

# Learning from Nature

## A conversation with Dr. Luise Herrmann, Cosphatec GmbH

*Dr. Luise Herrmann, Sales Director at Cosphatec GmbH, is responsible for the EMEA region (Europe, Middle East, Africa). She joined Cosphatec in 2017 as sales manager and was responsible for the Benelux and DACH region. Mrs. Herrmann studied food chemistry at the University of Hamburg, lived in Nantes while taking her second licence and made her PhD in food chemistry at the University of Hamburg.*



**EURO COSMETICS:** *You are one of the leading specialists when it comes to high-quality, innovative raw materials. Which raw materials do you use and to what do you pay particular attention?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** We focus on stabilising raw materials so basically everything that makes a product more stable regarding the consistency and the preservation as well as the protection of the oily phase.

The focus on our daily business lies on alternative preservatives, to be more precise: alternative preservation systems which we call Multifunctionals and that are free of listed preservatives.

Our Multifunctionals belong to our most popular product range and most of them are sourced from 100 % natural and sustainable origins as well as bio-degradable and approved by COSMOS. Besides our expertise in stabilising preservatives we also offer other products as actives, thickeners, natural emulsifiers and emollients.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Alternative preservatives for modern natural cosmetics. You detected this trend early on and implemented it successfully with the Cosphaderm brand. What product offerings are there in the meantime?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** We are working with very interesting acids such as levulinic acid and anisic acid. Also, we use the preservative effect of glycols and organic esters. Furthermore, our portfolio also offers extracts like our Cosphaderm® Magnolia Extract 98.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *And which are your best sellers?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** Among our best sellers are Cosphaderm® LA-T (levulinic acid), Cosphaderm® Propanediol natural (COSMOS certified propanediol) and Cosphaderm® Magnolia Extract 98 (magnolia extract). We also have thickeners within our best sellers such as our Cosphaderm® X 34 – a vegan xanthan gum which enables the production of clear gels and a smooth skin feel. It is also fast and easy in solubilising.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Meanwhile there are also increasing ethical motives to buy and the avoidance of plastic. How do you handle these developments?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** For us, it is important to contribute our part to a sustainable and a more sparing sourcing of raw materials. In fact, our vision is that one day every

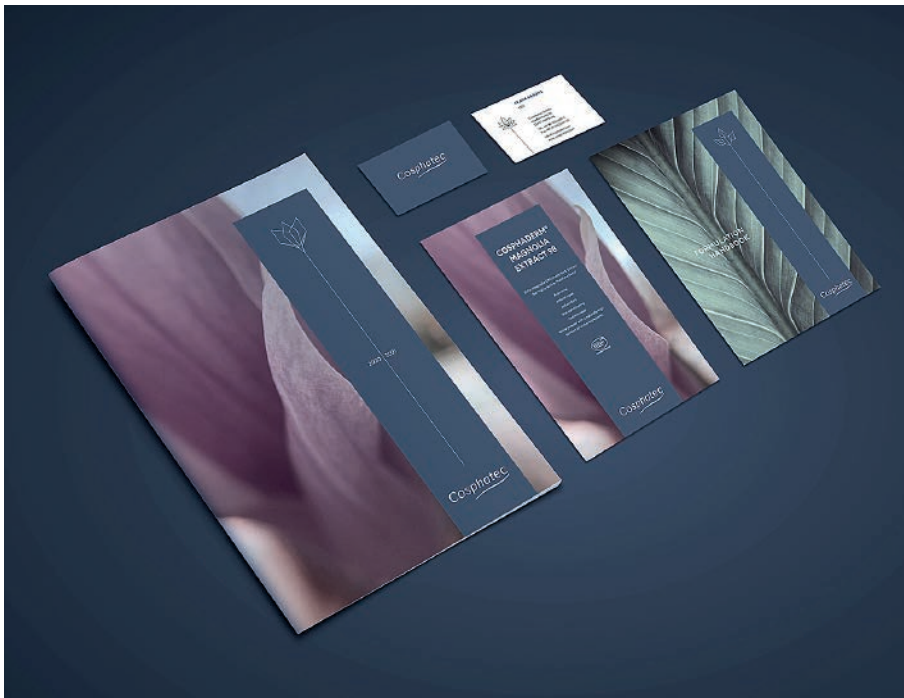
single harmful and synthetic material in cosmetics industry will be replaced by natural alternatives. This is why most of our products and all of our core products already are COSMOS certified, meaning they are sourced from 100 % natural and sustainable origins.

Instead of common preservatives we use natural alternatives which are more sparing. We offer products that can be used instead of silicone oils such as our Cosphaderm® Feel – the sensation on the skin would let you think it is silicone but it is not as its origin is rapeseed and castor. As for microplastic our R&D team is still researching. Nevertheless, our Cosphaderm® Xanthans can be used as a sustainable replacement for microplastic.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Since its establishment in 2005, a lot has happened at Cosphatec. Can you briefly describe your company's most important milestones?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** Only 5 years after the establishment we moved into a bigger office with 290 m<sup>2</sup> where we had our very first inhouse laboratory. In 2013 we launched our important blend Cosphaderm® MultiMEG.

Because of the increased demand, in 2016



we founded our subsidiary Cosphatec (Shanghai) Co., Ltd. in China. Last year we moved into a new office with 40 employees on an area of 700 m<sup>2</sup>.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *You have now redefined your brand image. How did this come about and what do you want to say with this?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** As every company there comes a time when you need to grow not only with the market but also with the spirit of the company. Sustainability and naturalness are very important to our colleagues at Cosphatec, so not only the employees act and think in a responsible manner but also our products are sustainable. This is why we decided it was about time to emphasise our image. We asked ourselves, a team consisting of mostly young professionals, what actually defines us as a company and what even is our identity. Taking our internal research into consideration we created an updated corporate identity and a fitting design. Hence, we needed to update our rather clinical design into a more natural design with earthy colours and botanical closeups and icons.

With this changes we want to keep up with the times and seize the opportunity to become more digital. This is why you can expect some interesting – digital – news as product videos and more if you keep following us at LinkedIn.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *“Natural stability for modern cosmetics.” What precisely lies behind this slogan?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** We produce raw materials that cover the essential needs of formulators. Our raw materials not only provide microbial stability against bacteria, yeasts and moulds but also antioxidative stability. We offer the stability against phase separation and a stable viscosity. All this stability is given by using natural alternatives.

Modern means for us taking care of skin tolerance and nature at the same time. Meaning we use bio-degradable raw materials from sustainable and natural sources which we test according to highest German quality standards. This way we can guarantee only positive effects on the skin.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Is the preservation of microbiotic-friendly products a contradiction?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** I don't think so. We frequently test our Multifunctionals and verify that certain germs do not get eliminated.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *What strategy do you pursue when it comes to skin compatibility?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** We only work with skin-friendly products and test them regularly in our own laboratory as well as in independent laboratories to ensure the skin compatibility.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *How do you offer your customers the best possible service?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** Most of our colleagues have a technical background which is why we not only sell our products but have also internalised them and understand them perfectly. Above all, we know how to combine and how to adapt them to our partners formulations. Because of our expertise our partners like to work close with us. We call them partners because we see our relationships more as a long-term partnership. We are approachable, personal and kind. Our work is defined by high quality products and consultations. Our partners can always reach out to us and meet us at exhibitions and have a drink or two with us. This is what a lot of clients appreciate about us, too.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *What distinguishes you from your competitors?*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** As mentioned before, we are very personal and approachable. This is why our customer service is also very estimated by our partners. Our team consists of dynamic young professionals who are kind and openminded. Considering the fact that our colleagues have a technical background and therefore a profound expertise, partners like to approach us with their problems knowing well we will find a solution. And what's also important: we are very committed to sustainability.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Your goal for the future is ...*

**Dr. Luise Herrmann:** ... to get the absolute best for cosmetics and ultimately for consumers which means to replace harmful raw materials with natural and more sustainable alternatives without endangering the products stability nor the environment. So, we aim to improve the cosmetics industry with our products and try to make technical progress while remaining environmentally friendly. This is why we keep showing our partners these equivalent alternatives that are more sustainable – hoping one day we won't have to convince them anymore as natural preservatives will become more and more standard in cosmetics.

**EURO COSMETICS:** *Thank you for the conversation.*