MAS Holdings invests in HeiQ AeoniQ™: a sustainable alternative to synthetics



Image: MAS Holdings and HeiQ administrators in a joint visit to the HeiQ AeoniQ™ pilot plant, in Austria (June 2023

MAS Holdings, a global apparel & textile manufacturing and tech conglomerate, headquartered in Sri Lanka with a global footprint across 16 countries, secures a stake in HeiQ AeoniQ™ as part of its Plan for Change initiative to support the development of next-generation cellulosic filament fibers to replace polyester and nylon.

HeiQ from Switzerland, leader in materials innovation, and MAS Holdings, a global apparel & textile manufacturing and tech conglomerate headquartered in Sri Lanka, entered a partnership for MAS to secure a stake in HeiQ AeoniQ GmbH, a subsidiary of HeiQ Group that will produce HeiQ AeoniQ™, a climate-positive cellulosic yarn.

With this investment, MAS Holdings becomes the first manufacturer to partner with HeiQ AeoniQ™ in their efforts to provide a sustainable alternative to polyester and nylon. The investment to be made by MAS Holdings is part of the group's strategy to drive a positive environmental impact. The MAS Plan for Change aims to generate 50% of the company's revenue through sustainable products by 2025, revolutionizing the textile industry with a focus on innovation, sustainable sourcing, and pioneering circularity at scale.

With the closing of this deal, HeiQ and MAS agreed to a 5-year Offtake Agreement for 3,000 tons of HeiQ AeoniQ™ yarn in 2025 and 5,000 tons per year from 2026 to 2029. MAS will finalize this commitment within a stipulated time period after achieving milestone 1. HeiQ and MAS firmly believe that rapid scaling is key to facilitating the fast adoption of sustainable, circular technologies such as HeiQ AeoniQ™.

HeiQ AeoniQ™: a game-changer for the textile industry

Since Q4 2021, HeiQ's launch of the HeiQ AeoniQ™ technology has been attracting the attention of major global players in the textile and clothing industries.

With the proprietary manufacturing method, for the first time in history, a cellulosic filament yarn can be made from a wide range of non-valorized feedstock and is able to reproduce comparable performance features of polyester or nylon, while being sustainable and endlessly circular.

The HeiQ AeoniQ™ pilot plant in Austria is manufacturing this revolutionary continuous cellulosic filament yarn since Q3 2022, with a 100 tons capacity to be upscaled to 300 tons by the end of 2023.

The HeiQ AeoniQ™ production scale-up is planned to have its definitive boost by early 2026 with the construction of an entirely new gigafactory capable of a 30,000-ton output per year, in a 250M USD estimated investment.

Carlo Centonze, CEO of HeiQ Group, said, "Since the beginning, HeiQ has pioneered textile innovation, revolutionizing sustainable functionality and enhancing the lives of billions. Now, with the introduction of HeiQ AeoniQ™, we solidify our unwavering commitment to disrupting the textile industry—a sector that has long held the dubious distinction of being the world's second-largest polluter. MAS' investment serves as resounding proof that leading textiles value chain players recognize HeiQ AeoniQ™ as the ultimate game-changer, placing their trust in its transformative power."

Group Chief Executive Officer of MAS Holdings, Suren Fernando adds, "MAS was built on the foundational belief of doing the right thing. As a global organization nurturing over 100,000 individuals, we are convinced of our responsibility to drive positive change within the apparel industry through sustainable product solutions. We believe that this investment is an important step in our efforts to reshape our industry by driving innovation, collaboration, and scale. With HeiQ AeoniQ™ as a key catalyst, we are poised to pave the way for a more sustainable future."

Polyester and nylon, two oil-based fibers, virtually non-recyclable, account for about 70% of all the global textile production, they take between 350 to 1000 years to degrade in nature, are currently close loop recycled at less than 1%, and are at the origin of 35% of the microplastics that can be found in today's oceans. HeiQ AeoniQ™ was innovated and is being hyper-scaled up to change this course of action.