products and secured significant new agreements to supply customers in the acetate sector during fiscal 2003. Also, a significant competitive source of supply was removed from the industry when International Paper closed its Natchez plant in fiscal 2003. Demand from all of the market segments in which Saiccor is active remained strong throughout fiscal 2004 with prices also increasing steadily. Saiccor's capacity during fiscal 2005 continued to be fully booked with overall demand steady, despite a general fall off in the demand for chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) from China during the year. Our chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) business, which is 100% export-based, maintained a strong market position in the key Viscose Staple Fibre segment but also posted record sales of its higher alpha products, which are primarily sold into the acetate tow segment.

Based on a growing demand for Saiccor's products, we announced, in the last quarter of fiscal 2005, that we are considering, subject to the completion of an environmental impact assessment and board approval, a project to expand the mill's annual capacity by 200,000 metric tonnes. During the latter part of fiscal 2005, Weyerhaeuser announced the closure, effective early in calendar 2006, of its Cosmopolis mill in North America, a speciality pulp mill producing 125,000 metric tonnes per annum.

Currency Fluctuations

The principal currencies in which our subsidiaries conduct business are the US dollar, euro and Rand. Although our reporting currency is the US dollar, a significant portion of our sales and purchases is made in currencies other than the dollar. In Europe and North America, sales and expenses are generally denominated in euro and US dollars, respectively; however, pulp purchases in Europe are primarily also denominated in US dollars. In southern Africa, costs incurred are generally denominated in Rand, as are local sales. Exports to other regions, which represent approximately 42% of sales in fiscal 2005, are denominated primarily in US dollars.

We made sales in a range of foreign currencies in fiscal 2005, fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2003 as follows:

Percentage of Sales	2005	2004	2003
US dollar	44.8	42.3	46.7
Euro	30.5	38.3	36.6
Rand	15.7	14.8	13.2
Other	9.0	4.6	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The increased proportion of the US dollar denominated sales and decreased proportion of euro denominated sales in fiscal 2005, is primarily the result of increased sales for our North American operations and also the effect of the Rand strengthening more on average in fiscal 2005 against the US dollar, compared to the strengthening of the euro on average against the US dollar.

The appreciation of the Rand or the euro against the US dollar tends to diminish the value of exports from southern Africa and Europe in local currencies, while depreciation of these currencies against the US dollar will have the opposite impact. Since expenses are generally denominated in local currencies, the depreciation of the US dollar has a negative effect on gross margins on exports and such domestic sales, which are priced relative to international US dollar prices. The appreciation of the US dollar will have the opposite impact. European importers of pulp denominated in US dollars have benefited in terms of local currency. Our consolidated financial position, results of operation and cash flows may be materially affected by movements in the exchange rate between the US dollar and the respective local currencies to which our subsidiaries are exposed. The principal currencies in which our subsidiaries conduct business

that are subject to the risks described in this paragraph are the US dollar, euro and Rand. The following table depicts the average and year end exchange rates for the Rand and euro against the US dollar used in the preparation of our financial statements in fiscal 2005, fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2003:

	2005	2004	2003
Average Exchange Rate ^{(1), (2)}			
Rand ⁽³⁾	6.2418	6.6824	8.3300
Euro ⁽³⁾	1.2659	1.2152	1.0804
Year end Exchange Rate ^{(1), (2)}			
Rand ⁽³⁾	6.3656	6.4290	7.1288
Euro ⁽³⁾	1.2030	1.2309	1.1475

(1) Source: audited Group annual financial statements of Sappi Limited.

(2) At December 15, 2005, based upon the Rand Noon Buying Rate and the euro Noon Buying Rate in New York City for cable transfers as certified for customs purposes by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, the exchange rates were as follows: Rand 6.4300 per \$1.00 and euro 1.1965 per \$1.00. Source: Federal Reserve Statistical Release.

(3) US\$1 = Rand, euro 1 = US dollar.

Since the adoption of the euro by the European Union on January 1, 1999, when the euro was trading at approximately \$1.18 per euro, the euro depreciated against the US dollar to a low of approximately \$0.83 per euro on October 25, 2000, and recovered to approximately \$0.98 at the end of fiscal 2002 and to approximately \$1.15 per euro at the end of fiscal 2003. It reached a high of approximately \$1.29 per euro on February 18, 2004 and was approximately \$1.23 at the end of fiscal 2004. It reached a high of approximately \$1.36 per euro on December 28, 2004, but declined subsequently to approximately \$1.20 per euro at the end of fiscal 2005. On December 7, 2005 it was trading at approximately \$1.17 per euro. During fiscal 2000, the Rand traded at levels around R6.55 per US dollar, and weakened to approximately R8.94 per US dollar at the end of fiscal 2001. It continued to weaken significantly and reached an all time low of approximately R13.90 per US dollar on December 21, 2001. The Rand has recovered since then and was trading at approximately R10.54 per US dollar at the end of fiscal 2002 and approximately R7.13 per US dollar at the end of fiscal 2003. During fiscal 2004 it reached a high of approximately R5.90 per US dollar on July 19, 2004. The Rand was trading at approximately R6.43 per US dollar at the end of fiscal 2004. It has strengthened since then to a level of approximately R5.59 per US dollar on December 27, 2004, but weakened again to R6.91 per US dollar on June 6, 2005. The Rand was trading at approximately R6.37 per US dollar at the end of fiscal 2005. It has strengthened since then to a level of approximately R6.30 on December 7, 2005. The profitability of certain of our southern African operations is directly dependent on the Rand proceeds of the US dollar exports. Furthermore, prices in the local market are also influenced by import parity competition. Should the Rand continue at the current levels or further strengthen against the US dollar, we would anticipate that certain operations would continue to incur losses while others could start incurring losses during the new fiscal year. The following graph depicts currency movements for the Rand and euro against the US dollar:

Daily euro and ZAR Exchange Rates against the US dollar

US\$1 = Rand, euro 1 = US dollar.

Raw Material and Other Input Costs of Manufacturing

Our business is sensitive to fluctuations in market prices of raw materials used in the manufacture of our products. These comprise mainly purchased materials, (such as wood and caustic soda), pulp, energy

and chemicals (including calcium carbonate and latex). Total raw materials (excluding pulp purchases) of approximately \$1,433 million purchased in fiscal 2005, increased by \$130 million (10.0%) from fiscal 2004, and consisted of 45.5% chemicals, 29.0% wood and 25.5% energy. The additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for \$27 million of the \$130 million increase, based on average weekly costs. Chemicals constitute the largest component of raw materials and chemical price increases impacts our business more than price increases of wood and energy. During fiscal 2005 we experienced significant increases in the cost of chemicals (11.7%), wood (3.9%) and energy (14.5%). For every 1% change in the price of chemicals and energy, our earnings per share will increase/decrease by \$0.02 cents and \$0.01 cent, respectively, based on our fiscal 2005 earnings. Our energy and chemical raw material costs, especially coating chemicals, are driven to a large extent by oil prices. The average cost of Brent Crude Oil increased on average by 52.9% during fiscal 2005, to \$52 per barrel, from \$34 per barrel during fiscal 2004. The cost of our raw materials, on a constant US dollar per metric tonne basis in fiscal 2005, increased by 5.0% (\$12 per metric tonne) over fiscal 2004.

During fiscal 2005, the impact of price increases on purchased wood, energy and chemical costs increases was \$71 million in our North American operations. This increase is largely due to significant increases in chemical costs (\$37 million), energy costs (\$20 million) and wood costs (\$14 million).

European purchased materials, energy and chemical costs increased by \$55 million in fiscal 2005, \$47 million of which was price increases, and \$8 million was the result of volume, mix and the impact of the currency translation effect. Average raw materials costs in euro per metric tonne increased by 3.3% to euro 211 per metric tonne in fiscal 2005, compared to fiscal 2004.

For Sappi Fine Paper South Africa the cost of purchased materials, energy and chemicals in Rand per metric tonne terms increased by 2.1%, which was mainly due to higher chemical costs. Our Forest Products operations experienced price increases in all the categories of raw materials (\$18 million) during fiscal 2005, comprising the majority of the \$20 million increase in total cost of purchased materials, energy and chemical costs in fiscal 2005.

Restructuring

During fiscal 2003 we took a number of actions in response to continuing weak markets and rising costs. These included the production downtime in our North American and European regions, as well as reducing capacity to improve the supply/demand balance in the United States and a range of other initiatives to reduce fixed costs in all regions.

We announced the closure of the number 14 paper line at our Westbrook mill in Maine, North America in November 2003. This followed our decision to take out capacity to improve the supply/demand balance in the United States. The machine that was closed was our highest cost of manufacturing paper machine. In the last quarter of fiscal 2003 we wrote off the assets and related inventory and took a charge of \$19 million after tax (\$32 million pre-tax). We also incurred a further charge of approximately \$16 million pre-tax in the first quarter of fiscal 2004 in respect of severance, retrenchment and related costs. The total number of employees affected by this closure was 145 people.

During fiscal 2004 we restructured the Fine Paper division to simplify reporting lines. As a result the chief executive officers of Sappi Fine Paper Europe and Sappi Fine Paper North America report directly to the chief executive officer of Sappi Limited. As a consequence the Fine Paper office in London was closed, and the position of chief executive officer for Sappi Fine Paper no longer exists. A charge of \$5 million pre-tax was incurred for the closure of the Fine Paper office in London during fiscal 2004. The total number of employees affected by this closure was 8 people.

In addition, in order to counteract the effect of rapidly increasing benefit costs, we also reduced our staffing levels by a further 85 people in North America, 49 people in Europe and 211 people at our Forest

Products operations during fiscal 2004. We incurred a pre-tax charge of approximately \$11 million during fiscal 2004 in respect of this.

We announced the restructuring and impairment of our North American Muskegon mill during the third quarter of fiscal 2005, to eliminate high cost capacity and to position the mill as a high quality, low cost mill. This is part of our ongoing plan to achieve acceptable returns in our North American operations. We recorded impairment charges of \$183 million in the third and fourth quarter of fiscal 2005. We closed PM4, which had an annual capacity of 105,000 metric tonnes of coated fine paper and closed and mothballed the pulp mill, which had an annual capacity of 110,000 metric tonnes of bleached chemical pulp. We also restructured our North American regional overhead structure to reduce selling, general and administrative expenses (SG&A), and in the fourth quarter of fiscal 2005 we recorded a restructuring charge of approximately \$21 million, mainly in respect of manpower reduction. The combined effect of the Muskegon restructuring and impairment and SG&A restructuring is expected to result in a reduction of approximately 420 people or 14% of our North American headcount, and is expected to result in a pre-tax benefit of approximately \$50 million compared to fiscal 2005.

During the first quarter of fiscal 2005 we announced the impairment of our Usutu mill. The Usutu mill is an unbleached kraft pulp mill and forms part of the Sappi Forest Products reporting segment. Due to continued losses an impairment review was conducted which led to the recognition of impairment charges of \$50 million. A detailed discussion of this impairment is contained in the section Mill Closures, Acquisitions, Dispositions and Impairment; and Joint Venture , elsewhere in this Operating and Financial Review and Prospects.

For further information see note 23 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

South African Economic and Political Environment

Sappi Limited, as a South African company and with ownership of significant operations in southern Africa, operates within a framework of various economic, fiscal, monetary, regulatory, operational (including labour-relations) and political policies and factors that affect South African companies and their subsidiaries generally. The impact of certain of these policies and factors, for example regulatory and operational factors, is limited by the geographic diversity of our sales by source and the geographic diversity of our operating assets, of which Europe represented 37%, North America represented 27% and southern Africa represented 36% at the end of fiscal 2005. However, of our consolidated operating loss of \$137 million in fiscal 2005, our operations outside South Africa generated an operating loss of \$194 million and our operations in southern Africa generated an operating profit of \$57 million.

South Africa features a highly developed sophisticated first world infrastructure at the core of its economy. The South African economy is expected to grow at approximately 4.5% in calendar 2005. South Africa currently has long-term foreign currency investment ratings of Baa1 from Moody's Investor Services Inc. and BBB+ from Standard & Poor's Rating Service (S&P). While exchange controls have been relaxed in recent years and are continuing to be relaxed, South African companies remain subject to restrictions on their ability to raise and deploy capital outside of the Southern African Common Monetary Area. See Liquidity and Capital Resources Financing .

South Africa celebrated 10 years of democracy in calendar 2004; however the country continues to face challenges in overcoming substantial differences in levels of economic and social development among its people. Access to land, poverty and unemployment, crime and a growing prevalence of HIV/AIDS are some of the social and economic factors that affect businesses operating in this country.

The southern African region has one of the highest infection rates of HIV/AIDS in the world. In 1992, Sappi established a programme to address the effects of HIV/AIDS and its impact on our employees and

our business. Our aim is to ensure that our programme prevents new infections. Accordingly, in 2005, we became a member of the Global Business Coalition (GBC) on HIV/AIDS, a global partnership focused on developing an integrated strategy for dealing with the disease. Each of our operating units in southern Africa has an elected HIV/AIDS committee and a workplace HIV/AIDS prevention programme which are adapted to suit the needs of each particular business unit. Each Sappi operation in southern Africa has also identified the relevant role players in their geographical area and is working with them on the implementation of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS programme, eliminating duplication, making optimum use of relevant resources and ensuring sustainability. Following an initial anonymous voluntary study in 2003, a second comprehensive study was conducted in 2005. Based on a participation rate of greater than 80% at the operating units tested, we estimate that the overall infection rate in our southern African operations is approximately 13.7%. Our HIV/AIDS response strategy places special emphasis on testing and counselling. Since August 2002, our medical care for employees has included treatment to prevent mother to child transmission. Anti-retroviral treatment has been offered to HIV-infected permanent employees from the beginning of 2003. Thirty-four percent of the estimated population of HIV positive employees are actively engaged in an HIV/AIDS managed care programme, which is a significant improvement on the prior year's participation rate. Of these employees actively engaged in a care programme, 40% are receiving anti-retroviral treatment.

The government and organised business have taken a number of steps in recent years to increase the participation of Black people in the South African economy. To this end, the Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998), the Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998) and the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (No 5 of 2000) were promulgated. More recently, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (No 53 of 2003) has formalised the country's approach to distributing skills, employment and wealth more equitably between races and genders. Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) focuses on increasing equity in ownership, management and control of businesses, and improving Black representation in all levels of employment. It also promotes the development of skills within a business, the nurturing of Black entrepreneurship through preferential procurement and enterprise development, and the uplifting of communities through social investment.

Our South African businesses have formulated a BBBEE scorecard, based on guidelines set out by the Codes of Good Practice from the government Department of Trade and Industry. The scorecard set out in the following table was verified by Empowerdex, a leading BBBEE rating agent and reflects our significant achievements in the categories of empowerment, equity, skills development, preferential procurement, enterprise development and social development. Furthermore, the scorecard provides us with a basis on which to make future plans to extend our efforts. In general, targets for improvement in the various categories in the scorecard are set to be achieved by 2015.

Sappi's rating

BBBEE factor status*

Equity in ownership	E
Equity in management	D
Employment equity	C
Skills development	B
Preferential procurement	C
Enterprise development	B
Social development	A

* A is the highest score.

The shares of Sappi are widely held by South African and international investors. The company does not currently intend to undertake an empowerment transaction in respect of these shares. We will consider

empowerment transactions related to specific southern African assets or business units where they add to the value of our business and meet our empowerment criteria.

The representation of Black people, particularly Black women, in management and all levels of employment within the company is a focus within the organisation, driven by employment equity targets set in each occupational category. Skills development initiatives, particularly programmes aimed at improving management and leadership skills, are geared to meet these targets. Where practical, Sappi purchases goods and services from Black-owned businesses and seeks opportunities to develop future Black vendors. Sappi is committed to the support of its Project Grow initiative through financial and technical input, as well as by providing a secure market during the start-up phase of these small tree farming enterprises. This initiative has been extended to encourage aspirant tree farmers who wish to undertake forestry activities on a larger scale. We have a number of enterprise development initiatives and have established programmes to train new entrepreneurs. These initiatives involve the transfer of business skills, technical assistance, financial support and preferential payment terms to assist new enterprises to enter the market. Sappi has a history of investment in the communities in which it operates. Initiatives to promote education, health and welfare, arts and culture, and rural and community development, amongst others, are regularly undertaken.

The South African constitution guarantees ownership rights of assets, and it is the stated intent of the Bill that transfer of ownership will occur at market prices. It should be noted that BBBEE equity participation need not necessarily occur at the corporate level, and can be effected at divisional, business unit or lower levels. Because the BBBEE Bill sets forth a framework for plans rather than specific requirements or goals, it is not possible to predict whether or how our business or assets may be impacted.

Inflation and Interest Rates

The following table sets forth South African inflation for fiscal 2005, fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2003:

	2005	2004	2003
Inflation ⁽¹⁾	4.4 %	1.3 %	3.7 %

(1) South African Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI is for the Sappi fiscal years.

After having peaked at levels in excess of 20% in the 1990's the South African prime overdraft interest rates declined to 13.0% in September 2001, the lowest level in 13 years. The South African inflation rate (as measured by inflation less mortgage interest rates), increased from 6.5% in December 2001, to 14.5% in October 2002, mainly due to the significant weakening of the Rand against the US dollar in the quarter ended December 2001. Accordingly, prime overdraft interest rates increased by 4% to 17% by the end of fiscal 2002. Since reaching its lowest levels against the US dollar in December 2001, the Rand has strengthened to its current levels of around R6.30. Partly due to the stronger Rand during fiscal 2005 and fiscal 2004, the South African inflation rate decreased significantly to 1.3% at the end of fiscal 2004, but increased to 4.4% as at the end of fiscal 2005, within the target range of 3-6% as set by the South African Reserve Bank (the SARB). This increase is largely the effect of the impact of higher oil prices on the South African economy. The SARB reduced its repurchase rate from 13.5% in November 2002 to 7.0% in April 2005, and as at December 7, 2005 it was 7.0%. The repurchase rate is the rate at which the SARB lends assistance to the banking sector and therefore represents the cost of credit to the banking sector. When the repurchase rate is changed, the interest rates on overdrafts and other loans extended by the banks also change. In this way the Reserve Bank indirectly affects interest rates in the economy. Although South African interest rates impact the cost of our South African borrowings, the majority of our borrowings have been incurred by subsidiaries outside southern Africa, denominated in either US dollars or euro.

In the US and Europe inflation rates were relatively stable in recent years, and accordingly had a lesser impact on our North American and European businesses. The three-month LIBOR interest rate for the US dollar reached 6.8%, in May 2000 and remained unchanged through to the end of fiscal 2000. Fiscal 2001 saw a period of significant rate reductions to 2.6% at the end of fiscal 2001. The rate reduced further to 1.14% at the end of fiscal 2003. Since then it increased to 1.96% by the end of fiscal 2004 and increased further to 4.06% by the end of fiscal 2005. On December 7, 2005 it was 4.48%.

The three-month Euribor interest rate in Europe decreased sharply from 4.9% at the end of fiscal 2000 and was 2.13% at the end of fiscal 2003 and 2.12% at the end of fiscal 2004. It increased slightly to 2.17% at the end of fiscal 2005 and on December 7, 2005 it was 2.45%. The relatively low interest rates in the United States and Europe continue to represent a significant interest rate differential when compared to South Africa's 7.0% repurchase rate as determined by the SARB, and could result in further short-term strengthening of the Rand.

We borrow in the currencies of the countries in which we invest. As a result, finance costs are related to the location of our activities and not our domicile.

Our foreign exchange policy consists of the following principal elements:

- External borrowings are taken up in the functional currency of the operating company concerned and, if not, then the exposure is hedged. Where appropriate we aim, in accordance with SA GAAP, to apply hedge accounting treatment to avoid volatility in our results due to mark-to-market effects of such hedging instruments.
- Any receivables or payables not in the operating currency of the mill are hedged. Sales are hedged from the time of invoicing, purchases from the time of capex approval in the case of capex, and all other purchases are hedged in most instances at the time the order is placed.
- These exposures are hedged through our central treasury, where external hedging instruments are contracted after netting the various exposures.
- Variations in this policy are considered from time to time, but any deviations from the central treasury policy are always subject to prior board approval.
- No speculative positions are permitted.

Translation risks are not hedged. As a general rule we manage our relative debt and equity ratios by financing our investments in different currencies with similar debt to asset ratios.

External dollar borrowings for our North American operations (with the exception of \$107 million public long-term bonds) were replaced during fiscal 2002 by inter-group financing from Sappi Papier Holding GmbH (SPH), our European holding company. Accordingly, there is a larger proportion of external borrowings in our European operations when compared to the position before fiscal 2002. We have a current policy of not hedging translation risks. Our South African and European operations use the South African Rand and the euro as their respective functional currencies. Any translation of the value of these operations into US dollars result in foreign exchange translation differences as the Rand and the euro exchange rates move against the US dollar. These changes are booked to the foreign currency translation reserve account. We prefer not to hedge this exposure with financial instruments, as this results in cash settlements which impact our results on a permanent basis. Borrowings taken up in a currency other than the functional currency of the borrowing entity is specifically hedged with financial instruments, such as currency swaps and forward exchange contracts. With regard to interest rate swaps, hedge accounting is permitted when the hedging relationship between the hedge and the underlying debt meets the requirements of the relevant accounting statements in accordance with SA GAAP and International Financial Reporting Standards. For example, on our public bonds we have fixed to variable swaps. The terms of the swaps match the terms of the bonds exactly in respect of interest settlements and capital

repayments etc. With regard to maturity, the 10-year bond is hedged to full maturity, the 30-year bond for the first ten years. If the relationship between the hedge and the debt is not matched, hedge accounting cannot be applied. We only enter interest rate swaps when hedge accounting can be applied or any volatility due to the mark-to-market movements of the swaps to the income statement avoided. For a description of hedge accounting with regard to interest rate swaps in accordance with United States GAAP, see note 42 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report. For a description of our interest and exchange rate risks, see note 37 to our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Financial Condition and Results of Operations

Our operations are organised into two business units:

Sappi Fine Paper, which consists of Sappi Fine Paper North America, Sappi Fine Paper Europe and Sappi Fine Paper South Africa; and

Sappi Forest Products, which consists of Sappi Kraft, Sappi Saiccor and Sappi Forests.

The following table sets forth sales and operating profit for Sappi, Sappi Fine Paper by region, and Sappi Forest Products, in US dollars, and as a percentage of sales for fiscal 2005, fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2003. Operating profit percentages are expressed as a percentage of sales of the applicable business unit.

	2005	% of	2004	% of	2003	% of
	Amount	Sales	Amount	Sales	Amount	Sales
	(\$ million)					
Sales:						
Sappi Fine Paper						
Sappi Fine Paper North America	1,458	29.1	1,373	29.0	1,384	32.2
Sappi Fine Paper Europe	2,239	44.6	2,127	45.0	1,903	44.2
Sappi Fine Paper South Africa	323	6.4	311	6.6	270	6.3
Total	4,020	80.1	3,811	80.6	3,557	82.7
Sappi Forest Products	998	19.9	917	19.4	742	17.3
Group Sales	5,018	100.0	4,728	100.0	4,299	100.0
Operating (Loss) Profit:						
Sappi Fine Paper						
Sappi Fine Paper North America	(270)	(18.5)	(92)	(6.7)	11	0.8
Sappi Fine Paper Europe	76	3.4	83	3.9	118	6.2
Sappi Fine Paper South Africa	(12)	(3.7)	15	4.8	35	13.0
Total	(206)	(5.1)	6	0.2	164	4.6
Sappi Forest Products	73	7.3	191	20.8	113	15.2
Corporate	(4)		(9)		(5)	
Group Operating (Loss) Profit	(137)	(2.7)	188	4.0	272	6.3

Our results for fiscal 2005 have been impacted by the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005, compared to fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2003. The following illustrates the impact of the additional accounting week on sales and operating expenses.

Group volumes sold in fiscal 2005 increased by 286,000 metric tonnes (4.0%) and consolidated group sales increased by \$290 million (6.1%) over fiscal 2004. The additional accounting week accounted for a sales volume increase of 141,000 metric tonnes and a \$95 million increase in sales, in each case based on the average weekly sales of the 53 accounting weeks, or average sales .

Group operating expenses (comprising cost of goods sold, SG&A expenses and other expenses) increased by \$615 million (13.5%) to \$5,155 million in fiscal 2005. This increase consisted of increases in cost of goods sold of \$381 million, other expenses of \$223 million (mainly impairments) and SG&A expenses of \$11 million. The additional accounting week accounted for an increase in cost of goods sold of \$85 million and for an increase in SG&A expenses of \$7 million, in each case based on the average weekly expenses of the 53 accounting weeks, or average expenses .

A more detailed discussion and explanation of the material factors that affect our results of operations described below, is contained in the sections Markets , Principal Factors Impacting our Results , Currency Fluctuations , Raw Material and Other Input Costs of Manufacturing , Restructuring , Inflation and Interest Rates and Mill Closures, Acquisitions, Dispositions and Impairment; and Joint Venture , elsewhere in this Operating and Financial Review and Prospects. These factors include market fluctuations, exchange rates, taxation, net finance costs, impairment costs and significant cost factors, including raw material and other input costs of manufacturing as well as restructuring and cost reduction initiatives.

Year Ended September 2005 Compared to Year Ended September 2004

North American coated fine paper apparent demand growth slowed in fiscal 2005 in comparison to fiscal 2004, despite continued economic and advertising growth. Demand for coated woodfree paper grades grew 1.0% in comparison to 4.7% growth in fiscal 2004. Sappi Fine Paper North America's average price realised increased by 6.9% to \$1,017 per metric tonne in fiscal 2005, mainly due to price increases realised for sales of web and market pulp. Sheet prices also increased, however, the overall average sheet prices realised in fiscal 2005 was flat compared to fiscal 2004 due to a mix shift from premium products to lower grades. Prices for other grades, including the speciality grades, were stable. In Europe, demand for coated woodfree paper grew by 4.4% in fiscal 2005, which was slower compared to growth of 8.2% in fiscal 2004. Despite sharp input costs increases and significant temporary capacity closures during fiscal 2005, prices in Europe were flat. Market pulp demand increased in fiscal 2005, mainly due to demand from China's growing paper industry. This increased demand did not result in price increases until after the end of fiscal 2005 as customers initially reduced inventories.

Due to weak market conditions in fiscal 2005 and to contain rising costs, the company continued its restructuring initiatives as described in the Company and Business Overview section.

The US dollar weakened during fiscal 2005 by 4.2% against the euro and by 6.6% against the Rand. The translation of our results from local currencies to US dollar for reporting purposes tends to distort comparisons between periods when currencies are volatile. For example, as a result of the weakening of the average US dollar rate against the euro and the Rand during fiscal 2005, a 0.6% decrease in average selling price per metric tonne realised in euro translates to a 3.6% increase in average selling price per metric tonne realised in US dollar, and a 2.7% decrease in average selling price per metric tonne realised in Rand translates to a 4.2% increase in average selling price per metric tonne realised in US dollar. We refer to this as the currency translation effect in the following discussion of our financial condition and results of operations.

Sales

Sales represent the net sales value of all products sold to outside parties. For a full description see our revenue recognition policy in note 2 of our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

In fiscal 2005, the volume of products sold increased by 286,000 metric tonnes (4.0%) to 7.5 million metric tonnes, from 7.2 million metric tonnes in fiscal 2004. Based on average sales, the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for 141,000 metric tonnes of the increase. The increase of 286,000 metric tonnes in volume of products sold consisted of increased volume sold for Sappi Fine Paper Europe (39,000 metric tonnes) and Sappi Forest Products (259,000 metric tonnes), and decreased volume sold for Sappi Fine Paper North America (11,000 metric tonnes) and for Sappi Fine Paper South Africa (1,000 metric tonnes).

Group sales increased by \$290 million to \$5,018 million in fiscal 2005 from \$4,728 million in fiscal 2004 (6.1%). Based on average sales, the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for \$95 million of the increase. The increase of \$290 million in Group sales consisted of increased sales for our Fine Paper division of \$209 million and Forest Products division of \$81 million. The increase of \$290 million in Group sales is primarily due to the impact of the currency translation effect (\$177 million) and increased volumes resulting from the additional accounting week. Group sales also increased due to higher selling prices realised of \$12 million. However, in local currencies, selling prices realised decreased at all our regions, except at North America.

Sappi Fine Paper. The total volume sold by Sappi Fine Paper (including pulp) in fiscal 2005 increased by 27,000 metric tonnes (0.7%) to 4,177 million metric tonnes, notwithstanding the impact of the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005, which accounted for 79,000 metric tonnes based on average sales. For Sappi Fine Paper North America, volumes sold decreased by 11,000 metric tonnes (0.8%), to 1.4 million metric tonnes, despite the additional accounting week which accounted for 27,000 metric tonnes in fiscal 2005, based on average sales. Industry demand for coated fine paper in North America increased at an annualised rate of 1.0% in fiscal 2005. Sappi Fine Paper Europe's volumes sold increased by 39,000 metric tonnes to 2.4 million metric tonnes. Excluding the impact of the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005, which accounted for 46,000 metric tonnes based on average sales, volumes decreased by 7,000 metric tonnes, largely due to lower volumes sold resulting from our loss of market share and pricing issues, compared with industry-wide coated fine paper growth of 4.4% in fiscal 2005. The market share lost in Europe in the second and third quarters of fiscal 2005 was regained by Sappi Fine Paper Europe in the last fiscal quarter of fiscal 2005. Sappi Fine Paper South Africa maintained market share in fiscal 2005 and volumes sold decreased by 1,000 metric tonnes despite the additional accounting week which accounted for 6,000 metric tonnes in fiscal 2005, based on average sales.

Total sales for Sappi Fine Paper (including pulp) increased by \$209 million (5.5%) to \$4,020 million in fiscal 2005. Based on average sales, the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for \$76 million of the increase. The \$209 million increase is due primarily to the currency translation effect (\$111 million), higher average selling prices realised in local currencies (\$75 million) and increased volume (\$23 million). Average prices realised in US dollar terms in fiscal 2005 increased by \$44 per metric tonne (4.8%) to \$962 per metric tonne, up from \$918 per metric tonne in fiscal 2004.

Sales for Sappi Fine Paper North America increased by \$85 million (6.2%) to \$1,458 million in fiscal 2005. Based on average sales, the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for \$28 million of the increase. Increased selling prices improved sales by \$95 million, and despite the additional volume sold due to the additional accounting week, lower volumes contributed to a decrease of \$10 million in sales. The average price realised increased by 6.9% to \$1,017 per metric tonne in fiscal 2005, despite the pressure from continued imports into the United States.

Sappi Fine Paper Europe sales increased by \$112 million (5.3%) to \$2,239 million in fiscal 2005. Based on average sales, the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for \$42 million of the increase. The \$112 million increase is due to the currency translation effect (\$90 million) and increased volumes, (\$35 million), reduced by decreased selling prices in euro terms (\$12 million). Excluding the impact of the additional volume of 46,000 metric tonnes sold due to the additional accounting week, based on average

sales, volume decreased compared to fiscal 2004, which resulted in a decrease in sales value. This decrease in volume sold was mainly the effect of our lower market share in the second and third fiscal quarters of fiscal 2005. Input cost pressures and significant temporary capacity closures from the labour action impacting competitors in Finland during fiscal 2005 prevented further price deterioration. Average price realised in US dollar terms was \$923 per metric tonne in fiscal 2005, 3.6% up from \$891 per metric tonne in fiscal 2004. In euro terms average prices per metric tonne were 0.5% lower.

For Sappi Fine Paper South Africa, sales increased by \$12 million (3.9%) to \$323 million in fiscal 2005. Based on average sales, the additional accounting week in fiscal 2005 accounted for \$6 million of the increase. This increase is primarily attributable to the result of the currency translation effect (\$21 million), reduced by lower average selling prices realised in Rand terms (\$8 million). Despite the additional volume sold due to the additional accounting week, lower volumes contributed to a decrease of \$1 million in sales. The average price realised for fine paper products in South Africa in US dollar terms increased by 4.2% to \$1,019 per metric tonne in fiscal 2005 as a result of the currency translation effect, while in Rand terms, the average price realised in fiscal 2005 decreased by 2.7% as a result of the pressure of continued imports into South Africa caused by the Rand's strength against the US dollar. The pressure of the currency strength also resulted in lower margin export sales increasing by 5,800 metric tonnes in fiscal 2005.

Sappi Forest Products. Total sales volume for Sappi Forest Products increased by 8.5% to 3.3 million metric tonnes in fiscal 2005. The volume of timber sold increased by 210,000 metric tonnes (13.8%), due to strong local demand for timber, and the volume of paper pulp sold increased by 23%, due to higher production in fiscal 2005, while chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) volumes were 2% lower, mainly due to the replenishment of inventories. The additional accounting week accounted for 62,000 metric tonnes (\$19 million), based on average sales. Sappi Forest Products sales increased by \$81 million (8.8%) to \$998 million in fiscal 2005, from \$917 million in fiscal 2004. This increase is attributable mainly to the currency translation effect (\$66 million) and increased volumes (\$78 million), partly reduced by lower selling prices in Rand terms (\$63 million). The average price for chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) increased by 5.8% in fiscal 2005, mainly due to strong demand in fiscal 2005, especially in the viscose market, despite a general decline in demand in China. The average price for NBSK pulp decreased by 1.1% in fiscal 2005.

Operating Expenses

Group operating expenses (comprising cost of goods sold, SG&A expenses and other expenses) increased by \$615 million (13.5%) to \$5,155 million in fiscal 2005. This increase consisted of increases in cost of goods sold (\$381 million, with \$136 million representing higher raw materials and energy costs and \$151 million representing the currency translation effect), other expenses (\$223 million) and selling, general and administrative expenses (\$11 million), including additional costs due to the additional accounting week (cost of goods sold \$85 million and SG&A \$7 million, based on average expenses). The total increase in Group operating expenses of \$615 million included \$233 million relating to the Muskegon and Usutu impairment charges and \$170 million due to the currency translation effect (of which Europe represented \$87 million and southern Africa \$83 million). We have been vigilant in trying to control costs and offset cost increases where possible. The ongoing initiatives that we put in place over the last few years to offset the impact of cost increases delivered significant savings in fiscal 2005. On a constant currency basis, Group fixed costs increased by only 1% in fiscal 2005.

Operating expenses for Sappi Fine Paper North America increased by \$263 million, primarily as a result of the \$183 million Muskegon impairment charges, and partly as a result of increased cost of sales of \$91 million, (of which price increases for raw material and energy input costs were \$71 million), partly reduced by decreased volumes (\$11 million). The additional accounting week accounted for \$33 million based on average expenses.

Operating expenses for our European operations increased by euro 27 million (1.6%), or by \$119 million in US dollar terms. The \$119 million increase was due primarily to the currency translation effect of \$87 million and volume increases of \$34 million. The additional accounting week accounted for euro 33 million (\$41 million) based on average expenses. Price increases for raw material and energy input costs accounted for an increase of \$47 million.

Operating expenses at Sappi Fine Paper South Africa increased by R113 million, (5.7%) or by \$39 million in US dollar terms, \$22 million of which was the currency translation effect. The R113 million increase included the impact of the additional accounting week (R39 million \$6 million), based on average expenses, the costs relating to the temporary closure in fiscal 2005 of the Stanger bleached plant (R36 million \$6 million), an increase in the provision for spares obsolescence (R22 million \$4 million), the effect of increases in prices of raw materials and energy (R31 million \$5 million) and an increase in finished goods obsolescence provision (R8 million \$1 million).

Operating expenses for Forest Products increased by R923 million (19.0%) in Rand terms, or \$199 million in US dollar terms, of which \$61 million was the currency translation effect, \$62 million was volume increases (including the additional costs due to the additional accounting week), \$50 million (R312 million) was the Usutu impairment charge and \$26 million was price increases. The \$26 million price increases included the result of increases in prices of raw materials and energy costs of \$20 million (R125 million). Operating expenses was reduced by the benefit of \$52 million relating to the plantation adjustment (\$18 million less than fiscal 2004 primarily due to fewer timber price increases). The 19.0% increase in operating expenses in Rand terms is mainly due to the 8.5% increase in volumes sold and the \$50 million impairment charges for the Usutu mill.

SG&A expenses, which are included in the group operating expenses discussed above, were \$382 million in fiscal 2005, \$11 million higher than \$371 million in fiscal 2004. \$11 million was as a result of the currency translation effect, \$8 million was due to the extra accounting week based on average expenses, reduced primarily by a lower charge for bad debt provisions of \$7 million for our European operations, compared to the charge for bad debt provisions in fiscal 2004.

Other expenses, which are included in the group operating expenses described above, represent all profit and expenditure relating to activities other than that which is regarded as normal trading. Other expenses of \$259 million in fiscal 2005 (\$36 million in fiscal 2004) relate mainly to asset impairment charges (\$232 million) and restructuring charges (\$22 million), reduced by the release of a \$6 million provision at Sappi Fine Paper Europe. The \$232 million asset impairment charges relate mainly to our North American Muskegon mill (\$183 million) and our southern African Usutu mill (\$50 million). The \$22 million restructuring charges relate mainly to our initiatives in North America to address the regional overhead structure. In fiscal 2004, other expenses of \$36 million included \$32 million of restructuring charges, mainly at our North American Westbrook mill (\$16 million), the closure of our London office (\$5 million) and staff compliment reductions at our North American and Forest Products operations (\$11 million) and also included charges relating to the write-off of assets at all of our divisions.

Group operating expenses per metric tonne increased by \$58 (9.2%) to \$689 in fiscal 2005 from \$631 per metric tonne in fiscal 2004. The increase of 9.2% was largely the result of the Muskegon and Usutu impairment charges (\$31 per metric tonne or 4.9%), the currency translation effect (\$23 per metric tonne or 3.6%) as well as higher raw materials and energy costs (\$18 per metric tonne or 2.9%). The ongoing initiatives that we put in place over the last few years to offset the impact of cost increases delivered significant savings in fiscal 2005. The 4.0% increase in volume sold in fiscal 2005 resulted in the fixed cost component of operating expenses being spread over more tonnes, thereby decreasing fixed costs on a per metric tonne basis. Excluding the Muskegon and Usutu impairment charges, the overall increase of operating expenses per metric tonne was contained to 4.3% per metric tonne from fiscal 2004, compared to the 8.4% increase in total operating expenses, excluding the Muskegon and Usutu impairment charges.

At our North American operations, operating expenses per metric tonne increased by 18.8%, mainly due to the Muskegon impairment charge (\$183 million) and higher raw materials and energy costs (\$71 million). Operating expenses per metric tonne at our European operations increased by 4.1% due to the strengthening of the euro against the dollar (in euro terms operating expenses per metric tonne were flat compared to fiscal 2004 levels). For our South African fine paper operations, operating expense per metric tonne in US dollars increased by 13.5% (in Rand terms operating expense per metric tonne increased by 6.0%), mainly as a result of higher raw material and energy costs and other costs relating to increased provisions and mill closures described above. For Forest Products, operating expense per metric tonne, in dollar terms, increased by 17.2%, mainly due to the effect of the Usutu impairment charge (\$50 million) and also as a result of the strengthening of the Rand against the dollar. In Rand terms, and excluding the effect of the Usutu impairment charge, operating expenses per metric tonne increased mainly due to higher raw materials and energy costs.

Operating Loss/Profit

Group operating loss amounted to \$137 million in fiscal 2005, and represented a decrease of \$325 million (172.9%) from an operating profit of \$188 million in fiscal 2004, primarily attributable to decreases in operating profit for our Fine Paper division (\$212 million), (mainly due to a decrease of \$178 million at our North American Fine Paper division) and Forest Products division (\$118 million). Operating loss included charges of \$233 million relating to the Muskegon and Usutu impairment, the restructuring charge of \$22 million and \$136 million relating to higher raw materials and energy costs. The ongoing initiatives that we put in place over the last few years to offset the impact of cost increases delivered significant savings in fiscal 2005. Operating loss was enhanced by the release of a \$6 million provision at Sappi Fine Paper Europe, and lower charges for European bad debt provisions of \$7 million. It was also enhanced by the benefit of \$52 million relating to the plantation adjustment (\$18 million less than fiscal 2004).

Our Group operating margin, or the ratio of operating profit (loss) to sales, decreased to negative 2.7% in fiscal 2005 compared to a profit of 4.0% in fiscal 2004 and 6.3% in fiscal 2003. The lower operating profit and operating margin reflect the effect of the Muskegon and Usutu impairment charges (\$233 million) and the continuing difficult trading conditions in our major fine paper markets, resulting in lower average prices realised in local currency in our European and southern African operations. This was reduced by higher average prices realised at our North American operations, and higher raw materials and energy costs at all our divisions (\$136 million).

Sappi Fine Paper. Operating profit for Sappi Fine Paper decreased to an operating loss of \$206 million in fiscal 2005 from an operating profit of \$6 million in fiscal 2004, mainly due to an increased operating loss in fiscal 2005 for Sappi Fine Paper North America (\$178 million) as well as decreases in operating profit at our South African (\$27 million) and European Fine paper divisions (\$7 million). This decrease in operating profit reflects the effect of the Muskegon impairment charge (\$183 million), higher raw materials and energy costs (\$118 million) and the impact of the \$21 million restructuring charge for our North American operations. Operating margin was negative 5.1% in fiscal 2005 compared to an operating margin of 0.2% in fiscal 2004 and to 4.6% in fiscal 2003.

Sappi Fine Paper North America incurred operating losses of \$270 million in fiscal 2005 and \$92 million in fiscal 2004. Operating margin was negative 18.5% in fiscal 2005 compared to negative 6.7% in fiscal 2004. These decreases in operating profit and operating margin in fiscal 2005 reflects the effect of the Muskegon impairment charge (\$183 million), higher raw materials and energy costs (\$71 million) and the impact of the restructuring charge (\$21 million). Delivery costs had decreased significantly and we will continue to be vigilant in controlling costs and offsetting cost increases where possible. Profitability will also be impacted positively by the expected full year savings of \$50 million resulting from the Muskegon impairment and the restructuring of the corporate overhead structure.

Operating profit for Sappi Fine Paper Europe decreased by \$7 million (8.4%) to \$76 million in fiscal 2005 from \$83 million in fiscal 2004. Operating margin decreased to 3.4% in fiscal 2005 from 3.9% in fiscal 2004. These decreases in operating profit and operating margin reflect the continuing difficult trading conditions in Europe, and were primarily due to the impact of higher raw materials and energy costs coupled with lower average selling prices realised in euro terms. Operating profit was enhanced in fiscal 2005 by the release of a \$6 million provision and lower charges for bad debt provisions of \$7 million, both at Sappi Fine Paper Europe. Improved productivity and cost reductions contained operating expense per metric tonne in euro terms in fiscal 2005, which contained to some extent the reduction in operating profit and operating margin.

The operating loss of \$12 million for Sappi Fine Paper South Africa decreased from an operating profit of \$15 million in fiscal 2005. Operating margin decreased to negative 3.7% in fiscal 2005 from 4.8% in fiscal 2004. These decreases in operating profit and operating margin reflect lower selling prices per metric tonne realised in Rand terms (2.7%) and higher raw materials and energy costs, while the operating expenses per metric tonne in Rand terms increased by 6.0%, 3.3% of which was due to higher provisions for obsolescence and the Stanger pulp mill temporary closure costs.

Sappi Forest Products. Sappi Forest Products operating profit decreased by \$118 million (61.8%) to \$73 million in fiscal 2005. Operating margin was 7.3% in fiscal 2005, compared to 20.8% in fiscal 2004. These decreases in operating profit and operating margin reflect the Usutu impairment charges (\$50 million) and higher raw materials and energy costs (\$20 million), whilst average selling price per metric tonne decreased in Rand terms (6.3%). The fair value adjustment for plantations enhanced operating profit by \$52 million in fiscal 2005, \$18 million less when compared to fiscal 2004. In Rand terms, operating expenses per metric tonne increased by 9.7% in fiscal 2005, mainly due to the impact of the Usutu impairment charges and higher raw materials and energy costs.

Corporate. Operating losses decreased by \$5 million in fiscal 2005 from a loss of \$9 million in fiscal 2004 mainly as a result of higher operating profits for our captive insurance company Lignin (\$3 million).

Year Ended September 2004 Compared to Year Ended September 2003

Fiscal 2004 was characterised by strong demand growth in the North American market, driven by renewed economic growth and a buoyant advertising market. Demand for coated woodfree grades grew at an annualised rate of 3.5%. As a result, we have been able to implement price increases during the course of fiscal 2004. In Western Europe, demand for coated woodfree paper grew by 6.8% in fiscal 2004, a significant increase on growth of 1% in fiscal 2003 and 1.5% in fiscal 2002. With supply exceeding demand in the earlier part of the fiscal year, however, price increases in the European market did not materialise during this fiscal year. During that period, there was a significant overcapacity of coated fine paper relative to demand which, on average for fiscal 2004, led to weakening prices for our Fine Paper operations. The pulp market was affected by increased demand during the first half of fiscal 2004, mainly due to demand from China's growing paper industry. The increased demand translated into higher prices. Towards the end of fiscal 2004 when Chinese demand decreased, prices fell as customer inventories were reduced. Due to the conditions of weak markets in fiscal 2003 and to contain rising costs, the company, early in fiscal 2004, completed a number of restructuring initiatives announced during fiscal 2003, as described in the Company and Business Overview section.

The US dollar weakened during fiscal 2004 by 12.5% against the euro and by 19.8% against the Rand.

The translation of our results from local currencies to US dollar for reporting purposes tends to distort comparisons between periods when currencies are volatile. For example, as a result of the weakening of the average US dollar rate against the euro and the Rand during fiscal 2004, a 7.1% reduction in average selling price realised in euro translates to a 4.6% increase in US dollar, and a 12.6% decrease in average selling price realised in Rand translates to an 8.7% increase in US dollar.

We refer to this as the currency translation effect in the following discussion of our financial condition and results of operations.

A more detailed discussion and explanation of the material factors that affect our results of operations described below, is contained in the sections *Principal Factors Impacting our Results*, *Inflation and Interest Rates* and *Mill Closures, Acquisitions and Dispositions*, elsewhere in this *Operating and Financial Review and Prospects*. These factors include market fluctuations, exchange rates, taxation, net finance costs and significant cost factors, including cost reduction initiatives.

Sales

Sales represent the net sales value of all products sold to outside parties. For a full description see our revenue recognition policy in note 2 of our Group annual financial statements included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

In fiscal 2004, the volume of products sold increased by 518,000 metric tonnes (7.8%) to 7,193,000 metric tonnes, from 6,675,000 metric tonnes in fiscal 2003. The volume of products sold during fiscal 2004 increased for all our divisions as follows, for Sappi Fine Paper North America (61,000 metric tonnes), Sappi Fine Paper Europe (155,000 metric tonnes), Sappi Fine Paper South Africa (18,000 metric tonnes) and Sappi Forest Products (284,000 metric tonnes).

Group sales increased by \$429 million to \$4,728 million in fiscal 2004 from \$4,299 million in fiscal 2003 (10.0%). The sales of our Fine Paper division increased by \$254 million and Forest Products by \$175 million. The increase in Group sales is primarily due to the translation of our results from local currencies to US dollar for reporting purposes (\$479 million) which tends to distort comparisons between periods when currencies are volatile. During fiscal 2004 the US dollar weakened by 12.5% on average against the euro, and by 19.8% on average against the Rand. Group sales also increased due to higher volumes sold (\$285 million) across all regions, reduced by lower selling prices realised in local currencies (\$335 million).

Sappi Fine Paper. The total volume sold by Sappi Fine Paper (including pulp) in fiscal 2004 increased by 234,000 metric tonnes (6.0%) to 4.1 million metric tonnes. Sappi Fine Paper Europe's volumes increased by 155,000 metric tonnes to 2.4 million metric tonnes (6.9%), slightly below industry-wide coated fine paper growth of 8.2%. For Sappi Fine Paper North America, volumes sold increased by 61,000 metric tonnes (4.4%), to 1.4 million metric tonnes. Industry demand for coated fine paper in North America grew by 3.5% in fiscal 2004. In fiscal 2004, Sappi Fine Paper South Africa claimed back market share lost in fiscal 2003, and increased volumes sold by 18,000 metric tonnes to 318,000 metric tonnes.

Total sales for Sappi Fine Paper increased by \$254 million (7.1%) to \$3,811 million in fiscal 2004. This increase is due to the currency translation effect (\$297 million) and increased volume (\$209 million), reduced by lower average selling prices realised in local currencies (\$252 million). Average prices realised in US dollar terms in fiscal 2004 increased as a result of the currency translation effect by \$10 per metric tonne (1.1%) to \$918 per metric tonne, up from \$908 per metric tonne in fiscal 2003.

Sales for Sappi Fine Paper North America decreased by \$11 million (0.8%) to \$1,373 million in fiscal 2004. Selling prices were lower (\$73 million) offset by increased volumes (\$62 million). The average price realised decreased by 5.0% to \$951 per metric tonne in fiscal 2004, mainly due to weak markets for coated paper in North America in the earlier part of fiscal 2004, as well as the pressure from continued imports into the US.

Sappi Fine Paper Europe sales increased by \$224 million (11.8%) to \$2,127 million in fiscal 2004. This increase is due to the currency translation effect (\$236 million) and increased volumes (\$131 million), reduced by lower selling prices in euro terms (\$143 million). Average price realised in US dollar terms was \$891 per metric tonne in fiscal 2004, up 4.6% from \$852 per metric tonne in fiscal 2003. In euro terms

average prices per metric tonne were 7.1% lower due to the continued surplus of supply compared to demand for coated fine paper in Europe, particularly in the early part of the year. Operating rates improved through the year.

For Sappi Fine Paper South Africa, sales increased by \$41 million (15.2%) to \$311 million in fiscal 2004. This increase is primarily attributable to the result of the currency translation effect (\$62 million) and partly due to an increase in volume sold (\$16 million), reduced by lower average selling prices realised in Rand terms (\$36 million). The average price realised for fine paper products in South Africa in US dollar terms increased by 8.7% to \$978 per metric tonne in fiscal 2004, as a result of the currency translation effect, while in Rand terms, the average price realised in fiscal 2004 decreased by 12.4% as a result of the pressure of continued imports into South Africa caused by the Rand's strength against the US dollar.

Sappi Forest Products. Total sales volumes for Sappi Forest Products increased by 10.3% to 3.0 million metric tonnes in fiscal 2004. There were increases in volumes of chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) (10.3%) and commodity paper products (1.4%) while paper pulp volumes were 5.5% lower. The increased chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) volume was mainly as a result of the closure of competitor capacity as well as the increased demand in the viscose staple industry, fuelled by higher prices for cotton, which is a competing product. Sappi Forest Product's sales increased by \$175 million (23.6%) to \$917 million in fiscal 2004. This increase is attributable mainly to the currency translation effect (\$181 million), and increased volumes (\$76 million), partly offset by lower selling prices in Rand terms (\$82 million). The average price for chemical cellulose (dissolving pulp) increased by 21.9% in fiscal 2004, in line with NBSK prices, to which it is linked. For paper pulp, the average price realised in US dollar terms increased by 12.8% per metric tonne reflecting the improved market conditions for that product.

Operating Expenses

Group operating expenses (comprising cost of goods sold, selling, general and administrative expenses and other expenses) increased by \$513 million (12.7%) to \$4,540 million in fiscal 2004. This increase was mainly due to the currency translation effect of \$429 million of which Europe represented \$227 million and southern Africa \$202 million. Operating expenses for Sappi Fine Paper North America increased by \$92 million, primarily as a result of increased volumes (\$61 million) and partly as a result of increased wood and energy costs (\$25 million). Operating expenses in North America were further increased by restructuring charges of \$20 million. Operating expenses in our European operations increased by 1.8% in euro terms, despite the 6.9% increase in volume sold, mainly due to lower fixed costs as a result of improved productivity and cost reduction initiatives. Operating expenses at Sappi Fine Paper South Africa increased by 1.4% in Rand terms. Forest Products operating expenses decreased by 7.3% in Rand terms. Excluding the effects of AC 137, the accounting standard for plantations, they increased by 1.6% in Rand terms, similar to the magnitude of the volume increase.

Selling, general and administrative expenses (SG&A), which are included in the group operating expenses discussed above, increased by \$55 million (17%) to \$371 million in fiscal 2004. \$30 million was as a result of the currency translation effect, and \$8 million was due to additional bad debt provisions in Europe. SG&A expenses in fiscal 2003 were favourably affected by a \$10 million once-off relief from the SFPNA pension plan amendment.

Other expenses, which are included in the group operating expenses described above, represent all profit and expenditure relating to activities other than that which is regarded as normal trading. Other expenses of \$36 million in fiscal 2004 (\$27 million in fiscal 2003) included \$32 million of restructuring charges and also included charges relating to the write-off of assets at all of our divisions. In fiscal 2003 other expenses consisted of a pre-tax charge of \$32 million for asset impairment and related write-off of inventory at our Westbrook mill (Sappi Fine Paper North America), reduced by net other profit of \$5 million relating

to various other items, including a net profit of \$3.0 million relating to the sale of a scrapped paper machine at our Gratkorn mill in Austria (Sappi Fine Paper Europe).

Operating expenses per metric tonne increased by \$28 (4.6%) to \$631 in fiscal 2004 from \$603 per metric tonne in fiscal 2003. The 7.8% increase in volume sold in fiscal 2004 resulted in the fixed cost component of operating expenses, being spread over more tonnes, thereby decreasing on a per metric tonne basis. This contained the overall increase of operating expenses per metric tonne to 4.6% from fiscal 2003, compared to the 12.7% increase in total operating expenses. This increase of 4.6% was largely the result of the currency translation effects described in the next paragraph.

At our North American operations, operating expense per metric tonne increased by 2.2% due to higher raw materials and energy costs. Operating expense per metric tonne increased by 7.1% at our European operations due to the strengthening of the euro against the dollar (in euro terms operating expense per metric tonne decreased by 4.8% as a result of cost reductions). For our South African fine paper operations, operating expense per metric tonne in US dollars increased by 18.9% (in Rand terms operating expense per metric tonne decreased by 4.7%) as a result of cost reductions. For Forest Products operating expense per metric tonne, in dollar terms, increased 4.8% particularly as a result of the strengthening of the Rand against the dollar. In Rand terms and excluding the effect of the accounting standard on plantations AC137 (AC137), operating expenses per metric tonne were contained at fiscal 2003 levels.

Operating Profit

Group operating profit decreased by \$84 million (30.9%) to \$188 million in fiscal 2004, from \$272 million in fiscal 2003, primarily attributable to decreases in operating profit for our Fine Paper division (\$158 million), (mainly due to a decrease of \$103 million at our North American Fine Paper division), offset mainly by an increased operating profit of \$78 million for our Forest Products division.

Our Group operating margin, or the ratio of operating profit to sales, decreased to 4.0% in fiscal 2004 compared to 6.3% in fiscal 2003. The lower operating profit and operating margin reflect the continuing difficult trading conditions in our major fine paper markets, resulting in lower average prices realised in local currency in all our fine paper operations, and are also partly attributable to the currency translation effect on the costs of our European and southern African operations.

Sappi Fine Paper. Operating profit for Sappi Fine Paper decreased by \$158 million (96.3%) to \$6 million in fiscal 2004 mainly due to lower operating profit in fiscal 2004 for Sappi Fine Paper North America (\$103 million), as well as decreases in operating profit at our European (\$35 million) and South African Fine Paper divisions (\$20 million). Operating margin was 0.2% in fiscal 2004 as compared to 4.6% in fiscal 2003.

Operating profit for Sappi Fine Paper Europe decreased by \$35 million (29.7%) to \$83 million in fiscal 2004 from \$118 million in fiscal 2003. Operating margin decreased to 3.9% in fiscal 2004 from 6.2% in fiscal 2003. These decreases in operating profit and operating margin reflects the difficult trading conditions in Europe in the earlier part of the fiscal year, and were primarily due to lower average prices realised in euro terms. Improved productivity and cost reductions decreased operating expense per metric tonne in euro terms by 4.8% in fiscal 2004, which offset to some extent the reduction in operating profit and operating margin.

Sappi Fine Paper North America incurred an operating loss of \$92 million in fiscal 2004 compared to an operating profit of \$11 million in fiscal 2003. This decrease in operating profit reflecting the continuing difficult trading conditions in the US in the earlier parts of fiscal 2004, which resulted in lower average selling prices realised. Operating profit was also negatively impacted in fiscal 2004 by higher raw materials and energy costs and by a \$20 million restructuring charge.

The operating profit of \$15 million for Sappi Fine Paper South Africa decreased from \$35 million in fiscal 2003. Selling prices realised in Rand terms decreased by 12.8%, while the operating expenses per metric tonne in Rand terms decreased by 4.7%. Operating margin decreased to 4.8% in fiscal 2004 from 13.0% in fiscal 2003, mainly due to the decrease in average selling prices realised in Rand terms.

Sappi Forest Products. Sappi Forest Products operating profit increased by \$78 million (69.0%) to \$191 million in fiscal 2004. This is mainly attributable to higher average selling prices realized, which increased on average by 11.9%, and also to the 10.3% increase in volumes sold. The fair value adjustment for plantations under AC137, had the effect of increasing operating profit by \$70 million in fiscal 2004. In Rand terms and excluding the fair value adjustment for plantations, operating expenses by metric tonne were contained at fiscal 2003 levels. Operating margin increased to 20.8% in fiscal 2004, from 15.2% in fiscal 2003.

Corporate. Operating losses increased by \$4 million as a result of the inclusion of the UK pension costs, which in the prior year and up to the closure of the London office were included in the Fine Paper results.

Net Finance Costs

Net finance costs consist of gross interest and other finance costs, interest received, interest capitalised, foreign exchange gains and losses and change in fair value of financial instruments. Net finance costs were \$87 million in fiscal 2005 compared to \$110 million in fiscal 2004. Gross interest cost increased by \$13 million to \$146 million in fiscal 2005, mainly as a result of increased interest rates in fiscal 2005. The benefit of the swaps in prior years was reduced by an increase in interest rates as benchmark swap rates increased by 200 basis points from fiscal 2004. Average gross interest-bearing borrowings of \$2,049 million in fiscal 2005 decreased by \$23 million compared to \$2,072 million in fiscal 2004.

Net finance costs also included a \$17 million gain relating to the change in fair value of financial instruments (fiscal 2004 \$11 million loss) driven by movements in interest rates and exchange rates. It includes a gain of \$13 million recorded in the third quarter of fiscal 2005 as a result of an accounting m