

From trash to treasure

In Vac from the Sea, Electrolux is raising awareness about plastic waste in the ocean – plastic that could instead be re-used for more sustainable products. Through innovative product design and information campaigns, Electrolux is triggering engagement in an emerging environmental issue across the value chain, from suppliers to consumers.

Sustainable products get a boost

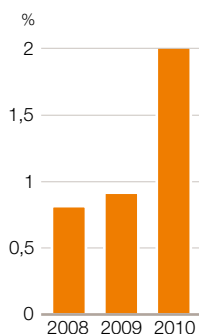
When plastic gets trashed rather than treasured, it contributes to the shortage of recycled material. Vac from the Sea, an awareness-raising campaign to highlight the problem of plastic waste in the oceans, helped spark public debate about an issue relevant to Electrolux. The Floor Care Green Range currently contains up to 70% post-consumer recycled material; the lack of certain types of high-grade recycled plastic is a barrier to increasing the share in more products.

The long-term objectives of Vac from the Sea are three-fold: to trigger widespread attention on a shared societal challenge, to stimulate greater supply of recycled material in the market and to boost sales of green products. The outcome has exceeded expectations within all three of these aims. In fact, net sales of Floor Care Green Range products doubled during 2010.

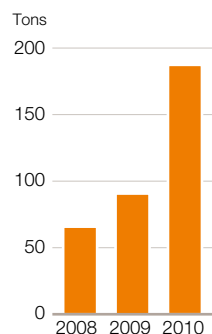


The Electrolux Floor Care Green Range will be launched on every continent during 2011. The range contains high-grade plastics recycled from such sources as carparts.

Sales of Floor Care Green Range products 2008–2010



Volume of recycled material used in Green Range products



Sales of Floor Care's Green Range have increased from 1% to 2% of the total net sales of vacuum cleaners. The volume of recycled material used for the Floor Care's Green Range has increased over 190% in a three-year period.



To illustrate the potential of trash-turned-treasure, Electrolux designed five unique concept vacuum cleaners, using plastics found in each of the world's oceans.



Large concentrations of plastic debris are collected in the North Pacific Gyre, the most heavily-researched area for plastic pollution. The gyre spans waters roughly twice the size of the United States. Source: 5Gyres.

135
million viewers

Building partnerships

In Vac from the Sea, there is an opportunity to connect the dots – to bring together individuals and organizations across the entire value chain to solve a complex sustainability challenge. In addition to engaging suppliers, the initiative is intended to inspire take-back schemes and recycling efforts.

Joining forces

Partnering with environmental organizations, such as the US-based Algalita and 5Gyres, volunteers in the project gather plastics from marine environments around the world. The Electrolux concept vacuum cleaners, made from plastics found in each of the world's five oceans, illustrate the importance of their efforts.

Focusing on longevity rather than disposability, recycled plastics have the potential to benefit society, reduce pollution and create more sustainable products. Electrolux is working with its suppliers to increase the availability and quality of post-consumer, recycled material.

Eye-opener

People feel connected to oceans and are passionate about their conservation. A total of 135 million people have been engaged, either through print, online or social media. This includes:

- 782,000 hits on the Vac from the Sea website as of year-end
- Second most frequently visited Electrolux website
- One re-tweet about the project every other minute during launch

The initiative won a number of PR awards in 2010, including gold medals in the European Excellence Awards for Best International Communication and Best Campaign. Eurobest, the European Championship in Marketing, awarded Electrolux two silvers and a bronze medal. Vac from the Sea was also presented at the UN climate conference COP16 in Mexico in December.

Progress on Vac from the Sea can be tracked at:

- www.electrolux.com/vacfromthesea
- <http://twitter.com/vacfromthesea>