The Sustainable Business Pilot Project at UNFPA

In 2009, UNFPA began a 'Greening the Blue' program designed to introduce sustainability into the latex industry ('Greening the Blue' is a global environmental stewardship initiative promoted by the *United Nations*). The latex industry supplies many UN medical-related and family planning programs, and it wants to continue to do so, but it was estimated that it would take 12-18 years of convincing before the manufacturers would accept new regulations, much less change their production methods. Indeed, during the first five years of the program, every regulation and improvement standard recommended by UNFPA was vehemently opposed.

In 2014, the CIPS 'Commitment to Sustainability' program was introduced along with a free portfolio of education materials distributed by EFMD. The program focuses on financial improvement, so eleven companies volunteered to try parts of it. Five months later, in October 2014, the eleven volunteer companies travelled to Kuala Lumpur to present their findings. Following, are their conclusions (the figures shown are the average results per company):

Commitment to Sustainability Program (UNFPA)

11 volunteer companies - average results per company

India / Thailand region (4 manufacturers)

Annual cost savings from increases in productivity, reductions in maintenance and salvage (production line recycling) } **$160,000**

Annual cost savings from methane gas production derived from waste water, as well as energy savings and heat transfer. } **$47,714**

China (3 manufacturers)

Reduction in water use..... **51%**

Reduction in electricity..... **13%**

Reduction in steam use..... **46%**

Malaysia (4 manufacturers)

Reduction in electricity use..... **20%**

'This is unprecedented. The latex industry is highly competitive and secretive, so to see them working together and producing real results after only five months is astonishing, particularly when you take into consideration that they had resisted for years. All of us who are involved with this project experienced a heartfelt sense of accomplishment as the manufacturers excitedly made their presentations. We've never seen anything like it before. And the entire industry is now buzzing.'

Theodoor Van Boven
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Founding Director Sape Moderne Abidjan (Ivory Coast)
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