



Driven by expertise

Sukano provides long-term support to Fondation Jan & Oscar to fight plastic pollution through youth education

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Schindellegi, February 23 - Sukano, a major player in the PET industry, and global additive and masterbatch specialist, is proud to announce that it is entering a long-term agreement with the [Fondation Jan & Oscar](#), a Swiss non-profit organization that has key projects with a strong focus on education and plastic pollution in rural regions. This partnership aims to help tackle the problem of plastic waste in the world's oceans by further strengthening the Foundation's waste bank and educational programs and increasing the environmental and social impact of their existing programs.

Sukano takes its societal responsibility seriously and is fully committed to a world without plastic waste. Design for circularity is embedded in the company's Design and Innovation principles. For this reason, Sukano corporate responsibility initiatives aim to go beyond the company's product, processes, and applications. The company strives to build strategies that not only advance business but also invest in the common good to give back to the society. This agreement is another step in putting these principles into action.

Raising awareness about the value of recycled plastics

"The Fondation Jan & Oscar's holistic approach was one of the key factors for us to establish this partnership," states Norman Egger, Global Board Member of Sukano. "We are firmly convinced that education and raising awareness about the importance of a waste management plays an essential role for a sustainable and long-term societal and environmental development."

The first principle of a circular economy is to eliminate waste and pollution by keeping materials in the productive loop for as long as possible. Plastic is a prime example. Over decades, people have become accustomed to think of many plastic products as disposable, to be thrown out immediately after a single use. The result is a massive plastic waste issue, particularly in the world's oceans.

"Educating children from an early age about waste and waste management practices and the solutions that exist, is a necessity to find sustainable means to marine plastic pollution," states Laurence Pian, Founder of Fondation Jan & Oscar. "The kids become recycling ambassadors to their families and communities and motivate them to think of innovative ways to overcome and hinder these problems."

Rather than a pollutant, plastic waste can in fact be a valuable resource, to be used again and again. It is a question of changing our behaviors and actions to ensure that more plastic is collected, recycled, and stays in use, rather than finding its way into our fragile marine ecosystems.

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Tackling the problem of marine plastic waste at its source

Most of the plastic we find in the ocean is leaked from land: 70-80% flows downstream through inland waterways to the sea.¹ At first, it may stay in coastal waters, but it can be picked up by rotating ocean currents, called gyres, and transported across the world.²

Because it is very challenging to retrieve plastic from the ocean once it has entered it, the better strategy is to prevent plastic waste from entering open waters in the first place. While the industry is working tirelessly on innovations to hinder plastic waste from ending up in the open environment, in the meantime solutions are needed to ensure plastic stays in the economy and out of the environment.

Fondation Jan & Oscar and its positive social and environmental impact

One of the organizations main projects is a social enterprise, Ranong Recycle for Environment (RRE), which aims to provide jobs and new sources of income for vulnerable people and communities in southern Thailand while offering concrete solutions to combat marine plastic pollution. RRE does this in close collaboration with #tide ocean Thailand by collecting ocean bound plastic waste in Ranong province for recycling. The plastics are then purchased at a fair price from collectors and fishermen living in the coastal area and on the islands of the Andaman Sea.

Ranong province and its islands are particularly impacted by plastic pollution, which is why the foundation has also initiated an education program. The objective is to create waste banks and provide workshops in schools in southern Thailand. A waste bank is a building where students can bring any plastic waste they find in their daily life. The workshops train students to sort plastics for recycling, while raising awareness about the pollution of our environment and encouraging them to consume plastic consciously.

To ensure that the collected material is recycled and given a second life, the Foundation has partnered with the Swiss upcycling company #tide ocean SA. Together with the Swiss University of Applied Sciences, #tide has developed a mechanical process to regenerate the molecular chains of damaged ocean-bound plastic waste. This method is being used on an industrial scale to transform plastic waste into a premium raw material. Thanks to an ecosystem of renowned and #tide-approved processors and manufacturers, as well as an unmatched level of technical expertise, #tide is able to upcycle single-use plastics into durable and valuable products. The supply chain is driven by value creation at every step, creating relevant social and environmental impact for the local communities most affected by plastic pollution. #tide ocean material® is the label of trust when it comes to ocean-bound plastics.

References

¹ Richie, H (2021). Our World in Data. Article available at <https://ourworldindata.org/ocean-plastics> [Accessed February 2023]

² UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. Ocean Literacy Portal available at <https://oceanliteracy.unesco.org/plastic-pollution-ocean/> [Accessed February 2023]