

**Press Release:**  
Ismaning, february, 2024

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**PERFORMANCEDAYS**  
FUNCTIONAL FABRIC FAIR

## **PERFORMANCE DAYS: Focus Topic “Beyond bottles” reveals alternatives to PET**

### **The Future of Polyester**

The PERFORMANCE DAYS team looks forward to welcoming trade fair visitors to Messe Muenchen in halls C1 and C2 on March 20 and March 21, 2024. As an integral part of the spring fair, innovations and trends for Spring/Summer 2026 will be previewed and inter-exchanged. The Trend Forum remains the highlight as an information platform, accompanied once again by a specially designated focus topic. This year’s Focus Topic “Beyond Bottles” will highlight the importance of alternatives to PET recycling - in particular with regard to upcoming legal regulations and circular economy principles. Considering the variety of polyester types, micro-plastics and the increasing need to replace PET with alternative raw materials, the branch is now facing major challenges. Solutions to this could include an increase in textile-to-textile recycling, along with polyester alternatives from food waste and the increased deployment of natural fibers.

**Polyester originating from PET bottles: What will the future bring?** PET bottles are the most popular and most widely used source of PET in the apparel industry. They are not only available in large quantities worldwide but, through mechanical recycling, can be reused as raw materials for all clothing industry products. That was the story up until now - Recently adopted EU regulations on recycling for the waste- and plastics industry aim to increase the use of used beverage bottles in the recycling process, which in turn will lead to a potential shortage of PET as a raw material, an essential component in the apparel industry. By 2027, the European Commission is expected to introduce minimum quotas for the use of recycled plastic components in new products. These quotas would be mandatory for the plastics processing industry and are likely to be between 15 and 30 percent. The introduction of such quotas will lead to the plastics processing industry having to adapt its production in order to use more recycled plastics. As a result, the demand for high-quality recycled plastic will increase significantly. Since high-quality plastic is currently in very short supply, the increase in demand could lead to a significant rise in prices.

The EU Green Deal and the New York Fashion Sustainability & Social Accountability Act are aligned with the principles of the circular economy, which are based on the following principles: Preserving the original product for as long as possible, eliminating waste and harmful chemicals from the production process, the regeneration of new business systems and of nature itself. The main focus of these principles is on the promotion of eco-design, increased diligence, the introduction of digital product IDs and the development of new business models. The challenge is to find a universal solution that could serve all branches. The industry must proactively strive for viable solutions.

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## **Beyond Bottles: Time for PET Alternatives**

In light of the variety of polyester types, micro-plastics and the increasing need to replace PET with alternative raw materials, the branch is now facing major challenges. Textile-to-textile recycling will play a crucial role in the search for alternative raw materials, especially in light of upcoming legislation and circular economy principles. Nevertheless, the issue of feasibility will be of increasing importance, especially in terms of mixed fibers, or questionable chemicals (PFAS) contained in waste material. In the sorting process, the extended use of automation (AI & DPP) will be unavoidable. The time has come to focus on progress rather than perfection and to tackle the challenges facing the industry together. The focus topic opens up a wide range of opportunities when one considers the various types of polyester that exist: PHA, PHB, PTT, PBT; even polycarbonate. It has also lead to an increased focus on micro-plastics (and the misinformation associated with them). For this year's Trend Forum, the jury of experts has defined six groups that could represent alternatives to conventional bottle recycling in the future. Among them, new developments in the field of membranes, fibers from mechanical recycling and chemical recycling, bio-based materials, materials from bio-plastics, textiles with carbon capture and other methods.

**SAVE THE DATE:** The next PERFORMANCE DAYS will take place on March 20 and 21, 2024 at the Messe München exhibition center in Halls C1+C2

Register now at: <https://www.performancedays.com/the-fair/visit/register-now.html>