Moss Research Announces "Industry-First" Sustainable Surfboards

Eco-Flex™ Technologies Gain Sustainability Endorsement

Solana Beach, CA (PRWEB) January 26, 2011 -- Master surfboard shaper Jake Moss, 15 year manufacturer of Moss Research Surfboards announces the availability of a new collection of surfboards, which define the industry standard in meeting sustainability criteria relating to human, environmental, economic, and social impacts.

Up until now, Surfboard making has arguably been one of the least "eco-friendly" crafts around. The traditional surfboard manufacturing process is toxic and emits gases known to be hazardous to shapers; the process depletes the ozone layer, and contributes to global warming. Previously, alternatives have not resulted in performance improvements for surfers. "The few people making 'green' boards have run in to two problems; the performance is never as good as a conventional surfboard, and they haven't been able to demonstrate them as eco-friendly," says Jake Moss. "Our Eco-boards, refined over the past 4 years, are better to surf than conventional boards. And we've worked hard to establish that our construction processes and materials are, in fact, more environmentally friendly."

The custom line of Moss Research boards use "Eco-Flex" technology, which gets its name from a construction process using plant fibers, a 100% recycled core and an ultra strong and elastic plant-based, non-VOC (volatile organic compound) resin.

According to Moss, "The performance surfboard never had a sustainable beginning." In the late 1950's the lightweight surfboard, using a polyurethane core reinforced with fiberglass and polyester resin was introduced. It was a performance breakthrough, however, at a time where there were few surfers and little consideration to the waste streams produced. To date, a majority of boards are still made of the same materials, toxic and non-recyclable plastics, containing diisocyanates (MDI, TDI) and VOCs.

Now, with a world surfing population of over 10 million, with each surfer owning an average of 3 boards, there are over 30 million surfboards in use. These boards will eventually become garbage, with no way to down-cycle the resources. "Plastic recycling has never been a 'closed loop', with over 30% of all plastics having the potential to end up in the ocean, in the North Pacific Gyre. That's a horrific version of the future that no surfer wants to help create", Moss says.

To help correct the situation, Moss Research uses a 100% recycled, closed-cell EPS (Expanded Polystyrene) foam blank, introduced by California supplier Marko Foam. They use a new, sustainable recycling technology that is able to make "1st quality" high-performance blanks comprised of post-consumer packing and industrial EPS waste. The material can be re-collected and re-processed again and again to truly support a closed loop effort that reduces the amount of EPS Foam waste entering the landfill—or the ocean. The recycled blanks weigh half as much as conventional polyurethane blanks and have a water absorption rate at a small fraction compared, so even dinged boards won't take on excessive water. "This means your board won't suck, literally," says Moss. "It also means Eco-Flex boards last longer, with the option to recycle the core once it has finally succumb to the elements."
The laminating resin has been replaced with plant-based "Super Sap" from manufacturer Entropy Resins, at a bio content concentration of up to 75%. Their process captures pinesap from papermaking and renewable oils from bio-fuel industry waste, and formulates them into an ultra durable epoxy resin. "Super Sap" emits no VOC's and does not require the use of harmful solvents or surfacing agents.

With all major components made domestically in the United States, mostly comprised of captured waste from other industrial processes, the end result is a board with a significantly lower carbon footprint, a healthier manufacturing environment, and a better experience for surfers.

The Moss Research Eco-Flex surfboards are the first to receive an Endorsement of Sustainability, based on a set of environmental standards for sustainable surfboard manufacturing developed by the Sustainable Surf Coalition (read more at http://sustainablesurfcoalition.org).

Tobias Schultz, author of "Surfboard Cradle-to-Grave", reviewed and approved Moss Research's Endorsement application. "After a lengthy review process, Moss Research's Eco-Flex boards satisfy the requirements of a sustainable surfboard, including use of domestic supply chain, company transparency, craftsmanship and durability," says Schultz. Schultz is working with Moss Research to create a Company Sustainability Report (CSR) for 2011, the first in the surfboard industry, which will be completed later this year.

Moss Research Sustainable Surfboards with "Eco-Flex" technologies can be seen at http://www.mossresearch.com/

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Contact Information
Robert Lundahl
Freshwater Bay Pictures, LLC
http://www.mossresearch.com
415.205.3481

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