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The most important product category reflects the main industry trend

Functional apparel at OutDoor 2017 - it's got to be lightweight and sustainable

Friedrichshafen - The days of Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) in the outdoor industry are numbered. A dozen companies, including several big players, are presenting PFC-free membrane jackets at this year's OutDoor. Sustainable solutions and lightweight designs are high on the agenda at the leading outdoor show.

One small step for Italian alpinist David Bacci, one giant leap for the outdoor industry. His ascent of Fitz Roy in Patagonia in 2016 marked the start of a new era. David Bacci was the first professional mountaineer to climb one of the world's hardest routes wearing a PFC-free jacket. "The PFC-free clothing worked better than I thought it would. There is no functional reason for using PFCs," says David Bacci. He adds that sustainable alpinism should mean reaching summits by ethical means only and without relying on harmful chemicals.

Europe's largest trade show also demonstrates that the outdoor industry can go PFC-free. David Bacci climbed in a Páramo Enduro jacket which uses a Nikwax Analogy fabric

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for weather protection. However, membrane jackets can do without PFCs too. High-end American brand Marmot, is introducing the "future of raingear", says European CEO Andy Schimeck. Marmot's EvoDry collection is completely PFC-free. Sympatex is also presenting a fabric of the future in Friedrichshafen. At a design workshop, the membrane manufacturer developed the functional Jacket 4.0. It is recycled and recyclable, 100 per cent PFC free and 100 per cent CO2-neutral, yet offers full functionality.

In addition to Marmot and Sympatex, Fjällräven, Haglöfs, Houdini, Jack Wolfskin, Klättermusen, Maier Sports, Mamalila, Pyua and Vaude are presenting PFC-free membranes. In many cases, these brands are going a step further, as just because a jacket is PFC-free, this doesn't mean that it is sustainable. In future, when a functional jacket is damaged beyond repair, there is no reason to throw it away. Instead, the fabric can be recycled to make a new functional jacket.

There are many different ways to be sustainable: renewable raw materials instead of fossil fuels, natural dyeing processes and dyes instead of chemicals, reducing water consumption when dyeing, or during production, plus compostable clothing and closed loop recycling. Houdini is launching the "first ever compostable T-Shirt", at the OutDoor show. Röjk and Tierra are both presenting jackets made from 100 per cent bio-polymers. That means they are 100 per cent free from non-renewable fossil based resources. It's interesting to note that Scandinavian and German brands are leading the way on sustainability. This is due to the framework conditions in both countries and their national outdoor trade associations.

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There is a whole raft of interesting new lightweight innovations for gear freaks and outdoor fans. Haglöfs L.I.M. Field Jacket is revolutionizing laminate technology with its super-thin, yet PFC-free, 1.5-layer membrane. Japanese lightweight experts Montbell are launching the ultra-light 70-gram Tachyon Parka, which has a 7-denier polyamide hood. Mammut is showcasing its Eisfeld Light softshell jacket and pant combination featuring seamless technology. Weighing in at 770 grams, it might sound heavy next to the Montbell jacket, but given the extremely abrasion-resistant characteristics of its Schoeller Dryskin fabric that can withstand plenty of punishment from rough rock, it is still very lightweight. And the fabric is also given a PFC-free treatment.

Lightweight, yet warm and insulating - the dream combination sought by alpinists the world over. Arc`teryx claims that the dream is now reality with their Cerium SL Hoody, which features a super-light down fill with composite mapping that places synthetic insulation at areas that need to withstand moisture, such as the shoulders. Patagonia claims that its Micro Puff Hoody is the smallest packable synthetic insulation jacket with the best warmth-to-weight ratio. And Berghaus is announcing that it intends to set another record. This time, it's with the GR20 Storm jacket, which it says is the most breathable Gore-Tex jacket ever made. Its patented ventilation makes it the first jacket with open ventilation to pass the Gore storm test.

OutDoor runs from 18 to 21 June 2017 and is only open to trade visitors.

For more information, please visit: www.outdoor-show.com.

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In case of further questions please contact our press department. They will be glad to help you.

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