

Media Information

5 April 2022

BMW i Ventures invests in high-performance composites made from natural fibres

The BMW Group acquires a stake in Bcomp, a Swiss company that manufactures sustainable reinforcement solutions. Collaborative partnership in motorsport moves to the next level, joint R&D work for series vehicles gets underway

Munich/Mountain View (California). The BMW Group is deepening its involvement in the field of sustainable, resource-efficient manufacturing of vehicle components made from natural materials. BMW i Ventures, the premium carmaker's venture capital firm, is now investing in Swiss cleantech company Bcomp, the leading manufacturer of high-performance composites made from natural fibres. At the same time, the two companies are also strengthening their partnership on the motorsport side, with Bcomp now an official BMW M Motorsport partner with the new BMW M4 GT4 racing car. Plus, BMW Group Research and Bcomp are also setting up a development collaboration with the aim of using a higher proportion of renewable raw materials for components in future vehicle models.

Bcomp's cutting-edge reinforcement solutions were first deployed by BMW M Motorsport in Formula E in 2019. The flax cooling shaft on the BMW iFE.20 made it the first BMW racing car with parts constructed from renewable plant fibres. Meanwhile, the Bcomp-developed powerRibs™ and ampliTex™ reinforcement solutions made from natural composite materials have been used in DTM touring cars from BMW M Motorsport to substitute selected carbon fibre-reinforced plastic (CFRP) components. Such advances underline BMW M Motorsport's vital role as a technology lab for the BMW Group, which is now set to continue with the collaboration on the BMW M4 GT4. Taking the findings and experience gained on the track as a basis, these new material technologies will also find their way into BMW M models and BMW M Performance Parts. "Product sustainability is increasing in importance in the world of motorsport too," says **Franciscus van Meel, Chairman of the Board of Management at BMW M GmbH**. "So we are delighted to have Bcomp on board as an official BMW M Motorsport partner for the BMW M4 GT4 project."

Inspired by leaf veins, the powerRibs™ reinforcement technology developed by Bcomp maximises stiffness with minimal weight by creating a 3D structure on one side of a thin-walled shell element. This enables a decrease in the amount of base material used, thereby reducing weight, costs and consumables in production. The ampliTex™ reinforcements add a visible layer of flax fibres as a carbon-neutral replacement for the conventional

covering material. Combining the two materials makes it possible to cut the amount of plastic used for interior panelling by up to 70 per cent and at the same time to lower CO₂ emissions by as much as 60 per cent. The result is more sustainable vehicle components, whose failure mode has the additional benefit of increasing safety over traditional composites. The natural-fibre composites also lend themselves to use with classical motor sport accessories, such as those in the BMW M Performance Parts range.

The development collaboration between BMW Group Research and Bcomp is also working on the use of new sustainable material solutions for future production models. Developing such innovative materials forms a key element of the sustainability strategy of the BMW Group, which is seeking to lower its vehicles' lifecycle carbon emissions by over 40 per cent by 2030 compared to 2019 levels.

Employing renewable raw materials and natural fibres such as hemp, kenaf or flax minimises material usage while also achieving a weight reduction of up to 50 per cent over conventional materials. This in turn helps to lower the energy consumption of the vehicles in which they are used. What is more, the natural materials bring down the calculated CO₂ figure, as their original plants have absorbed CO₂ while growing and released oxygen.

At the current time, natural fibres are particularly well suited to use in visible and panelling parts in vehicle interiors. "In order to reduce carbon emissions across its entire fleet, the BMW Group isn't just focusing on the use phase – it is also paying attention to energy-saving processes during manufacture," explains **Florian Preuß, Senior Vice President Development Complete Vehicle at the BMW Group**. "Innovative material selection and composition are an important step here as we move towards climate neutrality."

The BMW Group has been investing in research and development in the field of renewable materials for a number of years now in order to meet climate targets and redefine standards for sustainable premium quality. As it strives to establish a holistic form of sustainable product development, to make responsible use of resources and transform to a circular economy, the BMW Group is joining forces with carefully selected start-ups and experienced materials suppliers to work on pioneering materials for the future.

In the event of enquiries please contact:

BMW Group Corporate Communications

Carolyn Seidel, Press Spokesperson Innovation and Technology

E-mail: Carolyn.Seidel@bmwgroup.com, telephone: +49 89 382 90340

Dr Britta Ullrich, Communications Finance

E-mail: Britta.Ullrich@bmw.de, telephone: +49 89 382 18364

Andrea Schwab, Press Spokesperson BMW M

E-mail: Andrea.Schwab@bmw.de, telephone: +49 (0) 151 601 60988

Internet: www.press.bmwgroup.com/global

E-mail: presse@bmwgroup.com

About BMW i Ventures

BMW i Ventures is the BMW Group's venture capital firm, investing money and resources in start-ups in the fields of transportation, manufacturing, supply chain and sustainability. The firm has made many successful investments over the years in companies such as Bright Machines, Blackmore, Chargepoint, Graphcore, Urgent.ly, Proterra, PureCycle, Solid Power, Tekion, Turntide, Xometry and many more. BMW i Ventures invests in all stages from seed to growth with a focus on Series A/B.

The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2021, the BMW Group sold over 2.5 million passenger vehicles and more than 194,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2021 was € 16.1 billion on revenues amounting to € 111.2 billion. As of 31 December 2021, the BMW Group had a workforce of 118,909 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

www.bmwgroup.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/BMWGroup>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/BMWGroup>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/BMWGroupView>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bmwgroup>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/bmw-group/>

Media information

Date 5 April 2022

Subject BMW i Ventures invests in high-performance composites made from natural fibres

Page 4

Bcomp

Bcomp™ is a Swiss cleantech company and ESG-enabler that develops and sells sustainable light-weighting solutions. Its proprietary natural fibre-based reinforcement technologies ampliTex™ and power-Ribs™ reduce environmental impact in a wide range of high-performance applications, from automotive interiors to the highest levels of motorsports, from luxury yachting to sports, infrastructure, aerospace and even space. The Bcomp team offers its customers cutting-edge engineering support from idea to final part, out of its Fribourg headquarter. More information: www.bcomp.ch/