Innovative Viscose Specialities from Kelheim Fibres: A Sustainable Blend of Nature and Performance

Not only since 2021 has sustainability been a topic high on society's agenda. And yet the importance of sustainability for consumers and companies has once again increased sharply as a result of the Corona pandemic, as numerous studies confirm.
Then why is it often so difficult to implement this conviction in everyday life? One of the biggest obstacles to sustainable consumer behaviour is the lack of availability of alternatives.
Kelheim Fibres, German viscose speciality fibre manufacturer and a fixture in the nonwovens industry for decades, offers a solution: innovative bio-based fibres that are a real alternative to synthetic materials in a wide range of applications.

Combining nature with Performance
"We want to make it easy for consumers to choose an environmentally friendly option. That's the case when bio-based solutions offer the same performance as synthetic products," said Matthew North, Commercial Director at Kelheim Fibres." Our fibre technology allows us to create just that: unlike natural fibres, which are available already in fibre form and can only be treated on the surface, we can engineer the properties of our fibres they need for specific applications by specifically intervening in the production process. That way we combine nature - our fibres are made of wood pulp - with performance.""

This is how, for example, a series of special fibres for environmentally friendly Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) were created. These fibres have to fulfil different functions: While some ensure that liquids are passed on quickly, others score points for good distribution, particularly good absorbency or retention capacity. These fibres enable the production of completely biodegradable (feminine) hygiene products that do not need to hide behind their synthetic counterparts in terms of performance - a decisive aspect for the buyer, especially in the sensitive hygiene sector. In developing the AHP fibres, Kelheim was also able to draw on its expertise in the field of tampon fibres, where it has been the market leader for many years with its particularly absorbent Galaxy® fibre.

Another example is Kelheim's special fibres for flushable wipes: VILOFT® short-cut fibres, in combination with modern production technology, enable the manufacture of soft wet wipes that remain reliably stable during use but subsequently dissolve in a very short time. In addition, they are also fully biodegradable and thus help to reduce plastic pollution of our waters.

Shifting from a fossil-based to a bio-based economy
In addition to changing consumer demands, the EU Commission's recent decision on the single-use plastics directive is also prompting many nonwovens manufacturers to look at alternative solutions. Kelheim Fibres presents itself as the ideal partner at this year's INDEX in Geneva and online. The Bavarians not only bring decades of experience in the nonwovens and hygiene sector, but also enormous innovative power: "Our open innovation concept aims to find the best individual solutions in close dialogue with our partners along the value chain and to address unmet needs in the market." Says Dr Marina Crnoja-Cosic, Director New Business at Kelheim Fibres.

Kelheim's special fibres are made of wood pulp from sustainably managed sources, are produced in Kelheim in an environmentally friendly way and are fully biodegradable at the end of their product life. Kelheim Fibres is the first viscose fibre manufacturer in the world with an EMAS validated Environmental Management System and was awarded a dark green/light green shirt in the most recent Canopy HotButton-Ranking.