



## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### **Sustainable Cosmetics Summit Calls for Wider Approach**

**London** – The cosmetics & personal care industry needs to take a wider approach to sustainability. This was one of the key messages from the 8th North American edition of the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit ([www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com/Namerica](http://www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com/Namerica)), hosted in New York City a few weeks ago. There was a call for more positive case studies, as well as greater attention to social impacts.

Professor Steve Cohen, Executive Director of The Earth Institute Columbia University, opened the summit with a keynote on positive vision. He called for the personal care industry to pick leaders in sustainability management so it can prepare for a renewable, shared economy. He believes the way forward is not guilty consumption, but developing a sustainable lifestyle in which we consume products responsibly. According to Cohen, a cross-sector approach is required - involving the government, private sector, as well as citizens - if the personal care industry is to make the transition to sustainability.

In his keynote, Amarjit Sahota of Ecovia Intelligence (formerly Organic Monitor) said the beauty industry needs to address its social impacts if it is to be serious about sustainability. He commented: “Almost 2 billion people live in poverty according to the World Bank, leading to social inequality, economic migrants, and third world debt”. Environmental issues like deforestation, climate change, and biodiversity loss cannot be resolved without addressing such social issues, according to Sahota.

Robert Keen, CEO of Weleda North America, showed how the organic brand is taking a systems approach to make a social difference. The company set up its ‘Diversity Wins!’ program in 2015 to create opportunities for refugees fleeing the Syria conflict. It has also set up over 50 international sustainable sourcing projects for raw materials.

John O’ Keefe, Personal Care Director of AAK, gave details of its new Kolo Nafaso project for shea butter at the summit. Based on fair trade principles, the project involves over 100,000 women collecting shea nuts for the ingredients firm. Creating social value by fairtrade was discussed by Angie Crone from Fairtrade USA. The organization is encouraging the use of fairtrade ingredients in cosmetics, setting up a coconut sourcing project in the Philippines. DSM stressed the importance of addressing north-north relationships by fairtrade; the company is giving a premium to Swiss growers of alpine ingredients. Sonia Dawson, Regional Marketing Manager for the ingredients firm, called for more such initiatives to halt poverty in the western world.

Discussions also covered novel agricultural materials for personal care products. Mark Dorfman from Biomimicry 3.8 said the industry should look to nature for inspiration. He stated “unlike synthetic chemicals, nature’s materials are multi-functional” meaning they can have multiple applications in personal care products. Marty Kurylowicz from Mirexus showed how sustainable nanomaterials from sweetcorn can be used in such products. Another paper by Synshark looked at the use of tobacco as a sustainable source of squalene.

Sourabh Sharma stressed the importance of meeting the needs of millennial consumers. According to Sharma, “millennials value the experience, more than ownership”. He called for beauty brands to create an experience for this influential consumer segment. Santosh Krinsky, President of Beauty Without Cruelty, highlighted the potential of vegan cosmetics; he said 3% of the US population was now vegan, and these consumers were looking to avoid possible contentious cosmetic ingredients. Terry de Blasio from PCC Natural Markets echoed this sentiment, saying formulations of new products at the natural food retailer are put under close scrutiny.

Sustainability discussions will continue in the next edition of this executive summit, which will be hosted in Paris on Nov 6-8th 2017.

### **About the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit**

Since 2009, the Sustainable Cosmetics Summit has been covering sustainability issues in the cosmetic & personal care industry. The international series of summits now takes place in the major geographic regions of the world. The North American edition took place at the Park Central New York on 3-5th May 2017.

The North American summit in pictures

<http://www.sustainablecosmeticssummit.com/Namerica/ny2017summitpics.htm>

### **About Ecovia Intelligence**

Ecovia Intelligence (formerly known as Organic Monitor) is a specialist research, consulting & training company that focuses on global ethical product industries. Since 2001, we have been encouraging sustainable development via our services portfolio: market research publications, business & sustainability consulting, technical research, seminars & workshops, and sustainability summits. Visit us at [www.ecoviaint.com](http://www.ecoviaint.com)

### **Further Information**

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