



Munich, January 22, 2019

To the editors

Press conference invitation

Outdoor & Microplastics: Sympatex Technologies to present the initial results of a collective study on the subject of microplastics in the area of functional textiles during ISPO 2019

Study results will be presented on the 2nd day of the trade fair together with Plastic Soup Foundation, the Plastic Leak Project and the Italy-based IPCB-CNR institute, as well as with PlanetCare, a manufacturer of microplastics filters.

Dear media representatives, dear customers

Sympatex cordially invites you to attend our press conference during the 2019 ISPO trade fair in Munich.

Date: Monday, February, 4, 2019

Time: 4.00 pm – 5:00 pm

Location: Press Center West, Munich Trade Fair and Convention Center

Our industry has always preached about closeness with nature. At the same time, the calls for a more sustainable fashion industry are increasingly louder. Much has been achieved over the years, from the initial efforts to eliminate fluorocarbons from DWR-based outer materials and the extensive development of recycling concepts, to a broad-based commitment to protecting the environment through COP24.

Microplastics – the Achilles heel of a circular outdoor and textile industry

As an industry, we are part of the global microplastics problem and one of the contributors to the man-made contamination of the environment and our waters, with still unforeseeable consequences for mankind and nature. We nevertheless lack clear information regarding the actual dimensions of the problem, and have yet to develop clear solutions that will prevent microplastics from entering the water system through wear or washing of functional textiles.

As a pioneer in the field of green functional textiles, Sympatex wants to be one of the first in the industry to earnestly and quickly address this issue. With this in mind, the Munich-based company is collaborating with a wide range of partners from government and non-governmental organizations and research institutes to quickly pinpoint the causes of microplastics, especially in the fashion industry. One of the key goals here is to rely on data collection to develop solutions that can then be used to eventually tackle the creation of microplastics directly at the source.

As part of these efforts, Sympatex is collaborating with Netherlands-based **Plastic Soup Foundation**, one of the leading advocacy groups in the world to tackle plastic pollution. Founder and pioneer Maria Westeros and her team have a mission: “No Plastic In Our Water”. Their campaign “Ocean Clean Wash” is aimed at creating awareness and encouraging the fashion and other industries to take action, much like Greenpeace has done with the DETOX issue for a number of years already. <https://www.plasticsoupfoundation.org/en/organisation/mission/>

After intensive discussions with the Plastic Soup Foundation, in autumn 2018 Sympatex commissioned a study by the renowned Institute of Polymers, Composites and Biomaterials of the Italian Research Council (**IPCB-CNR**) a leading research institute on the issue of microplastics. Through the European Mermaids-Project (www.life-mermaids.eu), in addition to others, IPCB-CNR possesses a high level of know-how when it comes to understanding how microplastics impact the maritime environment. Sympatex made a wide selection of laminates available to IPCB-CNR, which were examined and estimated over several months using washing processes.



The goal is to analyze a large amount of Sympatex laminates to gain an understanding of the parameters that influence how, and to what extent, microplastics are released from the laminates, as well as identifying the parameters that have a positive impact (finish, lamination process) – in other words which parameters lead to the release of fewer microplastics during the wash process or as a result of friction when wearing. The institute also carried out a direct comparison of recycled and non-recycled laminates. The trial balloon started in autumn 2018. The initial results will be presented exclusively at the 2019 ISPO in front of a broad public audience.

PlanetCare, a leading manufacturer of microplastics filters for washing machines, will also participate in the press conference as a partner in the study. After all, even if we manage to minimize the amount of microplastics during the washing process, we still have to filter out the remaining amounts. To do that, PlanetCare developed a reliable filter process for a variety of washing machines.

One of the special highlights will be a demonstration at the Sympatex ISPO exhibit booth (hall A1, booth 300) that will illustrate how valuable waste can be. PET plastic waste, collected during a plogging event in the center of Munich one day before the opening of the ISPO, will be shredded, extruded and upcycled into a PlanetCare microplastics filter with a 3D printer over the course of the trade fair. This represents a clear signal that even here, valuable upcycling can be a sound and simple solution that can help prevent microplastics from leaking into the environment – a perfect circle!

Sympatex is also a participant and sponsor of the **Plastic Leak Project**, a new initiative created by the consulting firms Quantis and EA, which aims to develop metrics about microplastics and take advantage of existing findings to fight against the causes of microplastics around the world, based on available data and statistics. The goal is to include the plastic leak issue in environmental footprint assessments. The Plastic Leak Project will be officially launched in February. An introduction to the project, as well as the corresponding approaches and goals, will round out the Sympatex press conference.

We look forward to welcoming you to the press conference! We will be available for individual interviews upon the conclusion of the event. Get in touch with us as soon as possible!

Your response to the invitation would be greatly appreciated by Monday, January 28, 2019.

Best Regards,

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About Sympatex

Guaranteed Green – The Sympatex climate-neutral and recyclable membrane

As one of the worldwide leading producers, Sympatex® Technologies has been a synonym for high-tech functional materials in clothing, footwear, accessories and technical fields of application since 1986. Together with selected partners, Sympatex develops, produces and distributes membranes, laminates and functional textiles as well as finished products worldwide. The Sympatex membrane is highly breathable, 100% wind- and waterproof and regulates the climate. It is 100% recyclable, climate-neutral, bluesign® certified, and it received the 'Öko-Tex-Standard 100' certificate. It is also PTFE-free and PFC-free. The technologies and procedures are based on the principles of ecological responsibility and sustainability with a special focus on the optimal carbon footprint. Sympatex is represented worldwide with sales offices and branches.
www.sympatex.com