

Press release

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Scientific basis for recycling-friendly packaging design

Interseroh, bifa and Fraunhofer IVV present new testing method for packaging optimisation

- +++ Points system makes recycling capability of packaging measurable
- +++ Improvement potential in the “packaging” value chain can be raised targetedly in future
- +++ Optimal preparation for packaging law

Cologne. With a new, scientifically well-founded assessment method, companies from retail and industry can now find out how well packaging can be recycled. The system was developed by Cologne-based environmental service provider Interseroh together with the bifa environmental institute (bifa Umweltinstitut) and was finally reviewed by the experts of the Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging IVV (Fraunhofer-Institut für Verfahrenstechnik und Verpackung IVV). The aim is to enter more sales packaging into a high-quality recycling process in future and to manage the raw materials contained therein in the cycle.

“When packaging is designed, the course is set for the recycling capability,” says **Markus Müller-Drexel, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH**. “As part of our packaging optimisation service, we now enable manufacturers and dealers to optimise their sales packaging in a targeted manner using a scientifically reliable assessment pattern. This is also important with a view to the packaging law coming into effect in 2019. Afterwards, manufacturers are to receive financial incentives to use recycling-capable packaging for the first time.”

In order to assess the recycling capability of packaging, Interseroh, together with the bifa environmental institute specialising in technical environmental protection, has developed a three-stage points system. In the **first stage**, it is determined whether the consumer can assign the packaging to the correct collection system without any problems. Then, in the **second stage**, it is examined how the packaging performs when it comes to sorting. Can the currently available sorting technologies sort the packaging into the right material fraction – or do certain materials prevent a clear assignment? In the **third stage**, it is analysed whether the packaging

is suitable for material recycling or whether, for example, labels, colours or caps make recycling difficult. The more points the packaging achieves on a scale of 0 to 20, the more easily and better it can be recycled.

“Using our assessment method, weak points of packaging and potential for improvement can be identified very clearly,” explains **Dr Siegfried Kreibe, Deputy Managing Director of bifa Umweltinstitut GmbH**. “The better the recycling works, the higher the achievable qualities are and thus also the sales opportunities of the emerging recycled raw materials.”

“It is high time that movement comes into packaging design,” says **Dr Martin Schlummer, Business Area Manager Recycling and Environment at Fraunhofer IVV**. “What is important now is that all the participants in the value chain commit themselves to combining the product and design requirements of packaging effectively with its recycling capability.”

The assessment methodology developed by Interseroh and bifa and reviewed by Fraunhofer IVV is part of the Interseroh packaging optimisation service “Made for Recycling”. Here, the recycling specialist – in collaboration with the customers from retail and industry – illuminates the lifecycle of packaging from manufacture to disposal and recycling. Based on this, practicable action recommendations and solutions are developed for improved recycling.

You can find more information about “Made for Recycling”, Interseroh’s packaging optimisation service, here: <https://www.interseroh.de/en/services/consulting/packaging-optimisation/>

About the bifa environmental institute:

Since 1991, bifa, as an application-orientated research, development and consulting institution, has offered a multifaceted range of services related to “technical environmental protection”. This includes the areas of process technology, integrated operational environmental protection, sustainable waste management as well as system and process analysis. bifa analyses and assesses material flows, energy flows and process-technology processes.

About Fraunhofer IVV:

The Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging (IVV) stands for high-quality food and for safe packaging that allows high quality and convenient handling. In its developments along the value chain, Fraunhofer IVV aims for efficient use of raw materials and low environmental loads. The “Recycling and Environment” and “Packaging” business areas devote themselves to the development of innovative recycling processes and recycling-capable packaging materials.

About Interseroh

Next to ALBA, Interseroh is one brand under the umbrella of the ALBA Group. The ALBA Group operates with a total of about 7,500 employees within Germany, Europe and Asia. With an annual turnover of approx. 1.8 billion Euros (2016) ALBA Group is one of the leading recycling and environmental services companies as well as raw material providers worldwide. In 2016 alone ALBA Group saved almost 4.3 million tonnes of greenhouse gases compared to primary production and at the same time about 36.2 million tonnes of primary raw materials through its recycling activities.

Further information on Interseroh can be found at www.interseroh.com. All press releases of the ALBA Group may be subscribed to via RSS feed at www.albagroup.de/presse.

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