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VIVANESS: Elfriede Dambacher Column

Make your position clear

Every December, the shops are full of consumer goods, some useful, some less so. The coronavirus crisis has made people all around the world seriously question their existing value systems. There are many signals showing that reasons for purchasing are in a phase of increasing change. The pull toward ethical consumption is growing stronger and stronger. The superficial product benefit is no longer the main consideration; it is also important to exercise influence in creating a fairer world, and creating a positive future that is right for the coming generations. In times such as these, we need strong brands that are completely credible and offer both guidance and stability.

For the pioneers of natural and organic personal care products, social commitment has been an essential element from the outset. Start-ups are bringing new and unconventional ideas onto the market, and many conventional cosmetics companies are now also getting on board. The cosmetics industry is experiencing dramatic changes that would long have been inconceivable. This is most visible when it comes to plastics. There are all kinds of packaging made of recycled plastic, or products wrapped using no plastic at all if possible. Not long ago I picked up a block of "Feste Dusche" shower soap. It looked super: 100% plastic-free, lovely aroma, modern design and vegan too – it seemed the perfect Christmas gift. But as always, with products as complex as cosmetics, the devil is in the detail. I wasn't impressed by the ingredients, with all kinds of chemical additives and synthetic fragrances on the INCI list. Yes, a super brand, but unfortunately not consistent. Strong brands can't afford to gloss over the truth, otherwise they will never earn a fixed spot on the consumers' bathroom shelves. They can provide stability and guidance only if they impress at every step along the way. One hundred percent transparency and communication on an equal footing are prerequisites, and that goes for all cosmetic and natural and organic personal care products alike.

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