

AS SEEN IN:
INNOVATIE NU | JUNE 2021

IMPORTANT LINK

IN A TRANSPARENT AND SUSTAINABLE CHAIN

Author:

Drs. Annette Schumer

Manager Sustainability Uzin Utz Nederland
(brands: Uzin, Wolff, Pallmann, Arturo and Codex)



**ADVANCED
MANUFACTURING
CENTER**

ISSN 2772-428X

IMPORTANT *link*

IN A TRANSPARENT
AND SUSTAINABLE CHAIN



We are all aware of the need to minimise our ecological footprint in order to reduce global warming, control rising sea levels, restore flora and fauna, and improve public health. It is essential to find more economical and conscious uses of energy, raw materials, water and waste to help us stop the pollution and depletion of Earth's natural resources, leaving a liveable world for future generations.

Uzin Utz Nederland is keen to do its bit. Sustainability, health and the environment are key words in everything we do, at all levels of our organisation. A leading producer of materials for the installation, maintenance, and renovation of all types of floors, Uzin Utz has prioritised emission reduction, efficient energy use, water conservation, waste separation, and the reduction of raw materials in a concerted effort to bring economical, ecological and social aspects back in harmony. To aid in this effort, we use recycled or reclaimed raw materials wherever possible.

Efficient waste separation and recycling

Sustainable and ethical entrepreneurship is a basic precondition for the long-term continuity of our company. For years, we have focused on the production and supply of value-driven, innovative and high-quality products. In the early 1980s, we took a big step forward with the introduction of healthier synthetic resin dispersion adhesives. Not long after, we were the first in the market to supply a full range of solvent-free adhesives. Ten years ago, we introduced 'Cube it Simple'; a simple bag-in-box packaging system for various types of adhesives, primers and anti-slips, with a cardboard box and plastic in-liner, which are easy to separate and recycle after use. An added advantage is that the packaging can be easily stacked, so that more kg of product can be transported per pallet, resulting in considerable transport savings.



In 2018, our sustainable packaging range was supplemented by cans made of post-consumer recycled (PCR) material, made from 100% recycled plastics. This optimisation alone has resulted in a CO₂ emissions reduction of 311 tonnes since 2018. In combination with the 'Cube it Simple' packaging, we have achieved an impressive 533 tonnes in CO₂ savings. Our ultimate goal is to save around 300 tonnes of CO₂ per year on our packaging. To make this possible, we are converting, step-by-step, other Uzin Utz products to PCR packaging in the near future.

It starts with understanding...

Several years ago, we introduced the CO₂ Performance Ladder, to gain optimum insight into our CO₂ emissions. In 2015, we were certified according to this ladder, becoming the first company to land directly on Level 5, the highest step! By making our actions measurable, we can formulate concrete, useful objectives. This then makes our actions more understandable and credible to our employees, chain partners and customers.

Since 2013, we have been internally producing an annual CO₂ footprint report, in order to clarify our CO₂ policy, progress, and objectives for the

following year. In doing so, we commit ourselves to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, the most widely used registration method worldwide to map out CO₂ emissions. The protocol defines three areas of concern: Scope 1 - direct CO₂ emissions, caused by our own building, transport and production-related activities, Scope 2 - indirect CO₂ emissions, caused by the generation of purchased and consumed electricity and/or heat, and Scope 3 - indirect CO₂ emissions, caused by the business activities of partner organisations, such as suppliers and transporters. To this we have added our CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) objectives.

Targets for CO₂ reduction

The report makes our performance visible based on the following three criteria: (1) Green operations (mainly Scope 1 and 2), with a focus on energy, water and waste management, and lease car policy, (2) Transparent and sustainable supply chain (Scope 3), with attention to purchasing, transport/distribution, business travel, commuting and a sustainable product chain and (3) Community Centred Operations (CSR), in which we address the needs of the local community, a sustainable company site and business park, and sufficient opportunities for people distant from the labour market.

Among other things, the reports show that in 2019, we emitted over 30% less CO₂ in comparison to 2014. In 2020, it was even more impressive, with 45% less than 2014 levels, while our production increased by over 30%. This year, we aim to save 200 tonnes of CO₂ on our packaging alone. The switch to PCR packaging for our adhesives is an important contributing factor to our emissions savings. Our shift to a grey water system at the beginning of this year has also contributed to improvements in our ecological footprint. By efficiently using the rainwater from our 'green' roof for flushing our toilets, we expect to save 450 m³ of drinking water per year.

We actively pursue a sustainable product chain, from raw materials to production, processing, use, and recycling. With the help of our Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), the environmental impact of our products is becoming increasingly transparent. Step-by-step, we examine the entire chain. Where is the greatest impact? What should we tackle first? Who do we need to talk to?

Sustainability as a strategy

In order to continue to realise our ambitions for decreased CO₂ emissions in the future, we introduced a new corporate strategy in 2020 which we named 'Passion 2025'. Our aim is to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions levels across our entire business group. Our target is a 25% reduction of 2019 levels. We expect to achieve this by 2025.

The 'Passion Strategy' has its own sustainability targets for each of its' four pillars: Planet, People, Profit, and Products & Services. Energy plays an important role in this. With the construction of our 'green factory' in Haaksbergen in 2013, we have already switched to green energy,

which is generated from renewable sources. The building is all-electric (100% gas-less) and has a high sustainability score (GPR: 8.66). An EED Energy Audit, carried out in 2020, revealed that our building has an A+ label. The only improvement we could make was in adding a number of solar panels to our roof. Now it is time to tackle more complex issues. For example, we recognise that there are still great opportunities for improvements to sustainability in mobility, raw materials, packaging materials and waste processing.

Green facades for more biodiversity

Sustainability also plays an important role in the future expansion of our production facility in Haaksbergen. Sustainability and biodiversity, in all their facets, are being addressed during both design and construction. Our ambition is to achieve BREEAM-NL Excellent certification for the entire business park, as well as BREEAM-NL Outstanding for our own building.

Our participation in AdoptIDee can provide inspiration in this respect. AdoptIDee is an initiative of PNO Consultants, in which children from grades 6, 7 and 8 are encouraged to think about innovation challenges. Working with us, 10-12 years old pupils from a Haaksbergen primary school will investigate how we can use our new façades to enhance biodiversity in our business park. Of course, we have already helped them a little. For example, we researched the most common organisms in our area. At the moment, these organisms mainly come to eat with us. How can we make sure that they also come and live with us? For the children, this is a great opportunity to get involved with nature and biodiversity, while learning how these fit into our field of expertise: flooring. For us, it is likely to provide surprising new insights!



Author:

Drs. Annette Schumer

Manager Sustainability Uzin Utz Nederland
(brands: Uzin, Wolff, Pallmann, Arturo and Codex)