



**interseroh**  
zero waste solutions

# zero waste solutions

Sustainability Magazine





**zero waste.**

Protecting this unique planet of ours requires swift action to be taken. Together with our customers, employees and partners, we are working to achieve the closed-loop economy by reusing

# **one world.**

raw materials and conserving our resources. For a future worth living. And for a world without wastefulness. Because we have just this one.

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## Dear Readers,

Uncertainty is now the only reliable economic trend. Coronavirus and its consequences are presenting us with an unprecedented set of challenges. Yet one thing is certain: if we all work together, even this crisis is manageable. Solidarity and strong communities are more important than ever before. To protect public health, and to ensure we can act both proactively and sustainably.

This is also our approach to our vision of a world without waste: "We achieve more if we work together." Our Magazine aims to inspire and educate others about the approaches we use to champion the closed-loop economy across the entire value chain. Our efforts here have a common goal: using innovative and ingenious solutions to preserve this most precious and yet fragile planet of ours. Zero waste for one world. Because we all live under the same sun and share the same home.

Let's face the future as one and take a stand together: for a sustainable and secure future for us all.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Cologne, June 2020

The Interseroh Management Team



Hans-Stefan Kalinowski



Dr Timo Langemann



Markus Müller-Drexel

# “We need to think much bigger”

Climate protection is more important than ever. What contribution can be made by the circular economy? And how can we make it more pervasive? These topics are discussed here by sustainability expert Prof Dr Günther Bachmann and Markus Müller-Drexel, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH.



# W

**What is meant by the ‘circular economy’ and how can it help protect our environment?**

**Markus Müller-Drexel (MMD):** A circular economy seeks to avoid waste, ensure products are used as long as possible, and to fully recycle raw materials at the end of their useful life. This approach is therefore an effective tool for countering climate change: reprocessing and reusing raw materials has a carbon footprint roughly only half that of primary raw material usage.

**Prof Dr Bachmann, in 2016 you expressed the view that “Germany has no circular economy.” Would you still say the same today?**

**Prof Dr Günther Bachmann (GB):** Yes, unfortunately I would say so. We got off to a good start with the closed-loop economy in the 1980s and 1990s but not a lot of headway has been made since then. We’re deceiving ourselves when we promote Germany as the world champion in recycling. The topic is gaining traction in manufacturing, true. But the prevailing mindset hasn’t changed – and it has to. Buying recycled paper isn’t enough: we have to think much bigger than that.

**“More recyclable products, less resource consumption and more widespread use of recycled materials: to be fit for purpose, a circular economy needs everyone involved to play their part.”**

**Markus Müller-Drexel**

**MMD:** I agree with Professor Bachmann that much more needs to be done. But I’d argue that we’re much further along the road than we were 30 years ago – solely thanks to new technologies that help the circular economy. Production methods are still unsuitable for many materials. Whether or not a raw material can be recycled at end-of-life needs to be planned at the outset – not as an afterthought. There’s plenty of potential here.

**What would be the biggest single driver for change in the circular economy?**

**MMD:** We need to create more incentives for managing raw materials as part of a closed loop.

## MMD

After more than 25 years in the industry, Markus Müller-Drexel, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH, is one of the leading experts of the German Dual System.



**“The prevailing mindset hasn’t changed – and it has to. Buying recycled paper isn’t enough: we have to think much bigger than that.”**

**Prof Dr Günther Bachmann**



Lithium-ion batteries contain a lot of valuable materials, for example, and it would be wasteful not to reuse them. One solution here could be a deposit system. We notice that consumers are often ready to change their behaviour but often are simply unaware of what’s possible. So economic incentives are one way of providing the necessary motivation.

**GB:** That’s correct. And the key point of focus here has to be ensuring resources are returned to the loop. This, after all, is the basic requirement for being able to reprocess and reuse them as part of new products. To do so, however, we need better infrastructure. And we must work towards the goal of 100 percent returns for plastic products. Nor is this a task for the recycling industry alone – manufacturing and policymakers need to coordinate their efforts here.

**From the production to the consumption of goods, many actors play a part in the circular economy. How can solutions be implemented that work for them all?**

**MMD:** A serious approach to the circular economy needs specific legislation that works to define a level playing field, where the general ‘rules of the game’ are the same for everyone involved. Ultimately, however, each one of us – whether researcher, politician, entrepreneur or consumer – has to play our part.

**GB:** All of the stakeholders in the process need to be involved in finding solutions. Interests will naturally differ, as they always do. But for me, people are insisting on their point of view too much right now: everyone needs to be on the same page if we’re to share constructive criticism. Nor should we get too bogged down in the details: we need action, not just words. Only then will we see real progress with the circular economy.

**GB**

As General Secretary of the Council for Sustainable Development, Prof Dr Bachmann has advised the Federal Government on sustainability policy for almost 20 years.

Listen to the full interview:  
[www.interseroh.de/en/podcast](http://www.interseroh.de/en/podcast)

# An example to follow:

## ALDI's packaging now more sustainable

**ALDI's new packaging mission has set some ambitious goals for its own-brand products in terms of their recyclability and the material efficiency of the packaging that they use. The discount chain is being helped here by Interseroh's 'Check for Recycling' tool.**

In the food industry, plastic packaging has an important role to play: it not only protects products and keeps them fresh but is also used to present information to the consumer and so reduce food waste. At the same time, the material presents us with a number of challenges: if disposed of incorrectly, it cannot be recycled, which results in a valuable resource being lost from the loop. And the consequences are truly dire if plastic packaging is dumped in the environment or bodies of water. To develop a coordinated approach to this problem, ALDI Nord and ALDI SÜD have joined forces to concentrate their efforts on effective solution strategies.



**"We see packaging waste as a valuable resource that ideally could be used to produce new packaging."**

**Dr Julia Adou, Director Corporate Responsibility at ALDI SÜD**

Compared to 2015 figures, the two companies are therefore looking to cut packaging weights by 30 percent by 2025. "First of all, we're no longer packaging items unless it's really needed," explains Dr Julia Adou, Director Corporate Responsibility, ALDI SÜD. "Second, we're either reducing packaging or looking at innovative approaches capable of conserving our resources while protecting the environment." ALDI has already been the first retailer to dispense with cucumbers shrink-wrapped in

By **2025**  
ALDI aims to reduce  
packaging weight by  
**30%.**



German actor Uke Bosse is the face of the campaign for ALDI's Packaging Mission.



plastic without compromising on freshness. This saves both discount chains up to 120 tonnes of plastic a year. Where packaging really is necessary to ensure product quality or to avoid food waste, the packaging should be recyclable when properly disposed of. By 2022, all packaging for ALDI's own-brand products will be recyclable.

By removing the plastic wrap on cucumbers, the two ALDI chains are now saving up to

**120 t of plastic** a year.

"We see packaging waste as a valuable resource that ideally could be used to produce new packaging. This approach enables the efficient conservation and economical reuse of resources, so that ALDI can make a key contribution to promoting the further adoption of the circular economy," says Dr Adou.

By **2022**  
all packaging for ALDI's  
own-brand products will be  
**recyclable.**

#### Spotlight on packaging: a quick and simple tool

ALDI is also working with external companies to achieve the goals for its pioneering project. As one of these partners, Interseroh's new 'Check for Recycling' service offers an ecological assessment of the current recyclability of the packaging. Adou: "This quick, straightforward evaluation gives us an idea of where we are at the moment – and where we need to focus our efforts." Using the online tool couldn't be easier. Customers of the Dual System Interseroh simply upload a photo of the packaging and enter the necessary details, such as the

## ALDI Separation Guide

Self-explanatory information for the consumer helps to ensure that waste is separated properly.

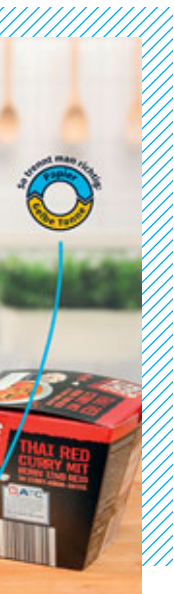


Over **60%** of  
the plastic  
in a minced meat flow  
pack can be saved if it is  
all recyclable.

materials used, dimensions and weight. The tool then provides them with an automated evaluation of the recyclability of the packaging. ALDI then focuses its attention on the types of packaging that are rated as being less recyclable than the others. “We carry out these kinds of quick checks regularly with our business partners to measure the progress we’re making and identify any further action needed”, explains Dr Adou.

To ensure that all of its packaging is more recyclable in the future, ALDI is always looking for alternative, innovative solutions that are sustainable while also helping to facilitate product quality and handling. And the company has already recorded some initial successes here, with stores in some regions now trialling minced meat in a plastic pouch using much less material. The pouch is fully recyclable and uses over 60 percent less plastic compared with the earlier type of packaging.





### Better together

ALDI draws on a broad network of partners for its widespread activities. “Society has to work as a whole to solve the problems we have with current packaging,” Adou explains. “This is why we discuss issues regularly with suppliers, packaging producers and domain experts.” This was the inspiration behind last year’s publication of ALDI’s first guideline for more recyclable packaging, which it handed out to its suppliers. The discount chain intends to work with all of the stakeholders in the packaging cycle to find suitable and effective solutions.

**“We also want to bring our customers on board, because good recycling depends on proper separation. Lots of packaging now bears the ‘ALDI Packaging Mission’ logo for this reason.”**

**Dr Julia Adou**, Director Corporate Responsibility at ALDI SÜD

Consumers are a particular priority for ALDI. “We also want to bring our customers on board,” says Adou, “because good recycling depends on proper separation. Lots of packaging now bears the ‘ALDI Packaging Mission’ logo for this reason.” This logo clearly indicates which packaging has been optimised for sustainability. All packaging also includes ALDI’s guide to separating waste – i.e. which bin for which part of the product packaging – to ensure that packaging is disposed of properly by consumers. “This is how we help to ensure that packaging waste can be sorted and recycled as easily and effectively as possible by dual systems from environmental services providers like Interseroh,” Adou concludes.

### ALDI Packaging Mission

Less plastic, less waste: the logo indicates packaging that has been redesigned.



## Check for Recycling

Interseroh’s ‘Check for Recycling’ tool is an online service that offers companies a way to test the recyclability of their own packaging. The three-step appraisal covers: a) options for correct disposal by the consumer; b) how easy the packaging is to sort; and c) its ability to be recycled into new packaging or products. If the packaging is not yet optimal, Interseroh provides support in person for the next steps.



# Award-winning, certified sustainable packaging design

As part of the extensive support given to customers for packaging optimisation, Interseroh analyses the recyclability and offers recommendations for environmentally appropriate design. The 'Made for Recycling' quality mark offers orientation for sustainable shopping.

Learn more about Made for Recycling:  
[www.interseroh.de/en/packaging-optimisation](http://www.interseroh.de/en/packaging-optimisation)

To date, Interseroh has assessed the recyclability of  
**1,250 pieces**  
 of customer packaging.



Alongside the quick check, Interseroh also offers in-depth analyses of packaging that identify weaknesses in order to derive specific, complementary areas of potential improvement. Interseroh developed this system for assessing recyclability together with the bifa environmental institute. This method was subsequently reviewed by experts from the Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging (Fraunhofer IVV). If the recyclability of a piece of packaging has not yet been optimised, Interseroh offers a separate service, 'Made for Recycling', which provides advice and support for the entire optimisation cycle.

Interseroh also offers its expertise on recycling-friendly packaging as part of workshops. "We believe it's important that companies understand the bigger picture," explains Julian Thielen, Packaging Engineer at Interseroh. "So we provide guided tours of our sorting plants, explain the various recycling technologies and highlight potential for optimisation."

Customers whose packaging is graded with 19 or 20 of the possible points on the assessment scale, and therefore has 'Very good recyclability', receive a certificate and are also entitled to use the 'Made for Recycling' seal.

## Sustainable packaging design forum: Future Resources 2019

At the third Future Resources symposium, experts from retail, the consumer goods sector and the recycling industry discussed approaches to packaging that protect the climate and conserve resources. At the event, organised jointly by Interseroh and the German Packaging Institute, delegates took a firm stance against resource wastage and agreed that producers are necessarily responsible for their packaging. A panel discussion entitled 'Designing worthwhile packaging' centred on the

question of how packaging should be optimised to avoid causing damage to the environment. Participants discussed the role of government and debated potential solution strategies.

Held annually, Future Resources invites all stakeholders along the packaging value chain to engage in dialogue with the aim of ensuring that they are fit for a recycling-friendly future. This year's event will be held on 10 November in Frankfurt, Germany.

For registration and further details, please visit [www.future-resources.de](http://www.future-resources.de)



Some 150 experts discussed viable packaging solutions for the future in 2019.



Interseroh actively pursues digitalisation in its industry – and included this as an objective in its 2015 digital transformation strategy. One real-world example of this is offered by Interseroh's online shop Lizenzero. As it is often the case, external changes drove the development of this new service: Since early 2019, the German Packaging Act has been demanding more responsibility and transparency from all companies placing packaging on the market.

#### **Our success proves us right**

Interseroh was careful to respond quickly to the Act's new requirements: the Lizenzero online shop offers customers an easier and straightforward way to license their packaging volumes. Doing so is a

special challenge for smaller companies, explains Head of Lizenzero Claudia Wegener: "Calculating packaging volumes is not a trivial matter for many of our customers." This is where Lizenzero comes in: "Our shop cuts through the legalese to ensure our customers understand their obligations, and offers help and support for calculating packaging volumes." Best of all, the new service is almost entirely automated.

#### **Optimising results with continuous improvement**

Even after a successful launch in early 2019, the Lizenzero team continued to review performance and has now tailored the service even more closely to customer needs. One recent feature added for customers is the ability to simply download the

# Digital solutions that are ahead of the game

The huge potential for greater sustainability offered by digitalisation is also found in the circular economy. This is why Interseroh is taking ambitious steps to modernise its business operations.



#### **Advantages for Lizenzero customers at a glance**

**Legally certain** By participating in the Dual System Interseroh, customers fulfil their key duties from the German Packaging Act.

**Completely flexible** Licence agreements can be cancelled on an annual basis and packaging volumes adjusted at any time.

**Simple, quick and affordable** A packaging licence in a matter of seconds – the calculation wizard works out the packaging weight in just a few steps.

**Really sustainable** The packaging is used to recover valuable raw materials – and customers receive an individual resources saved certificate to prove it.



packaging volumes reported in the shop for immediate upload to the Central Agency. Wegener: "This double log-in is required by law to ensure better monitoring of registration. Our solution simplifies the process further, however, to ensure that our customers complete their licensing without mistakes." Another point of focus for improvements has been catering to the needs of foreign companies: the Act's obligations also apply to these businesses if they place their packaged products on the market in Germany and therefore act as packaging distributors.

The Lizenzero online shop:  
[www.lizenzero.de/en](http://www.lizenzero.de/en)



With Lizenzero, Interseroh made it into the Top 3 in the special category "Digitalisation" at the German Sustainability Award 2020



Lizenzero's digital data collection on behalf of sustainability also caught the eye of the jury for the **2020 German Sustainability Award**. With its Lizenzero online shop, Interseroh made it into the Top 3 in the special category 'Digitalisation'. This accolade is awarded to especially innovative digital solutions to challenges in sustainability.



# 3

## questions for Claudia Wegener

**Lizenzero Manager Claudia Wegener takes stock one year after the new Packaging Act and the Lizenzero launch.**

### Has Lizenzero been a success?

We get new registrations almost every day and our customers really appreciate the straightforward, simple interface. In 2019 alone, Lizenzero was used to license over 14,000 tonnes of packaging material – and by doing so saved resources totalling more than 40,000 tonnes.

### What impact has been made by the new Act?

There's been a change in perspective: companies are more aware of their responsibilities. At the same time, we're also seeing how our customers are making an increasing

effort to cut packaging or switch to other materials – not least because sustainable packaging is also cheaper to license.

### What have been the lessons learned from Lizenzero? Are there some insights for other digitalisation projects?

It's really important to match your digital products to customer requirements. To do so, we have to know them in detail. And you mustn't overlook the human factor, either: although Lizenzero handles a lot of things behind the scenes, it's still used by real people, who do occasionally need to talk to a human customer service rep.

# My mate climate: separating waste properly

**To be successful, environmentally friendly recycling needs to start with proper disposal of packaging by consumers. This conserves resources and cuts carbon emissions. Germany's nationwide 'Waste Separation Works' campaign is raising awareness here.**



Where should empty yoghurt pots and pizza boxes go? And what happens to them after they have been thrown away by consumers? To answer these questions and correct some widespread mistakes, Interseroh teamed up with the other dual systems to launch a public information campaign about proper waste separation. "People throw too many items into Yellow Bags and Bins that don't belong there" explains Stephanie Gundlach, Product Manager at Interseroh. While around 70 percent of the contents is packaging, the other 30 percent is residual waste that doesn't belong there. This dam-



**"Separating our waste properly and regularly is something we all have to do as members of society: everyone can do their part to help protect the climate and our resources."**

Louisa Dellert, Influencer



More on the campaign at:  
[www.muelltrennung-wirkt.de/en/](http://www.muelltrennung-wirkt.de/en/)



### Drumming up support for separation

The campaign was officially launched with a flash mob in Berlin, where musicians turned the Yellow Bins into percussion instruments to literally drum up support for waste separation. With powerful rhythms and a waste separation mime, the performance publicised the campaign and the need to separate waste properly.

ages our environment, because only packaging that has been properly disposed of by consumers can be properly sorted and recycled afterwards. Anything thrown into the residual waste bin is usually incinerated – and lost forever as a resource.

This campaign is the first to be organised by all of the German dual systems together. Gundlach: “While we’re obviously competitors, we all have the same goal. So it’s appropriate and important that we’re working together on this project.”

### A trip to the Yellow Bin can help save the climate

The Waste Separation Works campaign informs German citizens about the right ways to separate their packaging while aiming to motivate them to get involved. After all: recycling only works if we all do our part. Just dropping waste in the right bin isn’t the whole story, either: the individual parts of the packaging also need to be separated out. Yoghurt pots and lids, for example, should be pulled apart before being binned.

The dual systems offer informational materials on the campaign website [www.muelltrennung-wirkt.de/en/](http://www.muelltrennung-wirkt.de/en/) that aim to change attitudes and encourage responsibility. TV and radio spots plus social media posts have been designed to raise people’s awareness and inform them about how to separate waste for recycling, with guides and instructions for doing so. Influencer Louisa Dellert is promoting the campaign on her Instagram channel: “Separating our waste properly and regularly is something we all have to do as members of society: everyone can do their part to help protect the climate and our resources.”





# A clear win for climate protection

**How does Interseroh's day-to-day work help protect the environment? To answer this question, the Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety, and Energy Technology UMSICHT uses various kinds of study to regularly assess the impact of the recycling activities carried out by ALBA Group and its member company Interseroh on the climate and our natural resources.**

**U**To achieve climate protection targets by 2030, recycling needs to become an integral part of every kind of business, because the reuse and recycling of used raw materials has a key role to play in fighting climate change. Interseroh has already proved this to be the case with the aid of several research studies that have measured and confirmed the positive environmental impact of its business operations. From remanufactured toner cartridges, refurbished smartphones, tablets, laptops and PCs, single-use deposit solu-

tions and the recycling of materials like plastics, glass and paper, Interseroh's extensive range of products and services is used by its customers and partners to make a measurable contribution to climate protection:

## **A sophisticated method of calculation**

To calculate the environmental effects of Interseroh's widespread business activities, researchers at Fraunhofer UMSICHT first model the primary process and recycling process for each product or material flow. Following this, the experts then collect all of the relevant data, such as the consumption of resources used, the delivery channels, or the energy consumption

involved in mining raw materials or operating the recycling process. A software programme works out the exact amounts of raw materials involved and the greenhouse gas emissions from the primary/recycling process. The values are then compared with one another: the difference is the environmental benefit for the individual material flow.

Closed-loop  
management  
of about

2.4

million tonnes of  
recyclables

Emissions of  
harmful green-  
house gases  
cut by around

1.3



million tonnes

More than

8.3

million tonnes of  
primary resources  
saved



These figures account for Interseroh's recycling activities in Austria, Germany, Poland and Slovenia for 2018.

This corresponds to the average annual CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of around 118,000 people in Germany.



Recycling plastics conserves natural resources and cuts emissions harmful to our climate. A key part of this is the high-quality reprocessing of waste plastic with the aim of bringing it back into the manufacturing loop. This is the idea behind the Recycled-Resource process from environmental services provider Interseroh: To make a new and competitive plastics granulate product from post-consumer packaging collected in Yellow Bins or Bags that can also make a valuable contribution to our sustainable use of resources.

#### A made-to-measure resource of the future

An innovative process is used to transform old packaging – mostly made from polypropylene (PP) and polyethylene (PE) – into the high-quality recycled plastics Recythen and Procyclen. In terms of quality, the materials can replace new plastics and their specific properties can be tailored to customer requirements.

# Plastics recycling:

**Plastics play an essential role in our day-to-day lives. This makes their closed-loop management all the more important to protect the environment and climate. With its Recycled-Resource process, Interseroh turns used packaging into as-new recycled plastics, which can then be used to manufacture new products. The results – and the impressive design – speak for themselves.**

## Recycling with tangible results

Interseroh's recycled plastics actively help to cut emissions of greenhouse gases.



**Recythen:** If Recythen is used instead of primary plastic made from crude oil, 1,029.5 kg of greenhouse gases are saved per tonne – some 60 percent fewer climate-damaging emissions.



**Procyclen:** Using Procyclen in production saves 891.6 kg of greenhouse gases per tonne – roughly 54 percent compared with primary plastics.

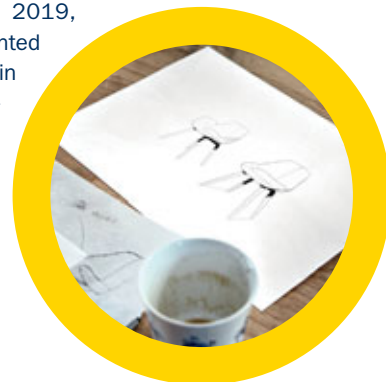
Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology UMSICHT, 'Recycled Resource' study report (report is based on data from 2018)



**Award-winning technology**

Manufacturing Procyclen used to be a two-stage production process but has now been reduced to just one. This is ensured by the COREMA® technology developed by recycling technology manufacturer EREMA specifically for Interseroh's requirements. Since the raw material only needs to be heated once for the 'one extrusion process', this also

saves valuable energy. Quality control is digital and carried out in real time. In 2019, Interseroh and EREMA were presented with the Plastics Recycling Award in the 'Recycling Machinery Innovation of the Year' category for this innovative technology.



# from Yellow Bin ...



**The sophisticated Recycled-Resource process produces a usable granulated feedstock from used plastic packaging. So what happens next? Furniture maker HOUE shows how it's done: with a designer chair made from recycled plastic packaging. While proving that climate protection and design are a great match.**

# ... to Danish designer chair

**T**he high-quality reprocessing of the used plastics and their reuse in production are important levers that help us to conserve our resources effectively while protecting the environment. This is because plastics are normally manufactured from crude oil. At the moment, reprocessed plastics are typically being used in construction and packaging. Only 1.1 percent of furniture has used recycled raw materials to date, however. Which means there is great potential here, as recently been shown by Danish furnishings brand HOUE: The designer Thomas Pedersen developed the world's first designer chair made from recycled plastic waste collected in Yellow Bins and Bags: the FALK chair.



### Fabulous FALK

A chair with a personality. Certified with the EU Ecolabel, the FALK chair is produced with recycled plastic and combines sustainability with comfort, quality and design. Compared with the use of primary raw materials, manufacturing 100 of these chairs saves 7,300 kilowatt-hours of energy – the same as 2,352 loads of laundry. At the end of its lifecycle, the chair can be dismantled into its individual parts for recycling. FALK is a flagship project for the closed-loop economy and environmental protection. This was also the opinion of the 2020 German Design Award jury, who selected the chair for an award in the 'Excellent Product Design/ Furniture' category.

Find out more about FALK: [www.falk.houe.com](http://www.falk.houe.com)



**“We set ourselves the goal of closing the materials loop completely and systematically reducing our use of resources. With FALK, our vision becomes reality.”**

Lars Houe, founder of HOUE

#### A visionary approach: turning used plastic packaging into top designs

The recycled plastic used for the chair is produced by Interseeroh's Recycled-Resource process. The Procyclen plastic granulate is heated and the resulting liquid plastic is poured into the chair seat mould. This makes the FALK designer chair the first high-end product to use the recyclates manufactured by Interseeroh. And the resulting chair doesn't just look great but also represents a new application for used plastics.

Houe's designers have managed to develop a product that is as sustainable as it is modern – and all without having to compromise in terms of either quality or functionality. “FALK is the result of a unique approach to product design,” explains Lars Houe, founder of HOUE. “We set ourselves the goal of closing the materials loop completely and systematically reducing our use of resources. With FALK, our vision becomes reality.”

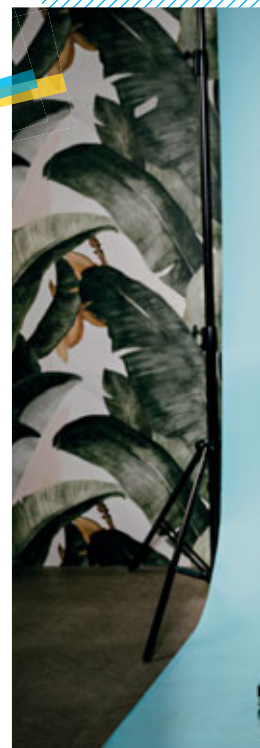
#### Modern – but sustainable? Perfectly possible!

Although certain aspects do need to be accounted for in the design, explains designer Thomas Pederesen: “The recycled material actually does have a few limitations. Because the recycled plastic is greyish in its raw state, we weren't able to make a shiny white chair. You can of course add pigments to change the colour – but only to make hues of a darker shade. So FALK is initially available in two colours: black and grey.”

Sustainable business and modern design isn't an either/or choice – quite the opposite. This designer chair has demonstrated an innovative approach to working with recycled plastics. Markus Müller-Drexel, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH: “FALK is a pioneering step towards greater sustainability in the furniture sector. The development of FALK shows the wide range of applications for our recycled plastics.”



# Sustainable for a change!



Hire clothes instead of buying them outright? That's the idea behind STAY AWHILE. The sharing model keeps your wardrobe looking fresh while simultaneously promoting sustainable consumption.

**You launched STAY AWHILE together at the start of 2019. What's the idea behind it?**

**Hendrik Scheuschner (HS):** People love fashion. And people also prize variety above all in fashion. In the long term, however, fast fashion simply isn't sustainable. That's the reason why we've started STAY AWHILE.

**Thekla Wilkening (TW):** We want our online shop to bring variety to your wardrobe while still ensuring we act sustainably – saving you money while also saving the environment. Our customers can select items themselves or ask us to pick things out: they then hire them for a set period of time. And if they fall in love with something, they can also buy it.

**“‘Access over ownership’ models that prioritise use rather than property conserve resources while offering flexibility and variety. We want to encourage a different kind of consumer.”**

STAY AWHILE founder **Thekla Wilkening**

**Clothes for hire: what goals do you hope to achieve with your sharing model?**

**TW:** We want to encourage a different kind of consumer with STAY AWHILE. In five or ten years, I'd love to see half the clothing in Germany with no 'owner': hired rather than bought and then put back into the loop. In the long term, we're aiming to motivate more and more people to treat clothing more sustainably.

**HS:** I'd go even further than that: ultimately, we're also looking to encourage companies to change their business models. If our future society is used to simply hiring rather than buying clothes, companies will need to modify their products and make them more long-lasting.



## TW

Thekla Wilkening started hiring out clothes back in 2012. With her eye for fashion and an extensive network in the sharing industry, she then joined forces with Hendrik to start STAY AWHILE.

## HS

Five years ago, Hendrik Scheuschner founded the Interseroh subsidiary Relenda. His aim in doing so was to use sharing models and custom-built re-commerce solutions to promote a longer useful life for products.



**“We advise companies in the textile industry about bespoke re-commerce solutions, develop suitable strategies and provide support during rollout and beyond.”**

**Hendrik Scheuschner**, Managing Director Relenda GmbH

**So you're already working with companies directly to encourage this sort of change?**

**TW:** From our networks, we know that many companies are now experimenting with new or modified forms of consumer behaviour. As a fast-paced industry, fashion really does need to come up with some new business models.

**HS:** We'll be engaging on several levels here. Our Relenda business advises the textile industry about bespoke re-commerce solutions. Companies face a number of major challenges here. How does an e-tailer handle customer clothing returns? Which sharing model is most appropriate here? As partners, we draw up the right sales strategy and support our client's roll-out.

**So a lot is going to be happening in this area in the future. How do you think the market will change over the next few years?**

**HS:** If we remember that the textiles sector has one of the largest carbon footprints, it's very clear that things have to change. Pressure from policy-makers and the public is also growing.

**TW:** Changing our consumption patterns is a big step in the right direction. And we have very positive feedback from our customers. So we're convinced that we'll see further positive developments in the sharing market.

**EUR 49**

is the price of the Early Bird package, which offers four new items for a month.

Hire clothes instead of buying them – from [www.stay-awhile.de](http://www.stay-awhile.de)



**“Zero Waste Office isn’t just about energy efficiency or avoiding waste. Employee well-being is another key point of focus for us here.”**

**Agata Szczotka-Sarna**, Consultant for CSR and Environmental Education at Interseroh Poland

“More and more people are looking for sustainable solutions – and not just limited to home life but also implemented in their workplaces, too,” explains Agata Szczotka-Sarna, Consultant for CSR and Environmental Education at Interseroh Poland. “Increasingly, employees now expect their companies to act sustainably.” This is why Ms Szczotka-Sarna launched the Zero Waste Office service in 2018. The overall aim is to help businesses fulfil these expectations.



# Designing greener offices

**From the daily commute to the handling of paper or water and power consumption: resource-friendly solutions are also needed in the workplace. This is the idea behind the new and innovative ‘Zero Waste Office’ service from Interseroh Poland, which successfully captures the zeitgeist by aiming to ensure greater sustainability in the workplace.**

### Tackling change proactively

The new consulting service has already been used successfully by several NGOs and businesses in a number of sectors. Technology and services provider Dell received the 'Zero Waste Office' certificate in March 2020, for example. Agata Szczotka-Sarna: "Dell implemented effective measures on the basis of our recommendations. To avoid plastic waste, for example, Dell has now stopped all use of non-reusable plastic cups." Employees are also provided with take-home glass containers for lunch purchases made on the premises. To ensure a lasting impact, measures

need the active involvement of staff. Dell launched a dedicated programme to ensure that everyone plays a part in the changes and can have fun while making things more sustainable.

With the aim of expanding its consulting service outside Poland, the Zero Waste Office completed its first audit in Croatia in 2019. Agata Szczotka-Sarna: "We're now working on ways to offer our new set of services in other countries besides Poland."

To learn more about Zero Waste Office, please visit [www.biurozerowaste.pl/en](http://www.biurozerowaste.pl/en)

**"Environmental protection has long been a priority at Dell, so we are proud that our Warsaw office has been awarded the Zero Waste Office certificate and the factory in Łódź is following in its footsteps. The detailed suggestions made by the Interseroh team were a key element in implementing the necessary changes. Apart from protecting resources, we have also saved time and office space."**

**Paweł Rakowski**, Regional Facilities Management and ERG Planet Leader at Dell Poland

## Four steps to the Zero Waste Office

Interseroh provides a set of tools and guidelines for designing a more eco-friendly workplace. Businesses who want to go the extra mile on this topic can seek advice and then be certified as a 'Zero Waste Office'. Company areas audited include canteens, WCs, work areas, meeting rooms and waste separation.

# 1.

### Zero Waste Audit

As part of the status quo analysis performed with the customer, the team tours the premises and interviews staff about waste separation, commutes or suggested changes.

# 2.

### Recommendations

The Zero Waste Office team then identifies the areas with the biggest potential for improvement and submits a set of recommendations to the company.

# 3.

### Implementation

The company either implements the recommendations itself or does so with the help of the Zero Waste Office team.

# 4.

### Certification Audit

As a final step, the implementation of the recommendations and identifiable progress is audited. If the result is positive, the company is then awarded the 'Zero Waste Office' certificate.



# World Cleanup Day<sup>2019</sup>

Every September, millions of people come together all over the world to raise awareness of environmental pollution and the need for a sustainable future. World Cleanup Day has now become a fixed date in the global grassroots calendar. Interseroh supports the initiative and also took part in activities championing a clean environment in 2019.



# E

Every year, we produce about two billion tonnes of household waste worldwide. If this waste is not professionally managed, the consequences are calamitous for both the environment and human health. Valuable resources are also lost forever. The idea behind World Cleanup Day is to raise awareness about this problem with a global day of action that brings people together with educational and litter picking events to clean up our environment.

### Leading by example

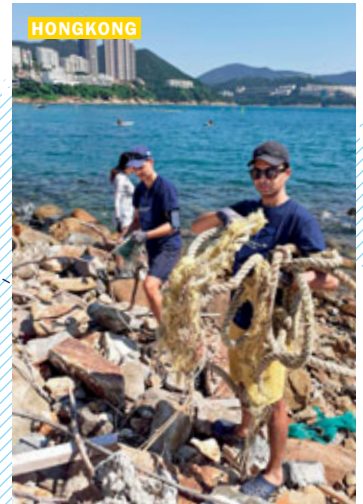
Making people more aware of the consequences of environmental pollution is also a key topic for Interseroh. "Each one of us can do their part to ensure waste is handled properly. Raising awareness and educating people is therefore an important part of our work," says Ole Kebbel, Head of ecoservice24 at Interseroh. "For this reason, World Cleanup Day is a great initiative that we're happy to help with our portfolio of services." Together with RTL, ecoservice24 helped out with the 2019 litter picking event: in five German cities, Ole Kebbel's team organised free transportation away from the pickup site as well as subsequent processing for the collected waste.

### A one-stop shop for waste disposal

Interseroh's ecoservice24 is an all-in-one online shop for waste management services. "All of our customers, whether individuals or companies, can order containers for waste disposal in a range of sizes," explains Kebbel. ecoservice24 delivers the containers, picks them up at the agreed time and then organises the disposal of the collected waste. And the 2019 World Cleanup Day was no different: while RTL's volunteers mobilised the litter pickers, ecoservice24 handled the logistics at no charge. Kebbel: "We supplied our recycling collection bins, which include both big bags and skips, for the event. Once filled by the teams of helpers on the day, we then picked up the bins to take care of environmentally sound waste management."

On 21 September 2019,  
**20 million**  
**people**  
from **170**  
**countries**  
took part in World  
Cleanup Day.





**“Each one of us can do their part to ensure waste is handled properly. Raising awareness and educating people is therefore an important part of our work.”**

Ole Kebbel, Head of ecoservice24 at Interseroh



#### A success on all counts

From cigarette butts, plastic cups and pizza boxes to electrical gadgets, the litter pickers dropped around 800 kg of waste into the containers provided by ecoservice24 – a gain for everyone involved. “We’re proud to have been part of World Cleanup Day,” says Kebbel, and has special praise for his hard-working team: “Simply put, our employees did a great job. They put in extra hours at the weekend to ensure same-day pickup for the bins. As a result, we were able to leverage our expertise to benefit a useful and worthwhile event, while making an effective contribution to better environmental protection.”



More about ecoservice24:  
[www.ecoservice24.com/de](http://www.ecoservice24.com/de)  
 More about World Cleanup Day:  
[www.worldcleanupday.de](http://www.worldcleanupday.de)

# Anyone can make a difference: Sustainability Ambassadors at Interseroh

**Sustainability affects us all – something Interseroh's employees can all agree on. Since 2015, the Sustainability Ambassadors have helped out with specific projects while generally promoting environmentally-conscious and community-focused conduct.**

From waste prevention during lunch breaks, collections for those in need or an environmentally friendly commute – Interseroh promotes sustainable attitudes among its employees. And the Sustainability Ambassadors have a key role to play here: a total of 26 members of staff working at seven different sites are committed to promoting sustainability within the company and launching projects to achieve this. One key event is the annual Sustainability Week, where the Ambassadors provide advice about waste prevention, resource conservation and sustainable eating habits, and encourage participation in litter picking days, sharing programmes and CO<sub>2</sub>-friendly commutes.





## It's better by bike

As a Sustainability Ambassador at Interseroh, Paola Viehoff focuses on promoting the benefits of bicycles. "I want to help promote cycling at Interseroh and make it an attractive alternative to driving for many of our colleagues here. Cycling cuts CO<sub>2</sub> while keeping you fit." From bike racks in the garage to providing tools or cycling route maps,

Viehoff has been involved in lots of activities to help cyclists who work on the Cologne premises. "I've also organised our entry into the City Cycle event for the fifth year running now," she tells us. This national cycling competition

sees teams clocking up the kilometres they cycle for three weeks – which cuts a great deal of carbon emissions.

Her most recent success? "We're now planning to launch the JobBike scheme at several sites in Germany," Viehoff explains. Available immediately, Interseroh's employees gain tax rebates when they lease bicycles and e-bikes. "This is an important step to promote cycling within the workforce, while also further improving Interseroh's profile as a cycling-friendly employer. We plan to expand the scheme to all of our sites in the future."



**"My goal is to help create a cycling-friendly company culture."**

**Paola Viehoff**, Team Leader Contract Services and Sustainability Ambassador at Interseroh

## Leading the way by embracing sustainability

For the last five years, Benjamin Mahmoud has been a Sustainability Ambassador at the company's sites in Sankt Leon-Rot, Mönchengladbach and Wiesbaden. "I want to help people understand how to act more sustainably – whether in the office, on the production line or at home," Mahmoud explains. Energy and water consumption are important topics at our plants. Mahmoud works with shift supervisors to develop solutions for saving resources. "As one example, we use little stickers to remind people to turn off the lights."

Apart from his environmentally-aware lifestyle, Mahmoud also gets involved in sustainability projects, with another focus on staff donations of food and clothing. "A lot can be achieved here even by small donations," he reports. This is why Mahmoud now organises staff donations campaigns twice a year for homeless charities, and so does his part to help those in need.



**"In my job, I look to promote sustainable thinking in the company and set an example of sustainable living for others to follow."**

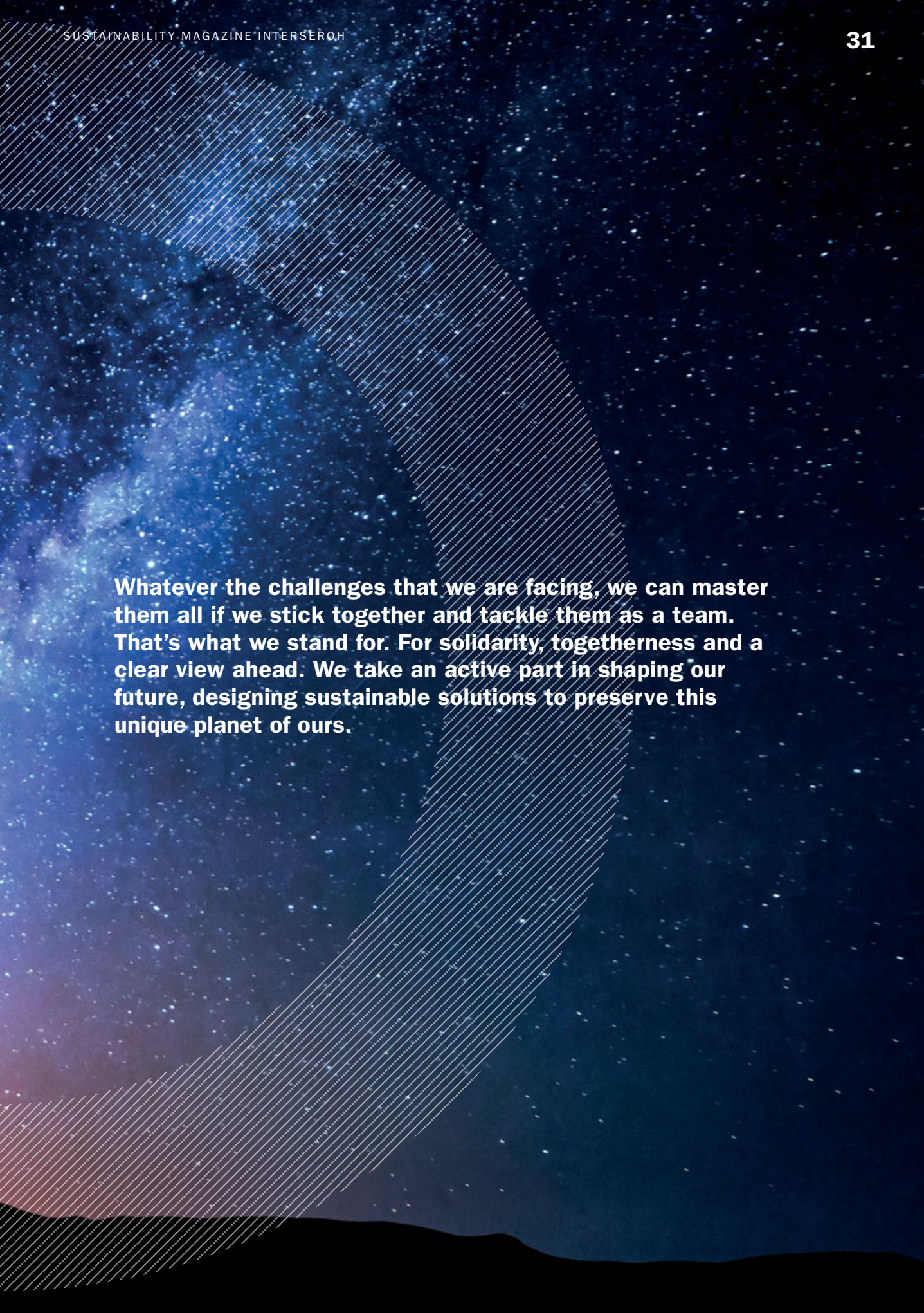
**Benjamin Mahmoud**, Depot Management at INTERSEROH Pool-System GmbH and Interseroh Sustainability Ambassador



# Achieving more together







**Whatever the challenges that we are facing, we can master them all if we stick together and tackle them as a team. That's what we stand for. For solidarity, togetherness and a clear view ahead. We take an active part in shaping our future, designing sustainable solutions to preserve this unique planet of ours.**

# Circular thinking – for a world without waste

**According to forecasts from the UN, annual global resource consumption will double by 2060. We need to act now, and use resources and energy more economically. Interseroh is playing its part here by enabling companies to stay viable while protecting our planet. For a world without waste.**



# T

The circular economy is capable of offering an effective, long-term solution for countering climate change. Not least because decoupling economic growth from resource utilisation could cut carbon emissions almost in half by 2030. Environmental services provider Interseroh is tackling this issue with its 'zero waste solutions' vision of new models for an end-to-end closed-loop economy. "We're guiding our customers towards a more sustainable future," explains Hans-Stefan Kalinowski, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH. "Whether we work as consultants or project participants, our customers can count on having a strong partner by their side. Together, we pursue the goal of using resources for as long as possible."

**"Developing our digital potential is a particularly useful strategy for achieving our goals: by promoting a digital and networked circular economy, we want to help shape a world where this is possible in the future."**

**Dr Timo Langemann, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Pool-System GmbH**



**“We’re guiding our customers towards a more sustainable future. Whether we work as consultants or project participants, our customers can count on having a strong partner by their side.”**

**Hans-Stefan Kalinowski**, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH



To achieve its vision of a world without waste, Interseroh makes the most of new opportunities and keeps its eye on the horizon. Dr Timo Langemann, Managing Director, INTERSEROH Pool-System GmbH: “Developing our digital potential is a particularly useful strategy for achieving our goals: by promoting a digital and networked circular economy, we want to help shape a world where this is possible in the future.”

In recent years, as part of our strategic process, we have been working on further developing the company and optimally positioning it for the challenges of the future.

## Solutions for tomorrow

Our services improve our customers’ sustainability performance indicators. Five company divisions reflect the breadth of our competencies – always innovative and made-to-measure.

**Recycling Solutions** Recycled raw materials conserve resources and offer companies the chance to rethink their products. We organise the take-back and recycling of packaging, and reprocess the raw materials into market-quality products that match customer needs. We ensure security of supply for manufacturing.

**Waste Management Solutions** Bespoke solutions maximise returns – and the same is true for corporate waste management. We use innovative approaches to design these to be sustainable, comprehensive and efficient.

**Circular Solutions** We help our customers to take responsibility for their products with tailor-made closed-loop and reverse logistics systems, new business models, and optimum integration with our portfolio of services.

**Facility Solutions** We devise individual solutions to enable efficient and effective waste management. This helps our customers manage their properties according to the principles of the circular economy.

**International Solutions** To ensure the broadest reach for the circular economy, we work internationally, offering in-depth environmental consulting and optimising waste management solutions.



# Our achievements

Our strategic points of focus:



Exploit the potential for digitalisation



Extend the service life of products



Develop design-for-recycling approaches

Our achievements in 2019:

1,250

‘Design for Recycling’ checks for packaging

Our strategic points of focus:



Working to promote employee health

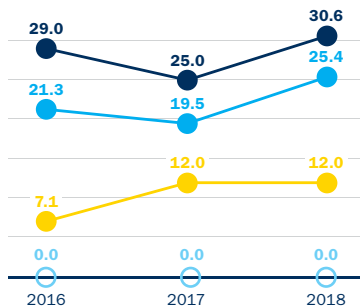


Enabling equal opportunities in our workforce

Our achievements in 2018:

Women in management (in percent)

- Proportion of women in first-level positions
- Proportion of women in second-level positions
- Proportion of women in third-level positions
- Average share of all management levels



no waste of  
ideas

no waste of  
talent

More on our sustainability strategy at  
[www.interseroh.de/en/sustainability](http://www.interseroh.de/en/sustainability)



For Interseroh, sustainability is at the core of our corporate strategy. We take responsibility for our customers and staff, and for the environment and society at large. We take particular care in formulating our sustainability strategy and commission annual reports on our targets. Our commitment is reflected in four action areas that encompass ten strategic points of focus. We use key performance indicators (KPIs) to audit our performance on an annual basis:

Our strategic points of focus:



Discovering new upcycling solutions for plastics



Closing material and logistics loop



Promoting waste prevention and higher recycling targets

Our achievements in 2019:

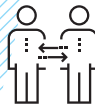
**336,050**

tonnes of greenhouse gases  
saved by the recycling of lightweight packaging  
and plastics

Our strategic points of focus:



Engaging in the transfer of knowledge to the circular economy



Promoting initiatives and dialogue

Our achievements in 2019:

Cooperation partners (schools/universities)



Alfred-Müller-Armack-Berufskolleg



Gymnasium Köln-Pesch

zero waste  
solutions

no waste of  
resources  
knowledge

# zero waste solutions: benefit for everyone



**“We help companies to achieve long-term improvements in their sustainability practices while securing their supply of resources.”**

**Markus Müller-Drexel**, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH

Interseroh uses its services for the benefit of the environment and its customers' business alike. Markus Müller-Drexel, Managing Director of INTERSEROH Dienstleistungs GmbH: “Today's companies face a considerable set of challenges: not only is climate protection legislation getting tougher, but resource conservation and environmental protection are now key decision-making criteria for consumers. We help companies to achieve long-term improvements in their sustainability practices while securing their supply of resources.” This also offers clear competitive advantages. More efficient processes can also cut costs.

Thanks to Interseroh's in-depth understanding of the value creation process, we account for product lifecycles at every stage: from design to production, from the usage phase to disposal. This produces bespoke customer solutions that can be used for strategic consulting or for the actual implementation of innovative solutions.

## **Achieving more together**

Productive, positive collaboration is what we aim for: whether with customers, supply chain partners or our own employees. Our 'We are One' company culture brings us together as a team of dedicated experts, united by the values of respect, dialogue and responsibility. These values give us the strength to champion our 'zero waste solutions' vision each and every day, and to work on ways to achieve it. For this precious Earth of ours. **For a world without waste.**

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FALK Chair: HOUE
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This magazine contains no gender-specific differentiation but uses the male designation throughout. In the spirit of gender equality, any gendered terms apply to all sexes.



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