



Expert Dialogue

FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE WORLD

The NIVEA WonderBARs are the 1st NIVEA range to have achieved the certification from Ecocert® Cosmos Natural for natural cosmetics. On top of that, they are free from microplastics, parabens, synthetic colorants, perfumes and phenoxyethanol as well as 100% vegan and to 99% of natural origin. In a dialogue Maria Gabriela González, Research & Development at NIVEA, and Pauline Raffaitin, Home & Personal Care Business Unit Manager at Ecocert, explain the meaning of the label.

Mrs. González, when the development of the NIVEA WonderBARs started, was it already clear that it should get a certificate?

Maria Gabriela González: Of course, before starting to formulate products this is an important variable to consider. This must be defined before starting any work at the laboratory, since it conditions the ingredients and raw materials available to be used during the development phase of the products.

There are many at first sight similar certificates now – what was important to you?

Maria Gabriela González: Since there is no official European regulation that dictates the norms to classify natural cosmetics, different associations have worked in parallel to create standards that defines and point out the differences between natural cosmetics vs conventional cosmetics. For NIVEA it was very important to choose the adequate and established standard which provides a seal that is trustworthy and guarantees our consumers environmentally friendly products, formulated with ingredients derived from renewable resources.

Pauline Raffaitin: If I may just add to that: That's the reason, why Ecocert was founded in the first place, almost 30 years ago, in 1991, in order to promote organic farming in France. The objective was to encourage productions that respect living ecosystems, to better manage natural resources, to integrate environment protection in each stage of the production and to develop socially responsible supply chains. All these commitments are more than ever in line with the environmental and societal challenges we face.

Ans what is the purpose of your company today?

Pauline Raffaitin: The Ecocert Group ambition is to “Act for a sustainable world”. Our daily actions aim at the development of environmentally and socially responsible practices. We strive to enable production processes that respect the environment, better management of available energy and of natural resources (water, air, soil fertility), socially responsible sectors,



and better product quality and safety. All of these elements are essential to address today's economic, social and environmental challenges in order to build tomorrow's world.

Mrs. González, was this attitude the reason to choose Ecocert for the certification of the WonderBARs?

Maria Gabriela González: Yes, Ecocert is the seal most recognized by consumers in the natural cosmetics segment. In addition to being internationally recognized, they have a lot of experience focus on providing solutions to improve and increase good environmental and social practices in the cosmetic, textile, home care sector, among others.

And what convinced you about the Ecocert program?

Maria Gabriela González: It plays an important role in the development and regulation of natural cosmetic products, which makes them one of the major stakeholders in this segment. Their label is known and associated for certifying high-quality products like ours.

Mrs. Raffaitin, what are the main differences between Ecocert and other seals in your opinion?

Pauline Raffaitin: The certification by Ecocert is the guarantee provided by the world leader of natural and organic cosmetic certification body. Our accreditation guarantees that our experienced team is working with professionalism, impartiality and independence. But more than that, being certified by the Ecocert group means also working with a partner entirely dedicated to sustainable practices with a strong CSR policy and which is carbon neutral, as we compensate 100% of our carbon emissions. With more than 20.000 cosmetic products certified worldwide, this is the reference in terms of natural and organic cosmetic certification.

What are the main criteria that a product must meet to obtain the Ecocert Cosmos Natural certificate?

Pauline Raffaitin: It's a voluntary approach that covers all the steps of a cosmetic product development: the most demanding requirement is related to sourcing only natural origin ingredients (except a limited list of preservatives).

Mrs. González, did the goal of the certification influence or change the development work?

Maria Gabriela González: Absolutely, using ingredients derived from plants that use environmentally friendly processes limits somehow the raw materials available in the market to formulate cosmetics. Hence the importance of defining Ecocert certification as the beginning as one of the objectives to be achieved during the formulation process.

Why is the certification important for NIVEA?

Maria Gabriela González: Being the first certified NIVEA product line on the market is an important milestone for the brand. We are very proud to have reached this goal, becoming a significant step for us in our commitment to offer safe, high quality, innovative and sustainable products for our consumers.



Mrs. Raffaitin, how does the certification process work and how long does it take?

Pauline Raffaitin: The certification process involves two main steps: an exhaustive documentary review of the project including natural origin ingredients assessment, formula composition study, recyclable packaging material check and label proofreading, and an onsite audit during which the declarations are challenged, and the traceability and quality systems are assessed in terms of compliance with the Cosmos standard. It usually takes from 4 to 6 months to get the certification.

How do you test?

Pauline Raffaitin: With our subsidiaries involved upstream on the raw material supply chain production, we use laboratory tests within organic farming certification processes. The certification is based on a full traceability assessment from raw materials to end-product: it allows for a much broader set of investigations such as on the origin and process of raw materials, on the cleaning products used on the production lines etc.

And how long is such a certification valid?

Pauline Raffaitin: The certification is a renewable process: The company commits itself to have an annual audit and also to provide any changes related to certified products. The certificate covers the year in progress and the year after: It allows the certification officer to renew the certificate until the next audit takes place.

Mrs. González, do you think consumers appreciate the effort of the certification?

Maria Gabriela González: Every day consumers are more demanding and have generated more awareness when choosing products, they consume and how their choice can reduce as much as possible their ecological footprint on the environment. Therefore, I think that this achievement is appreciated by consumers, but at the same time, this is for us is one of our first steps towards this direction, that makes us commit to offer consumers more alternatives that meet their expectations.

Pauline Raffaitin: I see that quite the same. There is a strong and lasting trend of consumers expectations in the need of transparency and also “true” natural and organic cosmetics. Recent studies show that consumers also search for committed companies with ethical and responsible actions.

In your opinion, what are the main benefits for consumers if a product has an Ecocert certification?

Maria Gabriela González: Our certified WonderBARs offer consumers products developed with plant-based ingredients, responsibly sourced, from renewable resources, and animal-friendly. Made following processes that respect the environment and health. The bars are soft and gentle with the skin, providing deep cleansing and comes in a fully recyclable and plastic free packaging.



Pauline Raffaitin: It is the guarantee that the natural claims on the products rely on an external independent expertise. The entire product including ingredients and packaging but also the manufacturing process including the cleaning products respect demanding criteria on environmental and sustainable aspects. The consumer can trust the professionalism of Ecocert. The certification is a trustworthy tool between the industry and the consumers, because it is a third-party external guarantee to rely on the real commitment of brands in implementing sustainable practices.

Mrs. González, do you think the certificate will increase the success of the NIVEA WonderBARs?

Maria Gabriela González: I believe that certification will open opportunities for both: our current consumers and new consumers. For our current consumers it will give the opportunity to enjoy their usual NIVEA beauty products, now naturally certified. While for our new consumers will increase their products alternatives and will represent the opportunity to choose and use products designed by the experts in skin care.

What does this first NIVEA natural cosmetic product mean to you personally?

Maria Gabriela González: Being part of the team responsible for bringing the first line of certified NIVEA products to the market gives me great satisfaction and pride. Personally, I consider exciting to have had the opportunity to participate in the development of products, that contributes towards the future of sustainable cosmetics, making use of natural resources and also respectful with the environment.

And Mrs. Raffaitin, was it something special for you too to work for such a large global corporation like Beiersdorf?

Pauline Raffaitin: We work with little companies to major international cosmetic players and we consider that any action in favor of environmental protection is valuable. We are proud to be chosen by partners like Beiersdorf who wants to join our efforts in acting for a more sustainable world.

Mrs. González, will NIVEA launch more natural cosmetic products, and will you continue the cooperation?

Maria Gabriela González: That's a fact! Following the launch of WonderBAR we will come with more interesting ideas for our consumers focused on skin care.