

Clothing brand Bergans of Norway embarks on ambitious sustainability programme

Submitted by: Karol Marketing

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Extreme outdoor clothing and ski brand, Bergans of Norway, announces its ambitious four-year sustainability programme, which will see the company embark on a huge commitment to reduce the industry's dependency on fossil fuels.

Bergans of Norway's Expedition 2020 programme will see the company set out to achieve a number of sustainability goals including:

- 75% of Bergans of Norway products to be bluesign® approved
- 70% of Bergans of Norway products to be made from more sustainable raw materials which will have a verified environmental footprint for products and operations
- Less than 2 percent of all shipments will be via airfreight
- All packaging will be composed of sustainable sources
- Annual sustainable training will be required for Bergans of Norway
- All buildings will be powered by renewable energy

Bergans of Norway's sustainability manager, Felix Ockborn said: "At Bergans, we are passionate about providing people with great outdoor experiences. It goes without saying that we do whatever we can to ensure that future generations can enjoy nature to the same extent as we do today."

"Bergans' priority is to promote clean and ethical production and one of our milestones for 2016 is to ensure all our products which are manufactured using Down are done so in accordance with the Textile Exchange's Responsible Down Standard. This means that a third party will verify that down production, throughout the entire production chain, adheres to specific ethical standards," said Ockborn.

Expedition 2020 will see the brand embark on other goals to include less than 2 percent of all shipments will be via airfreight, all packaging will be composed of sustainable sources, annual sustainable training will be required for Bergans of Norway staff and all buildings will be powered by renewable energy.

Instead of shipping via airfreight, Ockborn adds how Bergans of Norway will use alternative transportation. He believes that with the right planning, new train routes between Asia and the Norwegian and German distribution centres can leave less environmental impact. Ockborn also said that transportation is an area of focus within Expedition 2020 that can be influenced immediately.

As for renewable energy, the buildings in Norway will be powered by hydropower, which is Norway's number one energy supply, whilst the buildings in Germany aim to be powered through a combination of

solar, wind and hydropower.

“At Bergans, we have never been afraid to embark on tough expeditions. By being innovative, adaptive and focused, we will reach these goals,” said Ockborn.

Bergans of Norway recently marked a milestone in the outdoor clothing industry with the development of their first plant based, technical weatherproof jacket - the ‘Eidfjord’ – made using ecodear® fabric (a 30 percent plant-based environmentally friendly polyester face fabric) - in the development of resource-saving plastics and utilisation of renewable resources instead of fossil oil in clothing manufacture.

The lightweight and technical Eidfjord jacket (£280) is made with 3-layers of waterproof and breathable properties, using ecodear® fabric on the outer layer. Developed in collaboration with the Japanese manufacturer Toray®, the ecodear® fabric retains its highly technical performance due to the chemical structure of the ecodear® polyester being identical to conventionally produced polyester.

This announcement coincides with Bergans of Norway’s new partnership with The Virgin STRIVE Challenge 2016, where they will support Holly Branson, Sam Branson and Innocent drinks co-founder Richard Reed, amongst a core team of 25, to tackle a tough 30 day expedition from the base of the Matterhorn in Switzerland to the summit of Mount Etna in Sicily in aid of the Big Change charity.

The ultra-endurance challenge, which begins on 2nd September 2016, will see up to 250 participants join the core team at various stages of the journey, as they hike, cycle, swim and run over 2,300 km to raise funds for the Big Change charity, established by Holly and Sam Branson to catalyse positive change for young people.

Bergans of Norway UK country manager, Andy Nicolson said: “As a company, we genuinely believe in the power of the outdoors to inspire and educate, so we are very proud and privileged to have been involved with supporting Big Change since its inception in 2012. The Virgin Strive Challenge 2016 has a strong synergy with Bergans’ core values and to be associated with such a credible cause that combines a challenging expedition with raising funds to help young people in the UK is fantastic”

Co-founder and director of The Virgin STRIVE Challenge, Noah Devereux said: "Big Change is incredibly proud of the longstanding relationship we have with Bergans of Norway. Bergans is an important part of Big Change’s history, from supplying gear used to climb Mont Blanc in 2012 to launch the charity, through to supplying the Virgin STRIVE Challenges in 2014, 15 and 16! We chose Bergans because of the quality of gear, their environmental commitments and all the work they do with supplying vital survival gear to those affected by natural disasters”

Bergans of Norway has been a leader in outdoor gear since Sir Edmund Hillary pioneered Everest with a Bergans carrying frame to transport oxygen, and the company continues to be as innovative today. Expedition 2020 sets an example not only for the outdoor industry, but for companies around the globe.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Original Outdoor Brand

Bergans of Norway has been the original outdoor brand since 1908, when Ole F. Bergan's brilliant invention of the backpack frame made Bergans synonymous worldwide as the leading supplier of expedition equipment

Tested & Developed in Norway

The Norwegian environment, although unbelievably beautiful, has always presented extreme weather conditions. Bergans of Norway has a collection of equipment and apparel for skiing, snowboarding, mountaineering, hiking, travel, expeditions and outdoor lifestyle with a focus on design and development that uses generations of experience.

Used by Pioneering Adventurers

Bergans of Norway has been creating outstanding equipment and apparel for pioneers throughout a century of adventures. Practical testing in extreme conditions has always been part of the continuous development of products. Polar explorers Roald Amundsen (who led the first expedition to the South Pole), Ernest Henry Shackleton (who led a team across Antarctica) and Sir Edmond Hillary (who conquered Everest) all used Bergans of Norway gear. In more recent times, team Bergans members, Cecilie Skog and Rune Gjeldnes have continued this tradition using Bergans of Norway clothing, tents and backpacks on their expeditions.

Environmental & Social Responsibility

Bergans of Norway does everything possible to supply responsible and sustainable products; economically, environmentally and socially. Creating long-lasting products that minimize harmful impacts on natural surroundings, including everything from the use of chemicals in fabrics and materials, working conditions and animal welfare, organised product recycling, to waste separation and local environmental measures at head office.

The Polar Academy

Since 2013, Bergans of Norway UK has partnered with polar explorer Craig Mathieson, named Scotland's first explorer in residence by the RSGS (The Royal Scottish Geographical Society), and leader of the first Scottish expedition to reach the South Pole, to support his new venture The Polar Academy which inspires young people by taking them on Arctic expeditions www.polaracademy.org