

Against pollution, for better living conditions

Melitta Group establishes recycling company in India

Social Business uses plastic waste from Bangalore in Swirl® and handy bag® bin liners and campaigns for better living conditions for waste pickers.

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Together with Yunus Social Business, the Melitta Group recycles plastic waste in India and helps improve living conditions for waste pickers. ©Melitta Group

- **Recycling company 'Vishuddh Recycle' set up as a social business in Bangalore**
- **Approx. 2,000 tonnes of plastic waste per year are processed and recycled in our Swirl® and handy bag® bin liner production facilities**
- **Profits are reinvested and support charitable organisations**
- **Contribution to an improved waste management infrastructure in Bangalore and to improved working conditions for waste pickers**

Minden/Bangalore, **day/month/year** - with a population of around 12 million, is one of India's megalopolises. The city once boasted many magnificent gardens and was called the 'Garden City'. Today, it is no longer fragrant flowers that catch the eye, but rubbish by the side of the roads. About 3,500 tonnes of waste ends up on the roadside or piles up in the 60 illegal dumps in Bangalore every day as it is neither properly collected nor recycled. According to many critical locals, the 'Garden city' has turned into a 'Garbage city'.

Poor waste disposal is not only a problem for the environment, but also affects the lives of the poorest section of the population. About 15,000 people in Bangalore work as so-called waste pickers. From early in the morning until the evening, they collect waste along the streets and from rubbish heaps in order to sell it. They do this work without the benefit of protective equipment such as gloves or masks. A large proportion of the waste pickers are women who, in addition to collecting waste,



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usually do most of the housework and take care of their families. Many of them live in slums right next to the rubbish dumps.

With the Fair Recycled Plastic initiative, the Melitta Group wants to help solve these problems. The Yunus Social Business Fund gGmbH and the Melitta Group subsidiary Cofresco, set up the recycling company 'Vishuddh Recycle Pvt. Ltd.' in the southern Indian city of Bangalore. Employees at the plant produce around 2,000 tonnes of plastic granulate per year from so-called LDPE (Low Density Polyethylene) plastic waste, which is then used in the production of Swirl® and handy bag® brand bin liners.

The company sources plastic waste from selected social enterprises whose aim is to establish a better waste management infrastructure in Bangalore, integrating waste pickers with better working conditions into the value chain.

"It is part of the Melitta Group's ethos to make positive contributions to sustainable development," said Katharina Roehrig, Managing Director at the Melitta Group and Head of Corporate Communications and Sustainability. "A significant segment of our product portfolio at the Melitta Group is made from plastic. That's why we see it as our duty to do something to reduce plastic pollution in our oceans and on the land." Fair Recycled Plastic not only contributes to solving specific ecological and social problems locally in Bangalore, it also aims to be an innovative example of sustainable plastic production and recycling, and to inspire other companies and stakeholders to explore new approaches. After all, plastic is a valuable material that facilitates the hygienic storage of food, protects products and helps to extend the shelf life of food. It is essential that this valuable raw material remains in the life cycle as long as possible through recycling and does not harm the environment as waste. "Fair Recycled Plastic is an important milestone on our way to achieving this goal," added Katharina Roehrig.

Profits benefit charitable organisations

Cofresco, a subsidiary of the Melitta Group and, producer of Swirl® and Handybag® brand bin liners among other things, has founded the company 'Vishuddh Recycle' for the new production facility in Bangalore. The company has been started as a social business. This means that all profits generated are ploughed back into the business or invested in benefiting the local community.

Cofresco is working with Yunus Social Business GmbH to build up the new company 'Vishuddh Recycle'. Yunus Social Business GmbH is a company founded by Nobel Prize winner and economist Prof. Muhammad Yunus, who is the originator of the principle of social business. "We all have to ask ourselves what kind of world we want to live in and what kind of world we want for our children. With Cofresco and the Melitta Group, we are now taking a step towards this world together," said Prof. Muhammad Yunus.

Health and education projects for the families of waste pickers

Until the company 'Vishuddh Recycle' starts to make a profit, Cofresco will invest in the new business. When the company starts to make profits, they will be reinvested in the company or used to support social projects in Bangalore.

“We want to support the poorest section of the population in Bangalore in a holistic way and to achieve this we will be working with two organisations to provide better health care and additional educational opportunities for the waste pickers and their children,” explained Oliver Strelecki, Managing Director of Cofresco. One organisation is the ‘Smile Foundation’, which travels through the slums of Bangalore with mobile clinics to offer people free primary health care. The other is the ‘Hasiru Dala Trust’ which runs educational activities such as community libraries and workshops to promote the social, emotional and cognitive growth of children and works to help them achieve better educational qualifications.

“Fair Recycled Plastic alone will not transform Bangalore back into the ‘Garden City’ it once was. However, the Melitta Group is committed to taking this important step in the right direction” commented Katharina Roehrig.

Fair Recycled Plastic is financially supported by DEG - Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH as part of the develoPPP programme of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

For more information and extensive press material on Fair Recycled Plastic, visit fairrecycledplastic.com.

Further information on the Melitta Group's commitment to sustainability can be found in the [sustainability report](#).

The Melitta Group

Melitta is an internationally operating group of companies and is one of the leading independent family businesses, both in Germany and abroad. Its main activities are the development, manufacture and sale of branded products for the enjoyment of coffee, for the storage and preparation of food, and for cleanliness in the home. As a company with a history spanning more than 100 years, the Melitta Group thinks long term and sees the pursuit of sustainable development as an integral part of all its business activities. More information can be found at www.melitta-group.com.

Cofresco Frischhalteprodukte GmbH & Co.KG

Cofresco Frischhalteprodukte GmbH & Co. KG, a company in the Melitta Group, is Europe's leading manufacturer of branded products in the household foil and paper sector for the home and professional kitchen. With its Toppits®, Handy Bag®, BacoFoil® and Swirl® brands, products from this innovative business unit can be found on supermarket shelves in nearly all European countries. Cofresco is also a leader in the food service sector with its Caterwrap® and Wrapmaster® brands. As a plastics processing company, Cofresco optimises its own use of raw materials and follows the principle of the circular economy. The entire product portfolio will be fully part of a circular economy by 2025. Find out more at www.cofresco.de.

Yunus Social Business Fund gGmbH

Yunus Social Business (YSB) is based on the ideas of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus to solve global problems through the power of business. The Yunus Fund team transforms donations into investments that support sustainable social enterprises active in the areas agriculture & livelihood security, education and training, energy and the environment, and health and sanitation. With a portfolio spanning Brazil, Colombia, India,



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Kenya and Uganda, YSB Funds has positively impacted over 3.6 million lives worldwide. The Corporate Innovation team works with global corporations to empower them to become a force for good. By developing social business models, building social ventures and engaging in social intrapreneurship, the Corporate Innovation Team paves strategic paths for companies to align business goals and impact. YSB has its headquarters in Berlin, Germany, and has more than 10 years of experience in the field of mission-driven business.