



GOING GREEN

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While believers and haters have chewed each other up over the discussion of eco efforts in snowboarding, the question should long have moved on from “does it make sense?” to “which ones make sense?” Because the sceptics are right in their assertion that much of the first “green wave” of eco friendly products of many a brand was window dressing. But running riot against everything with a green touch is not gonna get anyone anywhere either, so get wise and greenwashing won’t be your problem anymore.

Certificates and seals of approval appear to be a terrific guideline at first, but if they don’t state who is checking on what exactly, you might as well draw the badge yourself. Transparency is king and the bluesign certificate is a royal of the highest order. Already in the 1980s a group of independent scientists came up with this standard, putting all stages of a product chain to the acid test. Instead of certifying a brand or company overall, they go in deep and don’t approve any product that doesn’t meet all their standards regarding environment, safety and health from sourcing to shipment. Swiss label Zimtstern will be the first snowboard brand ever with a completely bluesign approved collection

in 2011/12, along with Billabong, The North Face, Eleven and Deeluxe who are using certified Sympatex membranes for their outerwear and boots. This may seem a bit confusing and obscure now, but with more brands aiming for this seal, the number of approved suppliers will rise and with more and more “blind spots” disappearing from the ecological textile map, the system will become more plausible.

This is also what Patagonia’s “Footprint Chronicles” is about, where they show in detail where a range of selected products are coming from, how they are produced and what it takes for them to get to us. If you know that your down jacket’s feathers have to be fetched from Hungary, before they’re processed in California and shipped on to Asia, where the fabric is produced and sewn together, just to be sent back to Nevada from where they’re distributed to the whole world, you’ll have a different feel for it than for some anonymous piece of cloth. And you won’t only know more about garment production and ecology, you might also reconsider a trip to the flea market or second hand shop instead of just dumping said jacket in the trash.

But you don’t have to base your choice of gear solely on what certificates and eco friendly brands suggest for a clean conscience. Although this area is constantly growing

and the dark days of brown and green uniformity are long gone, the options are still quite limited. There is a growing number of brands though that are not entirely “green” themselves, but do act very green by supporting the cause financially. Volcom, Jones Snowboards and Magic Potion are part of 1% for the Planet for example, a worldwide movement with almost 1500 involved companies donating one percent of their profits to various environmentalist projects. One percent sounds petty, but it’s not only about money: “It’s about businesses recognizing that industry and ecology are inherently connected”. Without a whole river rushing in behind, this is just a drop in the ocean, but a growth of 40 percent despite recession last year is a healthy base.

In this spirit we hope that more and more snowboarders will trade their – by all means appropriate – scepticism for a more thorough knowledge of the environment and wintersports, more in line with the actual realities. And if you seriously don’t want any of this information in your brain, check by the 7Sky GreenRoom (7skygreenroom.com) every once in a while as they’ll have done the brain work for you – every single product in there is hand selected by their team of eco warriors who’d go out on a limb for their green-ness.

ARBOR |

Arbor has a 15-year history of producing hard and soft goods that are as environmentally friendly as possible in an industry which, let’s face it, has to use materials that are environmentally unsound. They do this by using bamboo, a renewable resource, in both their board product and in their apparel. They also contribute 5% of their profit to groups, which are committed to the protection and restoration of the environment, including reforestation programs in Hawaii.

Arbor Coda, directional twin with rocker, €499.99



BOND |

Now in its second season, Bond is an exemplary practitioner of sustainability. As a member of the Carbon fund, an organisation which boasts 1800 companies and 600,000 members who endeavour to reduce their carbon footprint and offset that which they can’t, they use only recycled PET and virgin polyester – which can be completely recycled – for their shells and liners, while zips and buttons are made from recycled industrial pellets.

Bond Station Jacket, €279.95,
Copper Pant, €219.95

