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Vaude and Pontetorto receive Eco Performance Award



The outdoor manufacturer Vaude and the Italian fabric producer Pontetorto were recognised with the Eco Performance Award at the recently concluded 19th edition of the Performance Days trade fair for functional fabrics and sport accessories, for their jointly developed sustainable fleece fabric *Biopile*.

Pontetorto is a pioneer when it comes to sustainable textile solutions and environmental protection. The Italian fleece specialist has a long history of recycled fabrics in its portfolio, under the name *Ecosystem*. Last season the company launched its 'biodegradable' materials. With its work, the company addresses one of the most topical environmental issues: dangerous micro plastics that contaminate waters worldwide.

Micro plasticity endangers the environment - it ends up in rivers, lakes and seas and accumulates in marine life, which is then consumed. This is one way, among others, how micro plastics enter the human body. In order to reduce its impact, plastic waste must be avoided. Not only bags and bottles are an issue, but also clothing made from synthetic fibres is a source of pollution. During the washing process, such garments (e.g. fleece pullovers) can release micro plastic particles from their brushed side.

Biopile

Article No. 8852 M, *Biopile*, is said to be the first fabric, whose pile fleece does not release any dangerous micro plastics, thus protecting rivers, lakes, seas and other creatures from such danger. What makes Biopile unique is its construction, the company explains.

The inner, brushed side of the fabric does not consist of polyester (as with conventional fleece), but is 100% of Lenzing's *Tencel*, whose fibres are biodegradable even in marine water, according to the manufacturer. "Should the fabric release even the smallest of Tencel particles from its brushed side during a washing process, these will decompose without residue in any environment in around 90 days, thus in no way endangering any living creatures," the company reports.

The material, which is currently available in three weight classes, is the latest highlight from Pontetorto's Ecosystem family. 100% (recycled) polyester is used on the smoother outer surface, with other qualities also possible. Biopile is said to combine all the benefits of higher functionality with an environmental consciousness, as Tencel is considered a natural functional fibre with excellent climate regulating and moisture transporting properties. Additionally, Tencel is the first fibre to be certified as biodegradable in marine water.

TextileMission

Initially, Biopile will be introduced exclusively for Vaude products. The outdoor enterprise from Tett nang was developing Biopile together with Pontetorto and is a founding member of the cooperative project, *TextileMission*, which was launched on the 1 September 2017.

TextileMission pursues an interdisciplinary research approach, focusing in particular on two possible solutions. Firstly, by means of research into textile technologies and the optimisation of production processes, textiles are to be developed which have a significantly lower micro particle output compared to products currently available on the market. Textile researchers, together with the sportswear manufacturers involved, also test biodegradable fibres as an environmentally friendly alternative. Secondly, project partners wish to contribute to the optimisation of wastewater treatment technologies.

TextileMission runs for a duration of three years and is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) with around EUR 1.7 million.

www.performancedays.com

www.pontetorto.it