

KARÜN
EST. IN PATAGONIA

Transforming pollution into high fashion: Karün Eyewear unveils Celion®, a pioneering material made out from cigarette butts

Milan, (Feb 5). During one of the world's premier eyewear events: MIDO, Karün announces a groundbreaking game changer: the world's first eyewear frames made from cellulose acetate recovered from cigarette butts. A new material called Celion®



At Karün, innovation is deeply rooted in the pursuit of harmony between humanity and nature. Their team is relentlessly exploring new ways to create products that not only protect the environment but also cater to the needs of users, transforming challenges into opportunities for both ecological and user-centric innovation.

From creating the first eyewear made with recycled fishing nets, to implementing full traceability with Blockchain and labeled carbon footprint to each of their products, Karün has led the way in sustainable innovation in the industry since 2012. This mindset has directed their focus today to one of the most neglected environmental concerns: cigarette butts.

Typically disregarded and rarely recycled, cigarette butts have spurred Karün's latest innovative leap. Employing advanced technology from IMEKO, a Chilean cleantech company that collects, processes and recovers the cellulose acetate found in cigarette butts to be completely transformed, these butts are repurposed into Celion®, the foundational material of their forthcoming collection. This distinctive chemical process does more than repurpose a discarded substance; it makes a significant contribution to the preservation of our planet's crucial ecosystems.

The Problem?

- 5.6 trillion cigarette butts are discarded into the environment each year. That's equivalent to filling 80 Olympic swimming pools every second.
- 1.3 million tons is the total weight of cigarette butts discarded every year.
- Up to 50 liters of water are contaminated by just one cigarette butt.
- This represents one of the most toxic forms of ocean plastic pollution.

The Solution?

- Repurpose acetate, the main component in cigarette butts (plastic).
- This new efficient, sustainable, and scalable mechanical-chemical process developed by IMEKO, removes the toxicity from the filters and recovers pure cellulose acetate as a new sustainable raw material.
- High-quality eyewear is achieved using fashion as a symbol of change. For every ton of Celion®, up to 5.6 million cigarette butts are removed.



Celion® stands out not just for its origin but also for its exceptional properties:

- Exceptional mechanical physical properties.
- 40% reduction in carbon footprint compared to virgin acetate.
- Formulated with no toxic additives.
- Ability to be molded in conventional industrial plastic processes.
- Versatility in colors and a high level of transparency.
- Adjustable formula for the development of various products (eyewear frames, jewelry, tools, other high-end plastic items).
- Celion material is infinitely recyclable, fostering a circular economy where resources are utilized for as long as possible.

Together with IMEKO, Karün once again showcases the crucial importance of looking at the world from a different point of view. This perspective enables them to continuously transform what was once considered waste into beautiful high quality products that generate a positive impact on our planet.

Crafted from a complex and commonly overlooked waste material, the use of Celion® is a symbol of their dedication to creative problem-solving and environmental stewardship. It positions the brand at the forefront of the eyewear industry and establishes them as leaders in sustainable innovation and chemical ingenuity.

With Celion®, Karün is not just marking a milestone in product design; they're pioneering a movement for responsible innovation and positive change in business and products.

About Karün

Karün is a B Corporation based in Patagonia that offers sustainable and high-quality eyewear designed to last. Through its Karün™ Regeneration Model, the brand demonstrates that companies can be a tool for social and environmental well-being. Karün's products are made with recycled and traceable materials, collected in collaboration with local rural communities in Patagonia to restore natural ecosystems and regenerate local economies. In addition to its commitment to sustainability, Karün is a pioneer in transparency by providing information on the carbon emissions of each product and allowing customers to track the production process through its Karün™ Traceability System, powered by blockchain technology. Today, the brand is present in more than 17 countries worldwide and has been recognized by leading sustainability and design organizations such as MIDO, National Geographic, and Forbes. Learn more about the brand at karuneyewear.com.

About IMEKO

IMEKO is a B Corporation founded in Valparaíso, Chile that is committed to clean the world from cigarette butts and constantly seeking creative solutions to environmental problems and works tirelessly to make a significant difference in the fight against cigarette butt pollution, using scientific knowledge and technology. Through a chemical process, completely sustainable from its design, IMEKO recovers the plastic, cellulose acetate, from the cigarette butt filter, completely free of toxic components, and transforming it into a new sustainable raw material, Celion(R) for its reincorporation into the plastic materials circular economy we are able to remove all the toxic substances contained in cigarette butts and recover the valuable cellulose acetate from which the filter is made.

IMEKO has developed a robust and efficient cigarette butt collection strategy through a network of partners, including companies, organizations and foundations, mobilizing a complete change of mentality through environmental education.

IMEKO has developed this technology knowing that it must be a global solution and works tirelessly to expand the horizons of the solution and generate awareness about this problem.