



# 'Recycled plastic has turned our business completely upside down'

Just a few years ago, Pack Tech produced packaging in virgin plastic only. Today, more than 30 per cent of the business is built on Ocean Waste Plastic collected by local fishermen in Indonesia.

Pack Tech was founded as a small family-owned company back in 1946, and has now become a global player in the plastics industry. For many years, plastic was considered the new wonder material, resulting in ever-increasing production volumes. Five years ago, however, that reality was turned completely upside down, Pack Tech's CMO, Mette Højsager Damgaard explains:

'Pack Tech has always taken great pride in delivering high-quality products, but recent developments has also opened our eyes for the huge quantities of plastic that is floating around in our oceans. Five years ago our management team therefore made a crucial decision, that the company would start producing plastic packaging made from Ocean Waste Plastic. That decision was the starting point for a whole new era in the company's history.'

With production located in China, the natural choice for Pack Tech was to identify sustainable solutions that would benefit local communities in the Far East. The choice fell on Indonesia, who had struggled to cope with the ever-increasing amounts of plastic waste for many years.

'In Indonesia, the waste problem is both extensive and insurmountable, hence the great need for international companies' assistance in the clean-up. Pack Tech has found a solution where we hire local fishermen to collect plastic. By drafting flexible contracts,

## Sustainable Development Goals at play

### SDG 14: Life below water

Target 14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.



the fishermen continue to catch fish and mussels next to the clean-up work. We thereby help restoring the balance of nature, we help the local communities by providing an extra source of income, and we also help the fishing industry as a whole by reducing the amount of ocean plastic,' says Mette Højsager Damgaard.

In fact, the project in Indonesia has been so successful that it has turned the company's entire value chain upside down, Mette Højsager Damgaard explains:

'We had no chance of foreseeing the radical transformations we were to undergo as a company. Just a few years ago, we produced virgin plastic only. Today, more than 50 per cent of the proposals we send to customers are based on Ocean Waste Plastic from the fishermen in Indonesia. On top of this, we are now doing business with some of the large international beauty brands, including the hair care company Kevin Murphy. The transformation opened the doors to a whole new customer segment that are equally devoted to environmental protection and sustainability.'

According to Mette Højsager Damgaard, the next step for Pack Tech is to reach even more potential customers with Ocean Waste Plastic and thereby cater to the increasing demand for sustainable packaging:

'Throughout the SDG Accelerator programme, we had an ambition of expanding our business to new industries, but also to develop a method to understand where our solution has the greatest sustainability potential. The health food industry would be a natural



choice, as companies are constantly looking for new packaging solutions in order to meet demands from environmentally conscious consumers. We can provide a sustainable solution that can easily replace virgin plastic.'

Mette Højsager Damgaard does however acknowledge that the path from idea to the finished product is long, because Ocean Waste Plastic is still not approved for contact with food:

'Although health food is not food as such, it is still a product that is consumed by humans and must therefore be packaged accordingly. The problem is that there are no standards for recycled plastic. We therefore have to develop those standards in collaboration with authorities across the European community, a process that has now begun.'

Despite the many unknown variables, Mette Højsager Damgaard is optimistic on behalf of her company:

'The sustainability agenda has provided Pack Tech with a whole new focus as well as renewed confidence in our ability to improve both living conditions and the environment in vulnerable countries. It is an amazing journey and we enjoy every second of it. We all know that we are draining the world's resources. Nothing feels better than giving something back.'

### This is how Pack Tech contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals

- Pack Tech hires local fishermen in Indonesia to collect plastic waste, which is subsequently used in the company's packaging products.
- Ocean Waste Plastic now accounts for more than 30 per cent of the company's revenue.

### Facts about Pack Tech

- Founded in 1946
- Supplier of packaging solutions to the pharma and beauty industries
- Production takes place primarily in China
- Head office in Herlev, Denmark
- Approximately 70 employees



*'Pack Tech has been eager to pursue a green profile for a long time. By joining the SDG Accelerator programme, we got the support needed to streamline implementation and to identify new opportunities beyond our original goal. For many companies, the SDG Accelerator programme will be a good starting point to develop a greener profile.'*

Christian L. Jensen  
Owner, Pack Tech A/S