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Teijin Expands *ECO CIRCLE*™ Overseas New initiatives promote the extended recyclability of garments

[Teijin Fibers Limited](#)

Teijin Fibers Limited announced that the *ECO CIRCLE* Garment Accessories Association, an organization dedicated to promoting the enhanced recyclability of garments through the use of more eco-friendly accessories, welcomed Hong Kong Non-Woven Fabric Industrial Co., Ltd. (HKNW) as its first overseas member on July 1. HKNW now develops recyclable products such as fiberfill insulations for the apparel, outdoor and furnishings markets, using Teijin Fibers' *ECOPET* polyester fiber made from recycled PET bottles.

ECO CIRCLE is an environmentally friendly closed-loop recycling system for polyester products that employs the world's first chemical recycling technology. Teijin Fibers established the *ECO CIRCLE* Garment Accessories Association in October 2008 for the related promotion of environmentally conscious garment accessories made and marketed by Japanese manufacturers, wholesalers and trading companies. Accessories developed by the association members are made of Teijin's *ECOPET* or *ECO CIRCLE FIBERS*, the latter being a chemically recycled fiber produced from used polyester products.

Thanks to the participation of HKNW, which sells to both Asian and Western markets, the increased international availability of recyclable accessories will help *ECO CIRCLE* members and other garment manufacturers around the world to develop products offering greater recyclability.

One of the challenges of encouraging the wider adoption of the *ECO CIRCLE* system has been the industry's practice of using non-recyclable accessories, such as linings, buttons and interlinings. Non-recyclable accessories cannot put through the *ECO CIRCLE* system, requiring time to remove the accessories before the remaining materials can be processed.

Recyclable accessories are thus a key to the continued expansion of *ECO CIRCLE*, and they also help to reduce the permanent disposal of garments containing materials that otherwise could be recycled. Moreover, the use of accessories developed by the association members eliminates the time required to test garments for their recyclability, meaning these garments can be quickly registered as *ECO CIRCLE* products.

What's more, the use of recyclable accessories can raise the polyester ratio of products, sometimes as high as 100%, so in many cases total garments can be recycled.

The *ECO CIRCLE* system chemically decomposes polyester at the molecular level and converts it into new polyester raw materials. Companies that participate in *ECO CIRCLE* activities collaborate with Teijin to develop and manufacture products made from recyclable materials, as well as collect these products at the end of their useful lives for a new round of recycling. Since its launch in 2002, *ECO CIRCLE* has attracted the participation of more than 110 companies, mostly apparel and sportswear manufacturers. Overseas members continue to increase and now include major brands such as Patagonia, Swamy America and Quiksilver in France.

Looking ahead, Teijin Fibers hopes to expand foreign participation in the *ECO CIRCLE* Garment Accessories Association, thereby strengthening its contribution to the environment through the wider global adoption of its *ECO CIRCLE* system.

About Teijin

Teijin is a global technology-driven group operating in five main fields: synthetic fibers; films and plastics; pharmaceuticals and home health care; trading and retail; and IT and new products. Teijin Limited, the holding company for the Teijin Group, is listed on the Tokyo and Osaka stock exchanges. The group had consolidated sales of USD 9.4 billion (JPY 943.4 billion, USD 1=JPY 100) in fiscal 2008 and employs approximately 19,000 people in 160 companies worldwide.

Teijin Fibers Limited is the Teijin Group's polyester fiber operation and conducts R&D, manufacturing and marketing of materials and textiles made from polymer and polyester fibers.

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