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Manfred Hackl new Plastics Cluster advisory board spokesman

Deputy provincial governor Dr. Strugl: *"With the EREMA Group CEO a forward thinker of the industry will be supporting the strategic orientation of the Cluster"*

As of December, Manfred Hackl, CEO of the EREMA Group located in Ansfelden, is the new advisory board spokesman of the Plastics Cluster of the Upper Austrian business agency Business Upper Austria. *"The twelve industry representatives of the advisory board support the Cluster in its strategic orientation. With Manfred Hackl as the advisory board spokesman of the Plastics Cluster we will benefit from the expertise of a forward thinker of the industry,"* says a delighted deputy provincial governor Dr. Michael Strugl.

Manfred Hackl is taking over from Dr. Friedrich Kastner, CEO of Dr. Collin GmbH, who has been the voice of the board of experts of the Plastics Cluster for seven years.

The vision of a functioning circular economy

The new advisory board spokesman will be taking up the cause of the circular economy as one of the focal topics. "A functioning circular economy is a major opportunity to improve the image of plastics. However, its success depends on the interplay of everyone involved – from waste plastic collection and recycling technology up to the reuse in processing," emphasises Manfred Hackl.

Together, the Plastics Cluster and the Cleantech Cluster want to show how this can work in the "Coming Home" project, with the aim of the initiative on forming regional material loops with the industry and the regional collection systems. The focus here is on household plastic waste.

A best-practice project is to be launched using the returnable yellow "Öli" collection bucket. "Öli" is an established used oil collection system operated by the provincial waste management organisation (LAVU). The bucket is currently made from virgin polypropylene (PP) material. In future the aim is for the waste plastic collected by the regional waste management and recycling organisations to be used to produce the collection bucket. This local project highlights the opportunities of collecting and recycling – namely that the plastic product loop can be closed by joint efforts in the Upper Austrian plastics industry.

Recycling also a focal point of the LIT Factory research centre at JKU

The LIT Factory, a public I4.0 pilot facility, will be established in Linz under the leadership of the Linz Institute of Technology (LIT) of the Johannes Kepler University of Linz. In the future, local companies will be able to try out digitalised production technologies in this test lab without disturbing their own operations. One aim here, for example, is for lightweight components made of plastic to be developed for cars. There are, however, also further research projects in the field of recycling technology.

About the Plastics Cluster

With around 400 companies whose total turnover amounts to some 17 billion euros the Plastics Cluster is the largest cluster initiative in Austria. The Cluster companies employ a total of 63,000 people. The focus of the activities in the network is on the initiation, support and promotion of innovation projects. The Plastics Cluster is supported by the business agency Business Upper Austria and the Lower Austrian business agency ecoplus.

www.kunststoff-cluster.at

Bildtext:

From left to right: deputy provincial governor Dr. Michael Strugl with the new advisory board spokesman of the Plastics Cluster, Manfred Hackl (CEO EREMA Group) and Cluster manager Wolfgang Bohmayr.

Photo: Upper Austrian government / Daniel Kauder