

Publishers embrace vision for a green future

April 17 2009, By HILLEL ITALIE , AP National Writer

(AP) -- The publishing industry has been fitted for 20-20-20 vision.

The Book Industry Environmental Council, a coalition of publishers, booksellers, librarians, printers and paper manufacturers, announced Thursday a goal to cut [greenhouse gas emissions](#) by 20 percent in the year 2020 (based on 2006 numbers), the equivalent, the council says, of pulling 450,000 cars off the road.

The council, which says it represents more than 60 percent of the book market, intends to shrink emissions by 80 percent in 2050. While individual publishers have set environmental goals, the council's announcement marks a broader industry commitment.

"I'm very pleased that our industry has set aggressive but achievable goals that will have tangible benefits and will surely set a precedent for other industries," Pete Datos, chair of the council's climate subcommittee and vice president for inventory and procurement at the Hachette Book Group USA, said in a statement.

No specific plans have been established, but the council cited some possible roads to reductions: increased use of recycled fiber, greater [energy efficiency](#) in office buildings, fewer destroyed books that end up in landfills and using market research and digital technology to reduce the number of unsold books returned to publishers (long a desired, but elusive goal for the industry).

"The tools at our disposal have dramatically improved - providing better

insight to improve our forecasts, reducing lead times to get [books](#) printed and distributed faster, and increasing our flexibility to print just the "right" quantities," Datos said.

The council has yet to take a stand on e-books, saying that the benefits of saving paper may be offset by the possible toxic effects of [electronic devices](#).

The council was formed last year and its coordinators include the Green Press Initiative, an environmental organization that works with book and newspaper publishers, and the Book Industry Study Group, a publishing industry trade association.

On the Net:

<http://www.bookcouncil.org> .

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