



Beiersdorf

Beiersdorf AG is a global company, headquartered in Germany, that manufactures skin care and personal care products.

Implemented in their corporate strategy C.A.R.E.+, the Sustainability Agenda CARE BEYOND SKIN sets ambitious commitments and targets. For example, as part of the company's "Plastic Pledge" they aim to reduce fossil-based virgin plastic by 50 % and foster to use 30 % recycled plastic globally by 2025.

Additionally, the company aims to make 100 % of its packaging refillable, reusable or recyclable by 2025. Beiersdorf has already relaunched several assortments that are now made from recycled plastic or bio-based materials or contain bio-based, or even CO₂-based ingredients. Beiersdorf is a founding member of the Renewable Carbon Initiative.

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Interview

with **Dr Manuela Köhler**
Chief Scientist Feedstock & Formula Science
Beiersdorf, Germany



with **Eva-Maria Bredehorst**
Manager Global Packaging Sustainability
Beiersdorf, Germany



Dr Manuela Köhler was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. She earned a diploma and PhD in Chemistry from the RWTH Aachen. In 2003, she started in Hair Care at Beiersdorf AG followed by different positions in product development and prototyping. In 2013 she moved to Mexico setting up the R&D center for the Americas. Returning in 2015 she joined Front End Innovation establishing the new Materials Science Team.

In 2020 she additionally took over the responsibility for Technology Scouting. Currently she is Chief Scientist Feedstock and Formula Science accompanying the transformation of the chemical industry regarding cosmetic raw materials.

Eva-Maria Bredehorst studied packaging technology at the Stuttgart Media University. In 2005, after completing her diploma thesis, she started working directly in global packaging development at Beiersdorf AG.

In the next few years, the focus was primarily on the field of technical development and strategic portfolio management for the packaging of the core brand NIVEA. Since 2019, she is responsible for the global sustainability strategy for packaging as Manager Global Packaging Sustainability.

Which renewables, i.e., bio-based, recycled or CO₂-based, does Beiersdorf rely and focus on in order to reach the goals of their sustainability agenda?

For our products it is imperative to use only materials that are safe with respect to human toxicity as well as environmental aspects, having the highest compatibility and performance. This requires a huge set of different functionalities which we always have been sourcing from different feedstocks.

This strategy will be further pursued while transforming our raw material and packaging portfolio. We will always choose from bio-based, chemically recycled or CO₂-based feedstocks and what is best for our consumer.

This is also reflected in our recent launches:

We launched in 2021 our Nivea Naturally Good Face Care – our first products where the jars are made from certified, renewable plastic and in 2022 we launched the NIVEA MEN Climate Care Moisturizer with 14% CCU Ethanol.

Additionally, in 2022 Eucerin introduced an innovative packaging and refill concept for its Hyaluron-Filler product: The consumer keeps the outer jar and lid and refills easily at home with a minimized click-in recharge unit. The amount of plastic needed to produce the innovative refill system is reduced by 90%. Projects like this show how we are rethinking packaging and are systematically working towards our 2025 target of reducing the amount of plastic used.

Have your renewable materials (e.g., bio-based PE) and chemicals (e.g., CO₂-based ethanol) the same quality and purity level as conventional fossil feedstock, i.e., can customers rely on consistent quality and safety? Do you see advantages for switching to renewable materials and chemicals?

Skin always comes first for us. Therefore, we will not compromise the aforementioned criteria regarding safety, compatibility, and performance.

We see our sustainability ambitions and our 'Climate Care' mission as a field of innovation. New raw materials from alternative sources that are now not fully leveraged feedstocks yet will offer new benefits, new experience, and new formats. The NIVEA MEN Climate Care Moisturizer is one example of such a new format.

Via the so-called carbon capture and utilization (CCU) process, emitted CO₂ is captured and then converted and processed to produce a high-quality ethanol that can be used in cosmetics. Our R&D Teams work hard to identify raw materials with a lower carbon footprint for our formula and packaging, without compromising on our excellent skin care product quality that consumers love around the world.

Does Beiersdorf AG also keep an eye on circularity and the entire supply chain? For example, how do you make sure that your packaging can be fully recycled?

Yes, circularity is a focus area for us. In fact, our ambitious global targets are in line with our vision of a circular economy. We assess and measure the recyclability of all our product packaging globally and we actively improve the recyclability by applying design-for-recycling standards.

Which added value does collaboration with other companies have to your switch to renewable alternatives?

Collaboration has always been a key success criterium for us. We have an extensive network of partners, be it suppliers, start-ups, universities, or research institutes as well as NGOs. We believe in exchange and joining forces to accelerate the change.

One example is the Beiersdorf-Evonik venture day that we hosted in 2022: Start-ups were invited to pitch for collaboration with Evonik and Beiersdorf, develop cooperation, go-to market partnerships

and provided access to funding in the field of sustainability.

Was the possibility to find collaboration partners one part of your decision to be part of the RCI?

Collaboration, exchange and joining forces are the main reasons we decided to join the RCI. We are also passionate about shaping and forming important sustainability measures together with all stakeholders at one table.