



Intergenerational sustainability strategy

Hesse Lignal is heralding a new era: the surface specialist from Hamm will be restructuring its product range, and by 2030 it will have replaced all solvent-based products with sustainable alternatives. Moreover, Hesse Lignal will increasingly rely on regenerative raw materials in the future.

“As a family-run company, we feel compelled to assume responsibility for subsequent generations”, says Jens Hesse, a managing director of coating and stain producer Hesse Lignal. “That’s why we want to take consistent action now, and contribute to preserving an exemplary world for our children and grandchildren.” This is the motivation for him joining forces with his co-managing director Hans J. Hesse in deciding to develop a new sustainability strategy. This envisages replacing all solvent-based products with sustainable alternatives by 2030.

Reducing VOC emissions and expanding the proportion of sustainable raw materials

This should make it possible, among other things, to minimise the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The VOCs contained in many solvents can evaporate even at low temperatures, and form ground-level ozone on contact with UV rays. Volatile organic compounds can also be washed out of the air by precipitation. They then hit the earth and thus cause soil pollution. VOCs from fossil sources can moreover oxidize in the atmosphere through contact with oxygen. This results in the production of climate-damaging CO₂. In addition, indoor VOCs pollute the ambient air when

they evaporate. These compounds can then irritate the respiratory tract of those present and cause allergies.

The surface specialist from Hamm will also increasingly offer products made from regenerative resources, such as water or renewable raw materials. Its product range already includes products with a bio-renewable carbon (BRC) content of up to 30 per cent, and Hydro lacquers with a renewable proportion of around 10 per cent. The proportion of sustainable raw materials in its entire product portfolio is to be expanded by 2030 to conserve resources.

Meeting future market demands

“The switch to more climate-friendly products is also important in meeting future market demands”, Jens Hesse is convinced. “Environmental awareness in society is increasing, and younger generations in particular are attaching importance to climate-friendly production methods, so sustainability is becoming a decisive competitive factor for our industrial and craft customers.” Switching to more sustainable products could furthermore protect employees from coming into contact with substances that are hazardous to health.

Production of nitrocellulose lacquers to end in 2023

The research department at Hesse Lignal is working on the development of modern lacquer systems to enable the imposed goals to be achieved. The company has set itself a tight 1 schedule in this respect: as early as by the end of 2023 Hesse Lignal will withdraw all nitrocellulose lacquers, solvent-based stains and solvent-based, acid-hardening lacquers from its product range. Hesse Lignal will therefore no longer be offering such products from January 2024. By 2030, all other products with a high VOC content will then be replaced by more climate-friendly alternatives.

The company’s equipment and technology consultants are already assisting customers to convert their machinery and processes, thus enabling coating applicators to prepare for this in good time.

“We are aware that this involves a major step”, says Jens Hesse. “But we’re also convinced that this measure is imperative if we don’t want to jeopardize the future of subsequent generations.”

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