

SAPPI LTD

Form 6-K

May 17, 2006

FORM 6-K

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

Report of Foreign Private Issuer

Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16

under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

For the month of May, 2006

Commission file number: 1-14872

SAPPI LIMITED

(Translation of registrant's name into English)

48 Ameshoff Street

Braamfontein

Johannesburg 2001

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

(Address of principal executive offices)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F

Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b) (1):

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b) (7):

Indicate by check mark whether by furnishing the information contained in this Form, the registrant is also thereby furnishing the information to the Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Yes

No

If "Yes" is marked, indicated below the file number assigned to the registrant in connection with Rule 12g3-2(b): 82-

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Sappi Limited's report for the conformed second quarter results ended March 2006, furnished by the Registrant under this Form 6-K, is incorporated by reference into (i) the Registration Statements on Form S-8 of the Registrant filed December 23, 1999 and December 15, 2004 in connection with The Sappi Limited Share Incentive Scheme, (ii) the Section 10(a) Prospectus relating to the offer and sale of the Registrant's shares to Participants under The Sappi Limited Share Incentive Scheme, (iii) the Registration Statements on Form S-8 of the Registrant filed December 15, 2004 and December 21, 2005 in connection with The Sappi Limited 2004 Performance Share Incentive Plan, and (iv) the Section 10(a) Prospectus relating to the offer and sale of the Registrant's shares to Participants under The Sappi Limited 2004 Performance Share Incentive Plan. This Form 6-K includes a conformed version of the earnings announcement sent by the Registrant to its shareholders. This conformed version was prepared solely for purposes of supplementing the documents referred to in clauses (i) - (iv) above.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

In order to utilize the "Safe Harbor" provisions of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 (the "Reform Act"), Sappi Limited (the "Company") is providing the following cautionary statement. Except for historical information contained herein, statements contained in this Report on Form 6-K may constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Reform Act. The words "believe", "anticipate", "expect", "intend", "estimate", "plan", "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 Report on Form 6-K may include forward-looking statements relating to the Company's potential exposure to various types of market risks, such as interest rate risk, foreign exchange rate risk and commodity price risk. Reliance should not be placed on forward-looking statements because they involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which are in some cases beyond the control of the Company, together with its subsidiaries (the "Group"), and may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of the Group 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 material, energy and employee costs, and pricing levels in North America, Europe, Asia and southern Africa; any major disruption in production at the Group's key facilities; changes in environmental, tax and other laws and regulations; adverse changes in the markets for the Group's products; any delays, unexpected costs or other problems experienced with any business acquired or to be acquired; consequences of the Group's 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 and other risks, uncertainties and factors are discussed in the Company's Annual Report on Form 20-F and other filings with and submissions to the Securities and Exchange Commission, including this Report on Form 6-K. Shareholders and prospective investors are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are made as of the date of the submission of this Report on Form 6-K and are not intended to give any assurance as to future results. The Company undertakes 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.

**sappi
conformed
quarter
results and
half-year
ended March
2006
1st
2nd
3rd
4th**

Form S-8 Version

Sappi is the world's leading
producer of coated fine paper
*

for the six months ended March 2006

*** Estimate as at 31 March 2006*

† *Rest of World*

Sales by product group *

**Sales: where the product
is sold ***

**Sales: where the product
is manufactured ***

Geographic ownership **

Coated fine paper

Uncoated fine paper

Coated specialities

Packaging and
newsprint

Pulp

Other

63%

5%

9%

9%

12%

2%

North America

Europe

Southern Africa

Asia and other

30%

41%

16%

13%

North America

Europe

Southern Africa

29%

45%

26%

South Africa

North America

Europe and ROW †

50%

40%

10%

Strong demand growth

Headline EPS 5 US cents; EPS 4 US cents

Limited price increase realisation

Continued input cost pressure

Strong Rand depresses earnings

19 US cents plantation fair value gain
summary

Quarter
Half-year

ended

ended

March

Dec

March

March

March

2006

2005

2005**

2006

2005**

Sales (US\$ million)

1,256

1,175

1,230

2,431

2,486

Operating profit (US\$ million)

59

49

55

108

67

Operating profit to sales (%)

4.7

4.2

4.5

4.4

2.7

EBITDA (US\$ million) *

176

163

180

339

317

EPS (US cents)

4

—

18

4

10

Headline EPS (US cents) *

5

1

20

6

30

** Refer to notes 1 and 2 of the Supplemental Information for the reconciliation of these numbers and definitions of these terms.*

*** Comparative amounts have been restated to take into account the effect of the adoption of International Financial Reporting*

Standards (Refer to note 2).

financial highlights

Our performance continued to be disappointing in the quarter with the non-cash fair value plantation credit lifting an otherwise negative result to a net profit of US\$9 million compared to US\$40 million a year earlier. In general, demand levels for our products have been strong and the primary reasons for our weak performance were rising input costs and unplanned maintenance at our Somerset and Ngodwana mills as well as poor output at several mills.

By the end of the quarter we had realised slightly higher prices in Europe and in North America. Group sales were US\$1.3 billion for the quarter, an increase of US\$26 million compared to the year earlier mainly as a result of a 3% increase in volume.

Escalating energy prices together with high wood and chemicals prices impacted our pre-tax results by US\$7 million compared to the prior quarter and US\$38 million compared to a year earlier. Rising pulp prices, which affect the European business are usually compensated by pulp sales from the South African business, but this was offset this quarter by the strengthening of the Rand.

The fair value adjustment on plantations, net after fellings, was US\$60 million before tax for the quarter. This is significantly higher than the US\$7 million gain reported in the prior quarter and the US\$3 million gain a year ago, as a result of higher hardwood pulpwood prices in the quarter. These adjustments cannot continue indefinitely and we may expect a reversal at some time in the future.

We recorded a pre-tax charge for the closure of Nash mill (UK) of US\$10 million. No revaluation was made for the potential development value of the land. The mill's customers will in future be supplied from other Sappi operations and the closure is not expected to have a significant impact on operating profit.

Our operating profit for the quarter was US\$59 million compared to US\$55 million a year ago and US\$49 million in the prior quarter.

The tax of US\$19 million for the quarter represents an effective rate of 68%. The high effective tax rate is a result of unrelieved tax losses in certain countries. This will only change when profitability improves in those countries. It was, however, lower than the prior quarter which included tax on the dividend (secondary tax on companies). The equivalent quarter last year was impacted by a tax credit resulting from the reduction of the South African tax rate from 30% to 29%.

Headline earnings for the quarter were 5 US cents and earnings per share were 4 US cents. In the equivalent quarter last year, headline earnings were 20 US cents and earnings per share were 18 US cents.

cash flow
Cash generated by operations was US\$117 million compared to US\$172 million a year ago, a reduction of US\$55 million mainly as a result of lower profits excluding fair value adjustments. Working capital increased by US\$33 million in the quarter (second quarter 2005: US\$104 million).

The annual dividend of US\$68 million which was declared in November 2005 was paid in the quarter.

Capital expenditure for the quarter was US\$67 million, representing 68% of the depreciation charge for the period. We expect a similar level for the full year.

comment

sappi limited – second quarter page 2

operating review for the quarter

Sappi Fine Paper

Quarter

Quarter

Quarter

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

%

Dec 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

change

US\$ million

Sales

1,018

982

3.7

943

Operating (loss) profit

(6)

24

–

15

Operating (loss) profit to sales (%)

(0.6)

2.4

–

1.6

Despite strong sales volumes, which were up approximately 9% compared to a year ago, the business recorded an operating loss of US\$6 million in the quarter. Against a background of increasing raw material and energy input costs, achieving higher prices and managing the realisation of better margins remains a key issue in each of the regions.

Europe

Quarter

Quarter

Quarter

ended

ended

%

%

ended

March 2006

March 2005

change

change

Dec 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

(US\$)

(Euro)

US\$ million

Sales

569

571

(0.4)

9.0

520

Operating profit

6

23

(73.9)

(71.5)

14

Operating profit to sales (%)

1.1

4.0

–

–

2.7

Demand for our products remains strong, particularly in Germany and eastern Europe, and our sales volume was up 7.5% compared to a year earlier. Realisation of our price increase has not been sufficient to offset the rise in our input costs (led by energy and wood costs), resulting in unacceptable margins.

North America

Quarter

Quarter

Quarter

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

%

Dec 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

change

US\$ million

Sales

367

339

8.3

345

Operating (loss) profit

(10)

1

–

1

Operating (loss) profit to sales (%)

(2.7)

0.3

–

0.3

Our sales volume increased strongly relative to a year earlier and the prior quarter but high input costs and product mix diminished the impact of higher prices and put further pressure on our margins. The slower than planned achievement of the Muskegon restructuring benefits resulted mainly from a slower ramp up of output and changes to the product range. These savings will take until the end of the year to achieve. Significant production cost variances arising from unplanned production issues have also impacted our margins.

sappi limited – second quarter page 3

Fine Paper South Africa

Quarter

Quarter

Quarter

ended

ended

%

%

ended

March 2006

March 2005

change

change

Dec 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

(US\$)

(Rand)

US\$ million

Sales

82

72

13.9

18.2

78

Operating loss

(2)

–

–

–

–

Operating loss to sales (%)

(2.4)

–

–

–

–

Sales volumes in the domestic market remained strong in the quarter and export volumes increased. The strong Rand contributed to competitive pricing in the domestic market and put pressure on margins.

Forest Products

Quarter

Quarter

Quarter

ended

ended

%

%

ended

March 2006

March 2005

change

change
 Dec 2005
 US\$ million
 US\$ million
 (US\$)
 (Rand)
 US\$ million
 Sales
 238
 248
 (4.0)
 (0.4)
 232
 Operating profit
 69
 32
 115.6
 123.9
 37
 Operating profit to sales (%)
 29.0
 12.9
 –
 –
 15.9

Demand for chemical cellulose continues to be strong and in the domestic market demand for our other products was generally buoyant. The underlying performance of this business was unfavourably affected by unplanned production stoppages at several mills resulting in reduced output and higher operating costs. The strong Rand more than offset the effect of rising pulp prices and the exchange rate continues to affect margins in the containerboard business. Pulp prices (NBSK) increased by US\$30 per ton by the end of the quarter relative to the prior quarter end. There has been another NBSK pulp price increase announced subsequent to the quarter end.

The operating profit includes US\$60 million of plantation fair value adjustment net of fellings. Subsequent to the quarter we announced our intention to sell a 25% interest in our plantation land (without the trees) to a black economic empowerment consortium for approximately US\$36 million, which will be vendor financed. We expect benefits to accrue from the consortium's identification and development of opportunities on the unplanted land, which makes up 36% of the total.

sappi limited – second quarter page 4
 operating review for the quarter (continued)

outlook

Demand for our products continues to be positive and the global coated fine paper industry operating rate is at one of the highest levels seen in at least the last 15 years.

We have already identified significant cost improvements and operating efficiencies which without any benefit of price increases could substantially improve earnings. These improvements are being addressed vigorously and are likely to start having an impact towards the end of the financial year.

In the current cost environment, our pricing model in many markets has led to a significant proportion of business being conducted at unprofitable levels. We are in the process of changing this. Furthermore, we are limiting the time horizon on which we will commit prices. We are evaluating the effectiveness and the costs of our distribution model and will be working with our distribution partners to streamline the supply chain. During this process, average selling prices should continue to rise.

To reverse the trend of continuing consumption of cash, we have cut back capital expenditure and we will rigorously manage our working capital – in particular our finished goods inventories, and will curtail manufacturing operations whenever necessary to ensure that we operate to our customers' requirements at a normalised inventory holding.

We do not expect to see much impact from our turnaround actions next quarter and are likely to see a similar underlying result to the current quarter.

changes of directors

As previously announced, Jonathan Leslie resigned as Chief Executive of the group on 5 March 2006.

Sir Nigel Rudd was appointed a non-executive director of Sappi Limited with effect from 3 April 2006.

On behalf of the Board

E van As

D G Wilson

Director

Director

8 May 2006

sappi limited

(Registration number 1936/008963/06)

NYSE Code: SPP

JSE Code: SAP

ISIN Code: ZAE 000006284

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operating review for the quarter (continued)

sappi limited – second quarter page 6

Certain statements in this release that are neither reported financial results nor other historical information, are forward-looking statements, including but not limited to statements that are predictions of or indicate future earnings, savings, synergies, events, trends, plans or objectives. Undue reliance should not be placed on such statements because, by their nature, they are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties and can be affected by other factors, that could cause actual results and company plans and objectives to differ materially from those expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements (or from past results). Such risks, uncertainties and factors include, but are not limited to the highly cyclical nature of the pulp and paper industry (and the factors that contribute to such cyclical nature, such as levels of demand, production capacity, production, input costs including raw material, energy and employee costs, and pricing), adverse changes in the markets for the group's products, consequences of substantial leverage, changing regulatory requirements, unanticipated production disruptions, economic and political conditions in international markets, the impact of investments, acquisitions and dispositions (including related financing), any delays, unexpected costs or other problems experienced with integrating acquisitions and achieving expected savings and synergies and currency fluctuations. The company undertakes 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.

forward-looking statements

conformed financial results
for the quarter and half-year ended March 2006

Form S-8 Version
sappi limited – second quarter page 7

group income statement
 sappi limited – second quarter page 8

Restated
 Restated
 Restated
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Quarter
 Quarter
 Half-year
 Half-year
 Year
 ended
 ended
 ended
 ended
 ended
 March 2006
 March 2005
 %
 March 2006
 March 2005
 %
 Sept 2005
 US\$ million
 US\$ million change
 US\$ million
 US\$ million change US\$ million
 Sales
 1,256
 1,230
 2.1
 2,431
 2,486
 (2.2)
 5,018
 Cost of sales
 1,098
 1,079
 2,140
 2,193
 4,507
 Gross profit
 158
 151
 4.6
 291
 293

(0.7)
511
Selling, general and
administrative expenses
87
91
170
178
361
71
60
121
115
150
Other expenses
12
5
13
48
259
Operating profit (loss)
59
55
7.3
108
67
61.2
(109)
Net finance costs
31
24
58
45
80
Net paid
33
31
65
64
125
Capitalised
—
(1)
(1)
(1)
(1)
Net foreign exchange
gains
(3)
(1)
(4)

(3)
(5)
Change in fair value of financial instruments
1
(5)
(2)
(15)
(39)
Profit (loss) before tax
28
31
(9.7)
50
22
127.3
(189)
Taxation – current
7
12
15
20
45
– deferred
12
(21)
26
(20)
(50)
Net profit (loss)
9
40
(77.5)
9
22
(59.1)
(184)
Earnings (loss) per share (US cents)
4
18
4
10
(81)
Weighted average number of shares in issue (millions)
226.0
225.6
225.9
225.8

225.8

Diluted earnings
(loss) per share
(US cents)

4

18

4

10

(81)

Weighted average
number of shares
on fully diluted
basis (millions)

227.0

226.8

226.7

227.1

226.7

group balance sheet
sappi limited – second quarter page 9

Restated

Reviewed

Reviewed

March 2006

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

ASSETS

Non-current assets

4,305

4,244

Property, plant and equipment

3,307

3,333

Plantations

690

604

Deferred taxation

71

70

Other non-current assets

237

237

Current assets

1,517

1,645

Inventories

765

711

Trade and other receivables

556

567

Cash and cash equivalents

196

367

Total assets

5,822

5,889

EQUITY AND LIABILITIES

Shareholders' equity

Ordinary shareholders' interest

1,550

1,589

Non-current liabilities

2,492

2,547

Interest-bearing borrowings

1,503

1,600

Deferred taxation	
402	
367	
Other non-current liabilities	
587	
580	
Current liabilities	
1,780	
1,753	
Interest-bearing borrowings	
845	
616	
Bank overdraft	
20	
159	
Other current liabilities	
790	
858	
Taxation payable	
125	
120	
Total equity and liabilities	
5,822	
5,889	
Number of shares in issue at balance sheet date (millions)	
226.3	
225.9	

group cash flow statement
sappi limited – second quarter page 10
group statement of recognised income and
expense
Restated
Restated
Restated
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Quarter
Quarter
Half-year
Half-year
Year
ended
ended
ended
ended
ended
March 2006
March 2005
March 2006
March 2005
Sept 2005
US\$ million
US\$ million
US\$ million
US\$ million US\$ million
Operating profit (loss)
59
55
108
67
(109)
Depreciation, fellings and other amortisation
117
125
231
250
490
Other non-cash items (including impairment
charges)
(59)
(8)
(100)
(3)
188
Cash generated by operations

117
172
239
314
569
Movement in working capital
(33)
(104)
(113)
(207)
(30)
Net finance costs
(23)
(28)
(68)
(67)
(127)
Taxation paid
(5)
(12)
(12)
(39)
(43)
Dividends paid
(68)
(68)
(68)
(68)
(68)
Cash (utilised in) retained from operating activities
(12)
(40)
(22)
(67)
301
Cash effects of investing activities
(78)
(79)
(152)
(206)
(379)
(90)
(119)
(174)
(273)
(78)
Cash effects of financing activities
(91)
(3)
3

21
 (37)
 Net movement in cash and
 cash equivalents
 (181)
 (122)
 (171)
 (252)
 (115)
 Restated
 Restated
 Restated
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Reviewed
 Quarter
 Quarter
 Half-year
 Half-year
 Year
 ended
 ended
 ended
 ended
 ended
 March 2006
 March 2005
 March 2006
 March 2005
 Sept 2005
 US\$ million
 US\$ million
 US\$ million
 US\$ million US\$ million
 Pension fund asset not recognised
 (2)
 -
 (4)
 -
 -
 Actuarial losses on pension and other post
 employment benefit liabilities
 -
 -
 -
 -
 (62)
 Deferred taxation on above items
 -

-	
1	
-	
11	
Valuation allowance against deferred tax asset on actuarial losses	
-	
(62)	
-	
(62)	
(62)	
Exchange differences on translation of foreign operations	
31	
(115)	
20	
64	
7	
Net income (expense) recorded directly in equity	
29	
(177)	
17	
2	
(106)	
Net income (loss) for the period	
9	
40	
9	
22	
(184)	
Total recognised income (expense) for the period	
38	
(137)	
26	
24	
(290)	

notes to the group results

1.

Basis of preparation

The condensed quarterly financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Sappi is reporting under IFRS for the first time for the year ending September 2006. The date of first transition to IFRS is October 2004 and comparative results have been restated accordingly. The condensed consolidated interim financial statements do not include all of the information required for full annual financial statements.

These quarterly results have been prepared in accordance with IAS 34 (Interim financial reporting). The accounting policies used in the preparation of the quarterly results are compliant with IFRS and consistent with those used in the annual financial statements for September 2005, except as disclosed below.

The preliminary results for the quarter have been reviewed in terms of International Standards on Review Engagements by the group's auditors, Deloitte & Touche. Their unqualified review report includes an emphasis of matter that amendments to the interpretive guidance issued between the date of this announcement and the finalisation of the financial statements for the year ending September 2006, may result in changes to the restatements published. This report is available for inspection at the company's registered offices.

2.

Effect of the first time adoption of IFRS

As discussed in Note 1, the group has adopted International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in preparing their consolidated financial statements for the year ending September 2006. For purposes of these interim financial statements, the group has developed accounting policies based on IFRS issued to date that will be effective at our reporting date of September 2006. IFRS 1, First-time Adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards, requires that an entity develop accounting policies based on the standards and related interpretations effective at the reporting date of its first IFRS financial statements. IFRS 1 also requires that those policies be applied as of the date of transition to IFRS and throughout all periods presented in the first IFRS financial statements. The accounting policies used in these financial statements are subject to change up to the reporting date of our first IFRS financial statements. Management does not believe the final accounting policies will change materially from those utilised in the preparation of the accompanying interim financial statements.

The following exemptions in accordance with IFRS 1 were considered:

- Business Combinations – IFRS 3

The group has elected not to retrospectively apply the requirements of IFRS 3 for Business Combinations that occurred prior to October 2004.

- Share based payments – IFRS 2

The group has applied the share based payment exemption therefore IFRS 2 is only applicable to equity instruments granted after 7 November 2002 that were not vested by 1 January 2005.

Liabilities arising from cash-settled share-based payments settled after 1 January 2005 are subject to IFRS 2. For instruments vesting on or after 1 January 2005, Sappi has recognised a charge in the income statement and set up a separate category in shareholders' equity for all share options and awards, based on the fair value of the awards as calculated at the grant date.

sappi limited – second quarter page 11

- The effects of changes in foreign exchange rates – IAS 21

Sappi has elected to apply the exemption in IFRS 1 which allows the cumulative translation differences of all foreign operations to be reduced to zero at the date of transition to IFRS which is October 2004.

Adjustments on adoption of IFRS

The adoption of IFRS led to changes in the Group's financial position, financial performance and cash flows. The significant differences between previously reported SA GAAP financial statements and IFRS are as follows:

- Employee benefits – IAS 19

Previously unrecognised actuarial employee benefit losses were recognised at October 2004, resulting in an increase in pension and other post employment benefits liabilities and a corresponding reduction in equity and deferred tax liability. These adjustments also led to a reduction in employee benefit expense in profit for the period. Sappi has elected to adopt the policy of recognising actuarial gains and losses in the period in which they occur. The gains and losses are recognised outside of profit for the period in the statement of recognised income and expense (SORIE). Items processed through SORIE are tax effected through SORIE. Part of the first time adoption of this method of accounting included a historic analysis of all pension fund movements to determine the portion of our deferred tax balances that relate to SORIE.

- Share based payments – IFRS 2

Sappi has recognised a charge in the income statement and set up a separate category in shareholders' equity for all share options and awards, based on the fair value of the awards as calculated at the grant date. The cost of the share options and grants are reflected in the income statement over the vesting period. This IFRS change had no impact on the comparative total shareholders' equity as a Share Based Payment Reserve is created with the equal and opposite amount included in retained earnings.

- Financial instruments – IAS 39

A significant portion of our securitised receivables was brought back on balance sheet, increasing trade and other receivables by US\$268 million and short term debt by US\$346 million and decreasing other payables by US\$78 million at September 2005. The related expense is no longer reflected in S,G&A but is included under finance costs. This caused an increase in finance costs and decrease in S,G&A of US\$15 million for the year ended September 2005 (March 2005: US\$9 million).

Cash flow hedges on inter-company loans, accounted for in equity, no longer qualify for hedge accounting under IAS 39. As a result these instruments are now recognised at fair value through profit and loss.

- The effects of changes in foreign exchange rates – IAS 21

Sappi has elected to apply the exemption in IFRS 1 which allows the cumulative translation differences of all foreign operations to be reduced to zero at the date of transition to IFRS which is October 2004. The Foreign Currency Translation Reserve (Non-Distributable Reserve) was transferred to retained earnings. This IFRS change has no impact on total shareholders' equity. There are no other accounting policy changes relevant to the first time adoption of IFRS.

sappi limited – second quarter page 12
notes to the group results (continued)

sappi limited – second quarter page 13

Reconciliation of previous SA GAAP to IFRS for shareholders' equity

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Year

Half-year

IFRS

ended

ended

transition

Sept 2005

March 2005

Oct 2004

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

Total equity presented under SA GAAP

1,881

2,151

2,157

Impact on retained earnings:

Recognition of previously unrecognised actuarial

losses – IAS 19

(340)

(289)

(300)

Deferred taxation impact of IAS 19 change

43

42

93

Share based payments – IFRS 2

(20)

(15)

(9)

Release of cash flow hedge reserve – IAS 39

14

9

(2)

Foreign Currency Translation Reserve cleared

at October 2004

244

244

244

Share based payment reserve – IFRS 2

20

16

9

Hedging Reserves – IAS 39

(13)

(9)

2

Foreign Currency Translation Reserve

(240)

(250)

(244)

Total equity and reserves presented under IFRS

1,589

1,899

1,950

Reconciliation of previous SA GAAP to IFRS for net (loss) profit

Reviewed

Reviewed

Year

Half-year

ended

ended

Sept 2005

March 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

Net loss under SA GAAP

(213)

(6)

Reduction in expense due to recognition of actuarial gains and losses – IAS 19

23

12

Deferred taxation impact of IAS 19

1

10

Share based payment expense – IFRS 2

(10)

(5)

Gains from cash flow hedges that do not qualify for hedge accounting – IAS 39

22

16

Deferred taxation impact of IAS 39

(7)

(5)

Net (loss) profit under IFRS

(184)

22

IFRS cash flow statement impact

The reduction in employee benefit expense attributed to an increase in operating profit (loss) and a corresponding decrease in non-cash items. Share based payment costs led to a decrease in operating profit and an increase in non-cash items. The recognition of securitised debtors caused the relating costs to be reflected under finance costs instead of included in operating profit.

notes to the group results (continued)
 sappi limited – second quarter page 14
 IFRS impact on debt

In accordance with IAS 39 a significant portion of our securitised receivables was brought back on balance sheet, increasing trade and other receivables by US\$268 million and short term debt by US\$346 million and decreasing other payables by US\$78 million at September 2005.

Restated

Restated

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Half-year

Half-year

Year

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

3.

Reconciliation of movement in shareholders' equity

Balance – beginning of year as reported

1,881

2,157

2,157

IFRS adoption (refer note 2)

(292)

(207)

(207)

Recognition of previously unrecognised actuarial

losses – IAS 19

(340)

(300)

(300)

Deferred taxation impact of IAS 19 change

43

93

93

Translation differences

5

–

–

Balance – beginning of year restated

1,589

1,950

1,950

Total recognised income (expense) for the period

26
24
(290)
Dividends paid
(68)
(68)
(68)
Share buybacks net of transfers to participants
of the share purchase trust
(1)
(14)
(14)
Share based payment reserve
4
7
11
Balance – end of period
1,550
1,899
1,589

sappi limited – second quarter page 15

Restated

Restated

Restated

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Quarter

Quarter

Half-year

Half-year

Year

ended

ended

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

March 2006

March 2005

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

4.

Operating profit

Included in operating profit are
the following non-cash items:

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation of property,
plant and equipment

98

108

195

216

422

Other amortisation

1

–

1

1

2

99

108

196

217

424
Impairment of property,
plant and equipment
4
1
5
42
233
Impairment of other assets
—
—
—
—
3
Impairment reversal of property,
plant and equipment
—
—
—
—
(4)
103
109
201
259
656
Fair value adjustment gains
on plantations (included in
cost of sales)
Changes in volume
Fellings *
18
17
35
33
66
Growth
(21)
(19)
(35)
(33)
(58)
(3)
(2)
—
—
8
Changes in fair value
(57)
(1)
(67)

(17)

(60)

(60)

(3)

(67)

(17)

(52)

The above fair value adjustment
gains have been offset
by silviculture costs

12

11

22

22

45

** The amount charged against the income statement representing the standing value of plantations harvested.*

sappi limited – second quarter page 16

notes to the group results (continued)

Restated

Restated

Restated

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Quarter

Quarter

Half-year

Half-year

Year

ended

ended

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

March 2006

March 2005

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

5.

Capital expenditure

Property, plant and equipment

67

60

139

138

345

Reviewed

Reviewed

March 2006

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

6.

Capital commitments

Contracted but not provided

130

115

Approved but not contracted

171

198

301

313

7.

Contingent liabilities

Guarantees and suretyships

54

86

Other contingent liabilities

11

11

supplemental information
sappi limited – second quarter page 17
additional information

Restated

Restated

Restated

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Quarter

Quarter

Half-year

Half-year

Year

ended

ended

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

March 2006

March 2005

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

1.

Net profit (loss) to EBITDA

(1)

reconciliation

Net profit (loss)

9

40

9

22

(184)

Net finance costs

31

24

58

45

80

Taxation – current

7

12

15

20
45
– deferred
12
(21)
26
(20)
(50)
Depreciation
98
108
195
216
422
Amortisation
(including fellings)
19
17
36
34
68
EBITDA
(1) (2)
176
180
339
317
381
(1)

Earnings before interest (net finance costs), tax, depreciation and amortisation.

(2)
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. As a result our definition retains other income/expenses as part of EBITDA.

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 IFRS. EBITDA is not a measure of performance under IFRS. EBITDA should not be construed as an alternative to operating profit as an indicator of the company’s operations in accordance with IFRS. 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. Different companies and analysts may calculate EBITDA differently, so making comparisons among companies on this basis should be done very carefully.

sappi limited – second quarter page 18

supplemental information

Restated

Restated

Restated

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Reviewed

Quarter

Quarter

Half-year

Half-year

Year

ended

ended

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

March 2006

March 2005

Sept 2005

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

US\$ million

2.

Calculation of Headline earnings *

Net profit (loss)

9

40

9

22

(184)

(Profit) loss on disposal of business
and property, plant and equipment

(2)

–

(2)

–

2

Write-off of assets

1

3

2

4

6

Impairment of property, plant
and equipment

4

1

5

42

219

Debt restructuring costs

–

–

–

–

2

Headline earnings

12

44

14

68

45

Headline earnings per share

Headline earnings per share (US cents) *

5

20

6

30

20

Weighted average number
of shares in issue (millions)

226.0

225.6

225.9

225.8

225.8

Diluted headline earnings
per share (US cents) *

5

19

6

30

20

Weighted average number of shares
on fully diluted basis (millions)

227.0

226.8

226.7

227.1

226.7

* *Headline earnings disclosure is required by the JSE Limited.*

3. exchange rates

March

Dec

Sept
June
March
2006
2005
2005
2005
2005

Exchange rates:

Period end rate: US \$1 = ZAR

6.1655
6.3275
6.3656
6.7041
6.2059

Average rate for the Quarter: US \$1 = ZAR

6.1858
6.4795
6.5289
6.3738
5.9577

Average rate for the YTD: US \$1 = ZAR

6.3334
6.4795
6.2418
6.1732
6.0632

Period end rate: EUR 1 = US\$

1.2119
1.1843
1.2030
1.2097
1.2982

Average rate for the Quarter: EUR 1 = US\$

1.1983
1.1915
1.2139
1.2678
1.3110

Average rate for the YTD: EUR 1 = US\$

1.1964
1.1915
1.2659
1.2811
1.2911

The financial results of entities with reporting currencies other than the US Dollar are translated into US Dollars as follows:

- Assets and liabilities at rates of exchange ruling at period end; and*
- Income, expenditure and cash flow items at average exchange rates.*

sappi limited – second quarter page 19

supplemental information

regional information

Quarter

Quarter

Half-year

Half-year

Year

ended

ended

ended

ended

ended

March 2006

March 2005

March 2006

March 2005

Sept 2005

Metric tons

Metric tons

%

Metric tons

Metric tons

% Metric tons

(000's)

(000's) change

(000's)

(000's) change

(000's)

Sales

Fine Paper –

North America

365

331

10.3

709

681

4.1

1,433

Europe

646

601

7.5

1,248

1,216

2.6

2,427

Southern Africa

79

69

14.5

158
147
7.5
317
Total
1,090
1,001
8.9
2,115
2,044
3.5
4,177
Forest Products – Pulp and paper
operations
347
389
(10.8)
702
780
(10.0)
1,565
Forestry operations
372
369
0.8
748
750
(0.3)
1,737
Total
1,809
1,759
2.8
3,565
3,574
(0.3)
7,479
Restated
Restated
Restated
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Quarter
Quarter
Half-year
Half-year
Year
ended

ended
ended
ended
ended
March 2006
March 2005
%
March 2006
March 2005
% Sept 2005
US\$ million
US\$ million
change
US\$ million
US\$ million
change US\$ million
Sales
Fine Paper –
North America
367
339
8.3
712
696
2.3
1,458
Europe
569
571
(0.4)
1,089
1,145
(4.9)
2,239
Southern Africa
82
72
13.9
160
155
3.2
323
Total
1,018
982
3.7
1,961
1,996
(1.8)
4,020
Forest Products – Pulp and paper

operations

215

230

(6.5)

427

452

(5.5)

908

Forestry operations

23

18

27.8

43

38

13.2

90

Total

1,256

1,230

2.1

2,431

2,486

(2.2)

5,018

sappi limited – second quarter page 20
supplemental information
Restated
Restated
Restated
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Reviewed
Quarter
Quarter
Half-year
Half-year
Year
ended
ended
ended
ended
ended
ended
March 2006
March 2005
%
March 2006
March 2005
% Sept 2005
US\$ million
US\$ million
change
US\$ million
US\$ million
change US\$ million
Operating profit
Fine Paper –
North America
(10)
1
–
(9)
(12)
25.0
(259)
Europe
6
23
(73.9)
20
54
(63.0)
84
Southern Africa

(2)
—
—
(2)
3
—
(11)
Total
(6)
24
—
9
45
(80.0)
(186)
Forest Products
69
32
115.6
106
25
324.0
83
Corporate
(4)
(1)
(300.0)
(7)
(3)
(133.3)
(6)
Total
59
55
7.3
103
67
61.2
(109)

sappi limited – second quarter page 21

note:(1 ADR = 1 sappi share)

sappi ordinary shares

ADR price (NYSE TICKER: SPP)

1 Apr

2003

1 Jul

2003

1 Oct

2003

1 Jan

2004

1 Apr

2004

1 Jul

2004

1 Oct

2004

1 Jan

2005

1 Apr

2005

1 Jul

2005

1 Oct

2005

1 Jan

2006

18

16

14

12

10

8

6

4

2

0

1 Apr

2006

5 May

2006

1 Apr

2003

1 Jul

2003

1 Oct

2003

1 Jan
2004
1 Apr
2004
1 Jul
2004
1 Oct
2004
1 Jan
2005
1 Apr
2005
1 Jul
2005
1 Oct
2005
1 Jan
2006

120
100
80
60
40
20
0
1 Apr
2006
5 May
2006

this report is available on the Sappi website

www.sappi.com

Transfer secretaries

South Africa:

United States

United Kingdom:

Computershare Investor

ADR Depository:

Capita Registrars

Services 2004 Limited

The Bank of New York

The Registry

70 Marshall Street

Investor Relations

34 Beckenham Road

Johannesburg 2001

PO Box 11258

Beckenham, Kent

PO Box 61051

Church Street Station

BR3 4TU, DX 91750

Marshalltown 2107

New York, NY 10286-1258

Beckenham West

Tel +27 (0)11 370 5000

Tel +1 610 382 7836

Tel +44 (0)208 639 2157

www.sappi.com

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

Date: May 17, 2006

SAPPI LIMITED,

by: /s/ D. G. Wilson

Name: D. G. Wilson

Title: Executive Director: Finance