

# Growing Green

## The Sustainability Journey Accelerates in Eyewear



Photo Credit: Getty Images / Andriy Onufriyenko

BY MARGE AXELRAD / SENIOR VP, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR AND GWENDOLYN PLUMMER / SENIOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**W**hile sustainability and environmental concerns are not new, during the pandemic, people have become more sensitive to the environmental impact of their shopping decisions. In fact, much of the world's recognition of the perils of climate change and accompanying social responsibility combined with shifting consumer priorities have led companies, executives, organizations and private citizens to dub this an era of a "global eco-awakening."

A recent Clarkston Consulting report put it this way, "2021 continued to shed more light on how consumers rely on companies to be held accountable and transparent regarding their sustainability practices. Consumers have always voted with their dollars, but they have begun to choose companies that reflect and represent strong social and environmental values."

Along with major national and regional optical retailers and a host of independent ECPs, participation is increasing as *VMAIL* continues to report in news, housed within *VisionMonday.com*'s Sustainability <https://visionmonday.com/business/sustainability/> section and other reports at <https://www.visionmonday.com/business/sustainability/article/sustainability-rising/>.

The focus of this special *VM* special feature is

the demonstrable expansion of a number of companies and leaders involved in the production of eyewear—frames and sunglass companies in particular have been growing their own commitments to Green and to sustainable efforts in general. Similarly, spectacle lens makers, Rx laboratories and contact lens companies, too, have increased their activity (See sidebar, Page 70).

Overhauling their approach to how they lead employees, reengineer their facilities, and bring contributions and new processes to their own countries and regions, companies including EssilorLuxottica, Safilo, Modo, Marchon/VSP, Marcolin, Kering, LVMH/Thelios, Kenmark, L'Amy America, Inspecc, Tura, Morel, Mykita, ClearVision, De Rigo Group, Zyloware and brands like Article One, Genusee and literally dozens of others are now more firmly on the green journey forward. We highlight here just a sampling of what's coming onstream in 2022.

Eyewear and sunglass sourcing and supply can be complex but new technologies and approaches to design and product development are taking hold, and Eastman, in particular, has been at the center of many sustainable eyewear material programs (See story, Page 52).

EssilorLuxottica's Eyes on the Planet <https://www.essilorluxottica.com/sustainability>

program is one prominent example, built on five pillars that address strategic sustainability themes. They include Carbon, for climate change; Circularity, for sustainable product and offering; World Sight, for responsibility to society; Inclusion, for its people and business partners; and Ethics, for fair and ethical practices within its value chain.

In 2021, EssilorLuxottica committed to becoming carbon neutral in its direct operations in Europe by 2023 and worldwide by 2025. The company has already reached carbon neutrality in its two historic home countries of Italy and France.

Elena Dimichino, head of sustainability, EssilorLuxottica, said, "It is no longer enough for companies to say they care about sustainability—we need to be walking the walk every day, together. From the raw materials to manufacturing to supply chain to our ethics and our commitment to our people and the communities we operate in. It's a long journey, but one we're very proud to take alongside others in the industry."

EssilorLuxottica hosted its first-ever virtual Sustainability Week last month, on the robust Leonardo learning platform. A series of virtual classrooms and live streams on sustainability were featured on

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## Growing Green

# Eastman's Initiatives Propel a Range of Sustainable Eyewear Plastics

BY MARGE AXELRAD / SENIOR VP, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

NEW YORK—Much progress continues to be made in developing new sustainable materials options for eyewear and sunwear manufacturers via the initiatives and collaborative efforts of Eastman (NYSE:EMN), one of the world's largest plastics producers. Through the company's multi-year efforts to create a more sustainable, circular approach to the system of recycling plastics into partnerships aimed at limiting the environmental impact of acetate frames and by using what they describe as "eco-responsible" formulas of recycled content and bio-sourced materials, a series of announcements have continued through 2021 and into 2022, "with more to come," executives told *VM*.

## EASTMAN

Further, Eastman itself is augmenting what it's done in other parts of the world with the news last January about its effort in France where the company will invest up to \$1 billion to accelerate circular economy through building the world's largest molecular plastics recycling facility. French president Emmanuel Macron and Eastman's board chair and CEO Mark Cost made that January announcement under which Eastman's polyester renewal technology could recycle up to 160,000 metric tons annually of hard-to-recycle plastic waste that is currently being incinerated.

In March, Eastman said it had entered into exclusive negotiations with a site in Normandy for the molecular recycling facility.

In an exclusive interview with *Vision Monday*, Glenn Goldman, Eastman's commercial director for specialty plastics, said, "I recall back at Mido 2018, sustainability was being discussed but it was not as high a priority, for sure. But in a fairly



Glenn Goldman

short time of three or four years, there has been a sea change in the industry, where the first thing that everybody wants to talk about now is sustainable materials, and doing things to address the footprint of the eyewear industry.

"And now, we are seeing all the companies in the industry from those focusing on lower price points all the way up to the most premium and most prestigious brands in the world, making decisions on the basis of sustainability."

From Goldman's perspective, there are a few factors contributing to the increased interest in moving forward. "The first one that comes to mind for me is that, at the end of the day, this is a consumer business, and people want to give their consumers what they want. And across society, people are starting to make choices and demand more sustainable products. And so I think what you're seeing, is a response by the industry to what the consumers are starting to truly ask for."

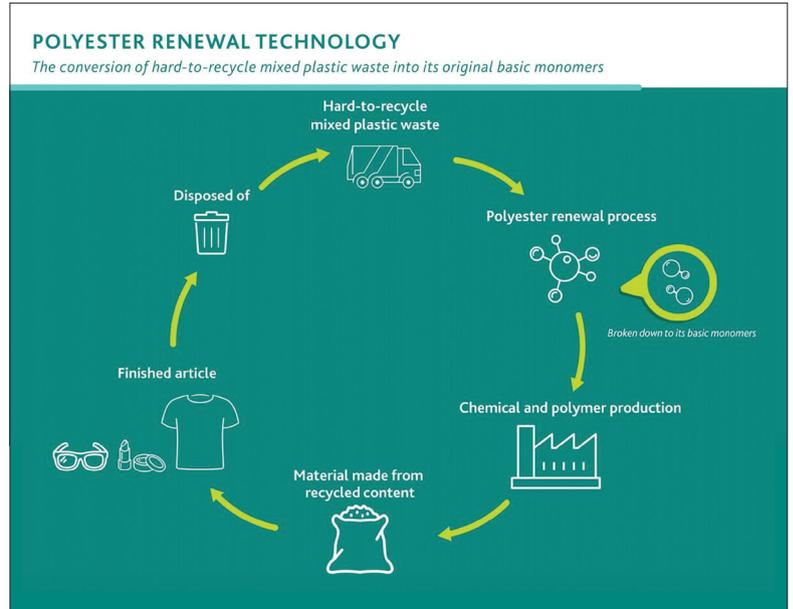
The second thing Goldman observed, "These companies want to do the right thing. Yes, sustainability matters, and there is recognition that a lot of practices in the past may not necessarily have been the most sustainable, possible. So we're seeing many companies trying to improve ways to reduce impact, emissions, and establish standards in the production process."

Finally, Goldman noted, "I'd like to feel that we've had a role to play in this aspect of it which is that there are viable material choices available, where brands are able to make those kinds of choices and make switches to more sustainable materials and do so in a way that is financially viable.

"In the past, it was very, very expensive to do that. And so as new options have come onto the market, including what we're able to offer at reasonable prices, I think the financial part of the equation is making it easier now for people to do the right thing. As all these things have come together, you've had the good demand from the end consumer, the awareness and the desire to do the right things by the brands themselves and then greater options that are justifiable from a sustainability and a business perspective. There's been a big, big shift in the industry."

Goldman sees that the crescendo of interest among eyewear companies is also expanding from acetate using recycled products to other materials, able to be used in injected production. And there is great potential for recognition of this change and its impact to occur in the realm of demo lenses, too.

Goldman pointed out, "One place where the eyewear industry is behind a number of other consumer industries is in establishing consistent standards or rules of the road that the industry is going to operate according to. And there are a number of practices, historical practices, like regrinding certain materials, reusing them



Eastman molecular recycling technologies (Polyester Renewal Technology and Carbon Renewal Technology) span a range of eyewear plastic materials.

in the same industrial process, which, according to most of the accepted standards, should not count as recycled content.

“And there are plenty of companies who are currently claiming that as recycled content, yes, that’s true. There would be a lot of benefit to the industry as much clearer standards established about what constitutes ‘bio-based’ and what constitutes ‘recycled.’”

Goldman said that Eastman is insisting that the value chains in which the company participates get certified. An independent third-party certification with external auditing is one way to ensure credibility and transparency of claims. Certification is a way of ensuring that what everybody is doing is aboveboard, and that is something that can be communicated to consumers. “So we use ISCC, and this will become increasingly important,” he said. More info about ISCC is posted at (<https://www.iscc-system.org/>).

Eastman is continuing to pursue a range of discussions and new partnerships. A top-line view of the some of the partnerships they’ve announced for both Acetate Renew and Tritan Renew projects are in the chart to the right. ■

## Eastman Eyewear Renew Announcements 2020-2022 (to date)

Group	Brand	Product	Application
Mazzuchelli	N/A	Acetate Renew	Acetate Sheet
United Creation	N/A	Acetate Renew	Frames
Marchon	N/A	Acetate Renew	Frames
Thelios/Mazzuchelli	N/A	Acetate Renew	Frames
Safilo	Polaroid	Tritan Renew Acetate Renew	Frames
Andy Wolf	Andy Wolf	Acetate Renew	Frames
Kenmark	Paradigm	Acetate Renew	Frames
Marchon	Ferragamo	Acetate Renew	Frames
Etnia	All Poets	Acetate Renew	Frames
Warby Parker	Warby Parker	Acetate Renew	Frames + demo lenses
Mykita	Mykita	Acetate Renew	Frames
Mondottica	Vivian Westwood	Acetate Renew	Frames
FGX	Foster Grant	Tritan Renew	Frames
Otaaki	Tritan Renew	Tritan Renew	Frames + lenses
Marchon	various	Tritan Renew	Frames + tinted lenses

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## Eyewear Brands Center Sustainable Practices

The idea of producing a more eco-friendly eyewear collection is nothing new—the optical industry has long been committed to lowering its environmental impact wherever possible—but the prevalence and depth of these collections is growing exponentially. Sustainable eyewear is virtually indistinguishable from traditional eyewear now, with new materials and technologies closing the gap further every day.

This growth is pushed by both a need to do better for our planet and by consumer interest, and it's expanding beyond just a few frames in a few collections. Sustainability is becoming company policy, its tenants woven into everything eyewear companies do from top to bottom: from getting rid of paper towels in the bathroom to creating frames made entirely from ocean waste.

Below, we look at how a handful of eyewear producers are growing green and approaching sustainability from every angle.

### Kenmark's Ongoing Journey Toward Sustainability

Kenmark launched Paradigm, its first in-house brand, in September 2019. The initial brand launch featured a collection of lightweight metals and translucent acetates for an airy, minimalist look—but over the past few years, Paradigm has evolved into something much bolder and more statement making.

Paradigm is now a heavily acetate collection—and for Spring 2022, the collection is made from ISCC certified recycled materials, as well as one of the first to include Eastman Acetate Renew frames and Eastman Tritan Renew material for sun lenses throughout the collection. This means Paradigm is incorporating 40 percent waste plastic into its frames, and 50 percent waste plastic into its sun lenses.

Kenmark decided to begin working with Eastman under Paradigm because “it’s a brand we fully own and have the freedom to quickly adapt to using new materials and technologies. Our



*Kenmark Eyewear's Paradigm is created in partnership with Eastman. The collection is made from ISCC certified recycled materials, and includes both Eastman Acetate Renew and Eastman Tritan Renew material.*

hope is that the success of this collection will support using sustainable materials in other collections and licensed brands in the future,” Marissa Cundiff, vice president of marketing and the Kenmark team told VM.

As a whole, Kenmark is consistently aiming for progress in its sustainability practices. The company became ISCC certified in 2021, and aims to keep that certification every year moving forward. Kenmark partners with Source Intelligence to de-

velop a Fair Labor Practice plan for its suppliers, and cooperated in Conflict Mineral risk management strategy for many years to confirm that its supply chain does not participate in unethical sourcing of certain minerals.

On a local level, Kenmark partners with Close the Loop, a Hebron, Kentucky-based company that helps Kenmark minimize its waste as well as recycle everything it can back into a circular economy. Kenmark sends all no longer needed prototypes, excess patterns, scrap acetates and metals, defective cases and materials, demo lenses and more back to Close the Loop to be broken down and reformulated for reuse. These partnerships create transparency and responsibility at every level of the company, and allows Kenmark to back up its sustainability claims with “legitimate certifications,” Cundiff and the team said.

In addition to being a company cornerstone, Kenmark also sees a customer and end-consumer appetite for sustainable practices and products. Sustainability does not mean sacrificing the quality or style Kenmark is known for. “Having the benefit of using certified recycled content can initially draw a consumer in, but if it doesn’t fit and have the quality you’ve come to expect, you won’t retain them as a future customer,” Cundiff and team explained. “The superior quality, fit and styling that everyone has come to expect with Paradigm is still there, but now it also has an added sustainability benefit.”

Kenmark sees sustainability as something with “no tangible end,” looking at it instead as a company journey made up of both little tweaks and big changes. “We are fully committed,” said Cundiff and team. “It’s not enough to make products using recyclable or sustainable materials, we must be sure that workers perform their tasks in a suitable environment, are treated fairly and paid a livable wage, too. Our future plans revolve around doing the ethical, right thing for all aspects of the sustainability model.”

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## Sustainability Is Evident at Every Level

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### L'Amy America Aims for 100 Percent

L'Amy America offers sustainable collections across many of its brands, including a Made Green collection from Ann Taylor and a sustainable offering within Nicole Miller Resort. The entire Ben Sherman line is dedicated to sustainability, as is the Sperry optical collection, and L'Amy plans to launch its Champion Made Different collection in the next few months, which will also have a sustainable cornerstone. The goal, overall, is “to be sustainable in most every brand within L'Amy America’s brand portfolio,” Cheryl Canning, VP of marketing and brand development fashion at the company told VM.



L'Amy America aims to be sustainable throughout its eyewear portfolio, beginning with brands such as Ann Taylor (top) and Nicole Miller, pictured here.

Ben Sherman, one of L'Amy's biggest sustainable players, uses 100 percent “environmentally friendly,” materials, such as recyclable stainless steel, bio-based acetates, renewable plant resources, biodegradable demo lenses and a case made from 100 percent post-recycled plastic bottles. There is no compromise on style or brand

personality, either: Ben Sherman is a brand with rich heritage, and L'Amy's designs for the brand draw on a mix of '60s Ivy League prep, military influences, mod looks and more.

Then there's Sperry, which launched its Made Green collection in 2021. Sperry is a mainstay of prep styling, and the brand has been associated with boating and time spent on and near the water since its inception, making environmental protection initiatives a perfect next step for the brand. Under its Made Green collection, Sperry frames are made from bio-based and recyclable materials, and overall the company continually works to reduce its water usage and eliminate packaging in manufacturing processes.

L'Amy still sees most customers selecting product based primarily on design, color and features, Canning said, with the sustainability story coming in lower on the list of priorities for many customers. Still, this doesn't make sustainable practices any less important for L'Amy. “We certainly feel the patient, especially Millennials, will be expecting this as a choice,” Canning said, and L'Amy is anticipating that demand will continue to grow. “We will be ready in our collections for future demand,” said Canning.

### Marchon's Sustainable Pillars

Marchon and Altair have been incorporating sustainable materials into its production for years now, Thomas Burkhardt, Marchon's senior vice president of global brands, marketing & design, told VM. As the technology for creating and working with sustainable materials has improved, Marchon's sustainable practices have been able to grow. Today, the company has several sustainable materials in its offerings, including plant-based resin (used in Dragon, Pure, Nike, Lacoste, Skaga, McAllister), upcycled plastic (Dragon, JOE by Joseph Abboud), Eastman Acetate Renew (Salvatore Ferragamo), responsible acetate and magnesium alloy.

Most recently, Marchon announced that it is fur-



Marchon and Altair approach sustainability in a layered fashion. Brands like Dragon (top) and Pure, pictured here, use materials such as plant-based resin and upcycled plastic.

thering its collaboration with Eastman by introducing Eastman Tritan Renew for frames and tinted lenses; Marchon will produce sunglasses, ophthalmic frames and tinted lenses with Eastman's Tritan Renew beginning in 2023.

In reaction to sustainable production, Burkhardt said Marchon has seen positive feedback from its sales representatives, employees and customers overall. He said, “We find that many of our consumers are selecting sustainable eyewear when given the choice. Now that we have so many great

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## A Sustainable Past, Present and Future

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sustainable materials to work with, we are able to offer consumers high quality eyewear in a variety of styles and brands that fit their lifestyle and allow them to feel confident they are having a positive impact on the planet.”

On a corporate level, Marchon is committed to Eyes on Tomorrow, its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) platform. This is a long-term, global program that will guide Marchon in responsibly reducing the impact its eyewear and processes have on the planet. The program is built on three pillars:

- **EYES ON TOMORROW FOR EYEWEAR,**

creating more sustainable frames, lens, and packaging solutions for Marchon customers.

- **EYES ON TOMORROW FOR SUPPLY CHAIN,**

innovating the way the company manufactures, transports and stores products to lessen the impact of all related activities.

- **EYES ON TOMORROW FOR OUR PEOPLE,**

striving to create an inclusive environment for Marchon’s workforce and partners, and a positive contributor to the communities the company calls home.

Burkhardt said, “We are committed to our CSR platform, leveraging to use sustainable materials wherever possible and available, and simplifying and eliminating waste by improving our recycling efforts. Marchon is constantly looking for ways we can improve and build on our efforts now and in the future.”

### Modo and Eco: Look Good, Feel Good, Do Good

Modo launched Eco, its pioneering sustainable brand, in 2009, and it has remained at the forefront of environmentally conscious eyewear production for well over a decade now. Today, Eco



Brian Dombrowski



*Modo’s Eco Eyewear is dedicated to being sustainable at every level, from development through to the sales floor.*

consists of three categories: Biobased (made of castor seed oil), Recycled (made of recycled stainless steel) and Ocean (made of recycled plastic pulled out of the ocean by Waste Free Oceans). Eco’s One Frame, One Tree program has helped plant 2.9 million trees so far.

However, sustainable and environmentally conscious practices are not limited to the Eco brand alone, but extended throughout Modo as a whole. “Among the elements of Modo’s DNA is having a focus on social and environmental responsibility,” explained Brian Dombrowski, Modo’s director of ECP sales and marketing. “We launched the Eco brand and continue to make sure all aspects of the brand from the frames to the packaging to our marketing material are sources using sustainable materials.

“There are some items like biodegradable cornstarch polybags and making frame cases out

of PET that we are carrying over to our Modo brand.” Alongside this, Modo is continuously reviewing all areas of its businesses to find places where it can reduce environmental impact, from reducing cartons and packaging to developing a more robust digital ordering platform.

Dombrowski believes we are headed toward a market where sustainable practices will be a major selling point for customers. He explained, “The patients and customers of our partner accounts are doing their research on brands before they purchase, whether that is in eyewear or other industry. In some instances ‘sustainable’ is good enough or helps attract customers to check out Eco. However, we know and understand that the frames still need to look good and be comfortable. We originated the line ‘look good, feel good, do good’ and we still aim to deliver on that.”

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## Eyewear Can Be Both Sustainable and Stylish

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### Safilo's Brands Center on Sustainability

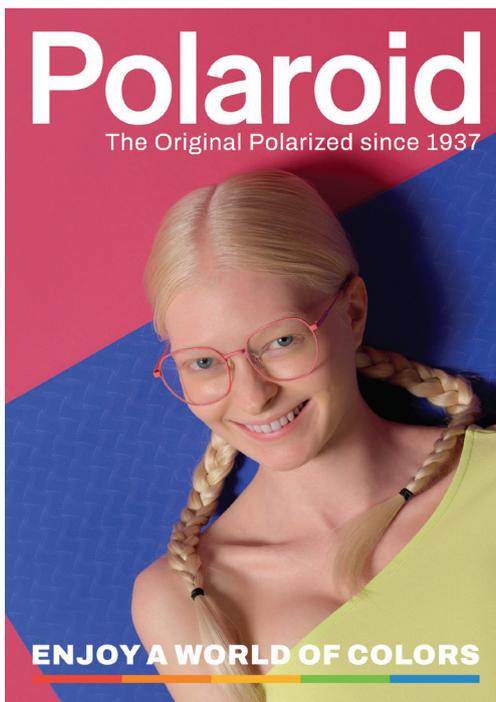
A number of brands within Safilo's large portfolio carry sustainable offerings, with BOSS, Fossil, rag & bone, Tommy Hilfiger and Polaroid all offering several new styles or collections for Spring/Summer 2022. Polaroid, an owned brand of Safilo, launched its first sunglasses made from Eastman Tritan Renew this season, while Tommy Hilfiger is introducing two optical frames and two sunglasses made with Eastman Acetate Renew fronts and temples.

BOSS' Responsible Collection is crafted in bio-acetate and features bio-based lenses, and rag & bone introduced its first sustainable styles made from bio-acetate. Fossil has launched a Pro-Planet banner featuring frames made from 100 percent recycled nylon—this is part of a larger corporate strategy from parent company Fossil Group, which plans to design and produce 100 percent of its products and packaging to meet its Pro-Planet criteria by 2025.

Alessandro Bellati, director of product innovation and North America product design and creation at Safilo Group, told *VM* that Safilo is “the first company to use all Eastman molecular recycling technologies (Polyester Renewal Technology and Carbon Renewal Technology) and adopt all Eastman portfolios of sustainable materials in all types of applications.”

This includes Acetate Renew for frames, Tritan Renew for frames, sun lenses and sun polarized lenses and Tenite Renew for frames. The Group has a number of upcoming sustainable launches planned, too: Hugo will launch with Tritan Renew frames and lenses next year; Boss will launch with Acetate Renew frames and Tritan Renew lenses next year; Under Armour will launch its first polarized lenses with a renew variant next year; and Levi's will launch with Tenite Renew next year.

Polarized lenses using Tritan Renew is “the re-



*Polaroid and Tommy Hilfiger (r) are two of Safilo Group's brands that have recently introduced new, sustainable styles and innovations.*

sult of a bilateral collaboration between Eastman and Safilo on technical development and innovation, enabling the unlocking of new opportunities for sustainability in the sun lens industry,” Bellati explained.

In late 2020, Safilo partnered with Dutch non-profit The Ocean Cleanup to produce a limited edition sunglass made of injected plastic recovered from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (GPPG); the frames sold out, and with each pair of sunglasses estimated to enable cleaning an equivalent of 24 football fields worth of the GPPG, the entire limited edition sales equate to approximately 500,000 football fields of cleanup.

Safilo Group has made corporate sustainability commitments as well, with a strategy aimed at contributing to the achievement of the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Bellati said, “Following the path taken in previous years, we have increased our commitment

to People, Product, and Planet, the three core pillars of our sustainability vision with initiatives aimed at consolidating and strengthening their significant roles within our business as part of our ongoing commitment to building a better present and future.

“Our ongoing commitment and research to identify processes that contribute to a lower impact on the environment have led us to introduce important innovative solutions in terms of production and development of new materials.”

Safilo's sales team has found sustainability to be a selling point for many customers, but “not all,” said Bellati. Many accounts react positively to sustainable products, and customers tend to gravitate toward sustainable frames—it's also a characteristic that helps brands and frames stand out and tell a different story, especially to younger consumers.”

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## Putting the Focus on a Green Mindset

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Bellati said, “We even have some customers open doors that only wish to stock sustainable products; it’s a way to differentiate themselves from their competition. We find that if there is a positive story around a frame or lens material, it entices customers to purchase and retell that story. In the end, the main deciding factor today when our customers select product is the price and quality. If the price is reasonable and the quality is in line with expectations, then sustainability is a bonus as long as the price point, product story and brand’s other sustainability initiatives also align.”

### Luxottica’s Layered Approach

A number of Luxottica’s products and brands center on sustainability, and the company has introduced a variety of new, innovative bio-based materials into its profile of raw materials for all types of products. Specifically, Emporio Armani, Arnette, Burberry, Costa del Mar, Oakley and Starck Eyes all feature distinct eco-friendly collections or styles.



*Luxottica’s Arnette (top) and Costa combine sustainable practices, style and function.*

Arnette is focused on combining sustainable practices and street style to create a cool, on-trend collection that is kinder to the planet, with frames made from bio-plastics, bio-acetate and

bio-based lenses as well as a recycled packaging concept.

Jane Lehman, head of corporate communications at Luxottica, told *VM* that Arnette is “totally committed to being the change we want to see,” and is committed to sustainable practices at every level, from design to distribution, digital touchpoints and frames themselves. Arnette also offers Arnette Positive, a platform dedicated to sustainability “on all levels of youth culture,” explained Lehman.

Costa’s Untangled Collection is a centerpiece of the brand, which is dedicated to those who spend their lives on and near the water in every way. It makes perfect sense for Costa to commit to cleaning and preserving waterways—Lehman explained. “Every year, an estimated 640,000 tons of discarded fishing material makes its way into our waterways. Discarded fishing nets are the most harmful form of plastic pollution in our oceans.”

In partnership with Bureo, Costa’s Untangled collection is made of 97 percent to 100 percent recycled fishing nets, and includes both Core Performance and Beach Lifestyle options to appeal to consumers across the board.

Finally, Oakley’s Reedmace is a full rim, round lens sun frame built for surf culture both aesthetically and philosophically. The frame is constructed from plant-based BiO-Matter, made from bio-materials having at least 56 percent bio-based carbon content. Lehman explained that this percentage indicates how much of the material mixture is obtained from castor oil sources versus petrochemical or fossil sources.

### Tura’s Fashion-Forward Botaniq

All of Tura’s brands lean into sustainable practices with sustainable frame cases, polybags and POS materials made from certified sustainable manufacturers, but it is its Botaniq, Tura’s sustainable collection, that truly centers the practice.



*Botaniq, from Tura, is created from bio-acetate Natura that looks and feels like traditional acetate while being kinder to the environment overall.*

Botaniq is made of Natura, a bio-acetate made up of 50 percent natural contents and available in a much wider variety of colors and textures than many other bio-acetates. The material can also be heated, treated and adjusted in the same manner as traditional acetate, making it a true, equal replacement for the material customers are used to.

Made with wood pulp, vegetable polymers and cotton fibers, Natura is also biodegradable within 120 days when properly composted. In addition to Natura, the Botaniq collection features natural wood harvested from ISO-certified forests. These frames carry the Forest Stewardship Council seal, which confirms that the wood was taken from a responsible managed forest. Finally, stainless steel is recycled and cork features in the design elements as well.

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## Manufacturers Are Partnering for Sustainability

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Kristen McLaughlin, marketing director at Tura, told *VM* that Botaniq has been an incredibly popular, in-demand launch for Tura. “Sustainability is a hot topic and even if you don’t participate in recycling and buying eco-friendly items, your clientele does,” said McLaughlin—making it something that almost all customers, regardless of how they operate in-practice, have to think about.

McLaughlin feels that Botaniq is uniquely positioned because it “doesn’t look like a sustainable brand. Botaniq follows in the spirit of Tura’s ‘More is More’ design ethos. It was of utmost importance to create a style-centric, fashion-savvy collection ‘first’ to appeal to those who appreciate attention to design detail especially featured in our custom laminations.”

### Marcolin, Timberland and the Earthkeepers Mark

Several of Marcolin’s licensed brands are heavily committed to sustainable practices, with Timberland as one of the central players. Timberland, part of Marcolin’s portfolio since 2003, launched its first Earthkeepers Eyewear collection in 2011, a philosophy that “guides the brand and that pervades most of the latest frames,” explained Camille Thomas, events and communications specialist at Marcolin.

All of Timberland’s eyewear with the Earthkeepers mark is manufactured with at least 35 percent bio-based plastic, and often more. Marcolin and Timberland renewed their licensing agreement earlier this year, extending it until 2026; as a mark of this commitment, the two companies partnered with web platform Treadm for the planting of trees and forests worldwide. Marcolin is committed to plant over 10,000 trees by 2023, in alignment with Timberland’s goal to plant over 50 million trees by 2025.

The company sees sustainability as a point of pride within its portfolio, and believes customer reactions align with this. There is a “different aware-



*Marcolin’s Timberland launched its first “Earthkeepers” collection in 2011, manufactured with at least 35 percent bio-based plastic.*

ness” toward sustainability now than a few years ago, Thomas said, and talking about sustainability is no longer a trend but instead is a global, large scale way of thinking and operating.

This commitment is reflected on a corporate level, too. Thomas said, “we are working on two areas: on the product side realizing eyewear models using recycled and bio-basic acetates both for brands part of the diffusion and luxury segment, and at the corporate level to make our company and production processes sustainable. It is a real transformation process that requires a global vision and a well-defined roadmap to be followed that will allow us to get further accreditation by our stakeholders.”

### Mykita Pivots With Eastman

Earlier this year, Mykita announced a partnership with Eastman to exclusively source Eastman Acetate Renew for its acetate frames. Eastman is actively working on solutions, including the take-back program that recycles waste from the eyewear industry into new sustainable materials, such as Acetate Renew. Mykita will be one of the first joining the program once it is up and running at scale in Europe to create true circularity in eyewear. The Mykita Acetate collection with Eastman debuted at LOFT 2022 in New York this past March.



*Mykita announced a partnership with Eastman earlier this year, and will exclusively source Eastman Acetate Renew for its acetate frames.*

Mykita founder and creative director Moritz Krueger said, “The partnership with Eastman and the quality of Acetate Renew is truly exciting for us as an independent brand and progressive manufacturer, allowing us to go all in and completely switch our acetate to this innovative sustainable option. We’re proud to show that it’s possible and to set an industry example, as well

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## Bringing a Sustainable Mindset to the Office

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as inspiring other brands to follow suit.”

Glenn Goldman, Eastman’s commercial director for specialty plastics, added, “Mykita is known for being bold, and they are demonstrating it once again with their commitment to rapidly enhance the sustainability of their eyewear. We are proud that Mykita has decided to switch its acetate entirely to Eastman Acetate Renew. They are showing that it is possible to make a quick and complete change with a sustainable offering for every frame starting today.”

### At Morel the Focus Is on Company Strategy and Sustainability

For some eyewear companies, sustainability is emphasized in the office, rather than in design and development. Morel, for example, does not have any dedicated sustainable collections—instead, the company sees sustainability as an overarching goal, one that they integrate into every aspect of the business.

About 80 percent of the stainless steel Morel uses is recyclable, and all frame bags are biodegradable. The latter has allowed Morel to eliminate



*Morel partners with local beekeepers, making its headquarters home to 12 beehives.*

over 1 million plastic bags and temple sleeves, Lisa Burns, Morel’s marketing and sales support manager told *VM*. The company’s point of purchase materials are made from recycled cardboard, textiles and vegetable inks, too. Finally, Morel makes a concerted effort to ensure that any and all reusable materials, including broken or damaged parts, find a new life in its frames.

Being sustainable is about more than just frame construction and point of sale for Morel. At Morel HQ, the lamps are equipped with LED bulbs that use three times less energy than low-energy bulbs, and motion sensors prevent unnecessary lighting when a room isn’t in use. The company has also

rolled out MyMOREL, its online tool that is helping Morel eliminate physical print materials including invoices and pay slips.

Most uniquely, though, Morel has partnered with local beekeepers to make its headquarters home to 12 beehives harvesting honey. The Morel team is currently working on plans to build birdhouses and insect hotels, too. Burns explained, “We are always looking for new ways to become more environmentally conscious.”

### Zyloware Makes Changes for Green Certifications

Like Morel, Zyloware does not have dedicated sustainable collections, but approaches sustainability on a company-wide level. The company is currently working toward achieving its green sustainability certification, explained Jacqueline Janiec, vice president of marketing. This has involved making a number of changes, including: switching to entirely recyclable packaging, paper and frame bags; removing paper towels in the office bathrooms; using a scanner system for order picking; allowing remote working to save gas consumption and more. ■

## Burnt Hills Optical Works Sustainability Into Every Day Tasks

For the team at Burnt Hills Optical in Burnt Hills, New York, being more eco-friendly is all about working sustainable practices and products into the every day. The optical offers a variety of eco-friendly lines or pieces within lines, and participates in Bausch + Lomb’s Terracycle program, encouraging patients to bring their contact lens waste into the office for the team to recycle for them.



The team has hosted a shredding party for 10 years running now, and offers \$200 refills on eyeglass cleaner bottles—this saves the pa-

tients about \$3 per bottle, and Kristen Cameron, licensed optician at Burnt Hills Optical, told *VM* that she often sees patients bringing in bottles that are over 10 years old and in great condition.

Cameron said that she doesn’t often see patients specifically asking for sustainable product, but that the reaction is always positive if she or her team mentions that something the patient is looking at is sustainable. “I think maybe people don’t realize it is possible to purchase frames that are eco-friendly, but, I do believe that sustainable products are the next big thing so we do hope to see a trend toward more products to offer.” ■



*Kris and David Cameron, co-owners and licensed opticians at Burnt Hills Optical.*

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## Contact Lens Companies Amplify Their Sustainable Commitments

NEW YORK—The major contact lens companies are each amplifying their commitments to sustainability efforts via materials, manufacturing and packaging processes, as *VM* reported last month. Alcon, Bausch + Lomb and CooperVision are expanding sustainability and recycling. Among many other things from each of these companies, Alcon said it has earned the GreenCircle Zero Waste to Landfill Certification for three of its ophthalmic drop and solutions' manufacturing facilities—two in Fort Worth, Texas, and one in Singapore.

Bausch + Lomb announced that its One by One and Biotrue Eye Care Recycling programs have recycled a total of 48,235,850 million units, or 290,145 pounds, of used contact lenses, eyecare and lens care materials, which is the equivalent of the weight of approximately 31 elephants.

CooperVision said its “first-of-its-kind plastic neutrality initiative” has expanded to include additional countries in Europe and Latin America, and will soon launch in select Asian countries. ECPs and contact lens wearers can now view the program's collective impact using the new CooperVision Impact Dashboard which provides updates on how much plastic waste has been collected in collaboration with Plastic Bank. A more detailed

look at the three company initiatives are posted at <https://visionmonday.com/technology/contact-lenses/article/alcon-bausch-lomb-and-cooper-vision-report-expanded-efforts-around-sustainability-and-recycling-as-nation-celebrates-earth-day/>.

Johnson & Johnson Vision, which is committed to achieving carbon neutrality in all its operations by 2030, said in April that it has made two important changes to the way some products are made and distributed to benefit the planet. All Acuvue brand contact lenses are now made with 100 percent renewable electricity—hitting the Johnson & Johnson Vision global climate goal of sourcing 100 percent of the company's electricity needs from renewable energy two years early.

Johnson & Johnson Vision's production site in Limerick, Ireland, is already powered by wind energy and now its HQ manufacturing site in Jacksonville, Fla., has gone live with a new partnership to power it from 100 percent solar energy.

The company also removed the plastic pouches placed on the outside of all customer delivery boxes in Europe, saving approximately 10 tons of plastic every year. With new stickers on the outside, delivery notes will now be placed on the inside of the box alongside the product. Plans are under way

Johnson & Johnson VISION

BAUSCH + LOMB  
ONE by ONE  
RECYCLING PROGRAM



to look at extending this initiative globally. More of their goals are posted at <https://visionmonday.com/technology/contact-lenses/article/johnson-and-johnson-vision-makes-key-changes-to-product-manufacturing-and-packaging-as-it-increases-commitment-to-sustainability/>. ■

## The Sustainability Journey Accelerates in Eyewear

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topics such as tips for managing your practice in a sustainable way; how to address sustainability with customers; the value in choosing a sustainable partner; sustainable efforts of EssilorLuxottica; and the products in the EssilorLuxottica portfolio that are made using sustainable materials and practices. ECPs with access to Leonardo can learn from this content.

*VM*'s sustainability coverage will continue as the year progresses. ■



*EssilorLuxottica and Italian star chef Davide Oldani are launching an innovative collaboration to promote the principles of a healthy and sustainable diet in the workplace, which the company intends to do at its many Italian facilities and then bring to other parts of the world. The project titled “Eyes on Food” will also focus on reducing waste. A sustainability chef will be responsible for implementing the strategy set out by Oldani. Making the announcement here is, (l to r) Essilor Luxottica's CEO Francesco Milleri, founder Leonardo Del Vecchio and Davide Oldani, chef at D'O restaurant.*