

PRESS INFORMATION



SOEX and I:CO launch world's first recycling system for all footwear types

- **First sustainable solution for all unwearable shoes is unveiled**
- **The recycling plant will help to reduce waste volumes and close production cycles**
- **The secondary raw materials derived will be used in the manufacturing of new products**

Wolfen, Germany, 6 June 2018. Following a five-year development phase, SOEX, a global leader in the field of used textiles marketing and recycling, and I:Collect GmbH, an international specialist for the collection, reuse and recycling of textiles and footwear, will today be presenting the world's first shoe recycling plant able to process all types of footwear. This pioneering system will serve to reduce waste and to close production cycles helping to enable a circular economy for the industry. It is, moreover, the first ever system able to mechanically disassemble all shoe types into their components, and to then derive from them usable secondary raw materials such as rubber, leather or foam. The innovative system provides a much needed truly sustainable solution for all unwearable shoes!

Every year, millions of tonnes of used shoes end up in landfill sites or incineration plants. This results in the loss of valuable raw materials and natural resources. Every day, tens of thousands of used shoes are delivered to SOEX's sorting and recycling plant in Wolfen, Germany. Around 83% of these tend to still be in good condition and can be worn again. They are distributed and sold around the world as second-hand products. This leaves around 17% of the shoes no longer fit for use and the need for them to be disposed of professionally. From an ecological perspective, this destruction is an unsustainable solution. "Until now, due to the complex construction of footwear,

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no one had been able to create a system able to recycle unwearable footwear of all types on an industrial scale, and to then process their components in an ecologically sound manner,” explains Axel Buchholz, Managing Director of SOEX Textil-Vermarktungsgesellschaft m.b.H. and of I:Collect GmbH. “This is why we decided, back in 2012, to invest in finding a shoe recycling solution. Today’s launch is a recycling sector milestone. Entirely scalable, our system offers all footwear manufacturers, retailers and consumers a sustainable approach to product end-of-life management.”

For more information and images, please go to www.footwear-recycling.com/en/press.

About SOEX

SOEX is the world’s leading company for used textile marketing and recycling, and has been giving used textiles a new lease of life for more than 40 years. With locations in six countries and approximately 1,200 employees worldwide, SOEX is the expert for used textile collection, processing, trading and recycling. SOEX sells secondhand clothes in about 70 countries worldwide, making a sustainable contribution to the conservation of resources and the avoidance of waste. For more information, go to www.soex.de.

About I:CO

I:Collect GmbH (I:CO) is an international solutions provider for the collection, reuse and recycling of used clothing, shoes and other textiles. With its innovative retail take-back system and worldwide infrastructure, I:CO aims to keep consumers’ used clothing and shoes in a continuous closed loop production cycle where these goods can be reprocessed and reused again and again. This reduces waste, preserves resources and protects the environment. I:CO works with more than 40 fashion companies in over 60 countries worldwide. For more information, please go to www.ico-spirit.com.

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