

November 30, 2021

## **Sulzer identifies new recycling opportunities for ocean-bound plastic waste**

**Sulzer has helped to open new doors in the reuse of ocean-bound plastic waste by providing technical support to Tide Ocean SA and the Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences. Using its expertise in polymer processing, Sulzer Chemtech has developed a method to turn recycled polyethylene terephthalate (PET) into high-quality foams that match the properties of virgin plastics. This development will help #tide to accelerate its work in addressing pollution and increasing the adoption of recycled polymer-based products.**

A leader in the field of ocean-bound plastic upcycling, Tide Ocean SA collects and transforms this waste into premium raw materials, the award-winning #tide ocean material®, for new sustainable products. The company is able to process a wide range of polymer waste including PET from plastic bottles, polypropylene (PP) and polyethylene (PE). These are currently turned into pellets, yarn and filament which can be used in a variety of applications such as plastic injection, textiles and 3D printing.

In the search for new processes to upcycle ocean-bound plastic waste, OST – University of Applied Sciences Eastern Switzerland approached Sulzer Chemtech. Leveraging its pilot plant facility equipped with cutting-edge foaming equipment, the company has proven that it is possible to use the recycled granules to produce expanded PET (XPET) foam boards. It also defined the key processing conditions to obtain boards that are indistinguishable from conventional XPET made from virgin plastic. This will enable #tide to offer products that can be used in packaging and construction, helping to improve the sustainability of these industries.

Daniel Schwendemann, Professor at the Institute for Material Science and Plastics Processing (IWK) at OST – University of Applied Sciences Eastern Switzerland, comments: *“The partnership with Sulzer Chemtech has been key in the development of XPET foam boards made from our recycled feedstock. The company’s specialists helped us determine the suitability of #tide ocean material® as well as the optimum processes to deliver high-quality products. We look forward to collaborating with them in the future.”*

Marc Krebs, CCO at Tide Ocean SA, says: *“We are always looking for new applications for our recycled plastic pellets. The ability to produce expanded foams opens new doors to a wide range of markets, helping us reduce plastic waste by upcycling it to obtain advanced materials. We are very thankful to Sulzer Chemtech for helping us develop this new processing method for our recycled pellets.”*

Daniel Rytz, Global Head Strategy and Business Development at Sulzer Chemtech concludes: *“We are delighted with the feedback received from OST and #tide. Our extensive experience in developing expanded foams from recycled plastics helps us conduct feasibility tests quickly and effectively. At the same time, we can leverage our advanced extrusion technology to develop and prove processes. We look forward to supporting more innovative projects to produce sustainable foams in the future.”*

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