



One planet  
inform with care

## GRUPO AIEn

Sector: Goods

Region: México

Best Practice:



Grupo AIEn is a leading manufacturer of cleaning products in Mexico, providing innovative hygiene and well-being solutions for homes. With more than 70 years of experience in the market, the company's purpose is to build a cleaner and more sustainable world for its customers.

Ensueño® is a brand inspired by social development, nature and respect for animals, and is the only fabric softener in Mexico with a biodegradable plant-based formula and 100% recycled polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic container.



### Mentality

Life Cycle Thinking (LCA): Driven by the commitment to cultivate a culture of environmental protection, Ensueño® has incorporated two models into its management processes, namely the circular economy and the life cycle analysis. With a vision and focus of **LCA** since 2015, Ensueño participates in the scorecard of The Sustainability Consortium which is validated by the University of Arkansas, and this determines the areas of opportunity and strengths of the product with sustainability criteria that are updated annually.

In the circular economy, Grupo AIEn has been a leader in the collection and processing of post-consumer material for the generation of its packaging since 1995. Another of the approaches they use is the development of local suppliers with fair and sustainable practices.

Analysis focused on critical points: From an LCA, the critical points with which Ensueño® has worked, research and sustainable development were delimited, highlighting these as the transcendental priorities. It has promoted the development of local suppliers through the introduction of sustainable practices, as well as the eco-design of its packaging to contribute to the reduction of plastic waste.

As part of the brand's sustainability strategy, Ensueño® transformed its formulas to be biodegradable, and this is made with natural raw materials free of animal cruelty. Parallel to this it has placed special interest in transparency and the development of the suppliers with which the fabric softener is manufactured. Its characteristic of Plant Origin derives from the use of palm oil as a raw material, guaranteeing that it meets the criteria for supplying sustainable agriculture. UUMBAL® which is one of the suppliers to Ensueño®, is certified with the Rainforest Alliance (RFA) on its farms and processing plant, and this guarantees the proper use of resources, support for biodiversity, and the generation of new formal jobs in the area. After evaluating the environmental footprint, challenges have been identified and worked on in the formulation such as the elimination of priority chemicals and this prioritization of reformulation is maintained based on international regulations such as REACH, the Chemical Footprint Project and environmental audits.

The "unique" attribute is based on a gas chromatographic analysis of the fatty acid profile in fabric softeners, which allows it to be compared with the rest of the fabric softener brands sold in Mexico, and this confirms that Ensueño® is the only one that obtains the softening agent of a plant.

Ensueño® has over the past 10 years contributed to the reduction of plastic waste, and the bottle has been redesigned to include post-consumer material. From 2016 to date Ensueño® has also recycled an annual average of 8,000 tons of PET for its bottles.

Ensueño® works towards continuous improvement and is a brand committed to innovation and constant change, and has set goals to identify and address areas of opportunity for further improvement.

### Sustainability Integration

Through the various strategies, Ensueño® is especially inspired to meet the needs of its consumers by offering a sustainable product, and the efforts made thus far has repositioned it as a pioneer on sustainability issues within the category of fabric softeners through clear actions in the environmental and social fields.

When speaking of a certified responsible supplier, one can list investments and actions such as those that UUMBAL® carries out in the southeast of Mexico, where it promotes the quality of life of thousands of families through the generation of more than 1,500 direct and 3,000 indirect jobs, boosting the local economy in vulnerable areas of the states of Veracruz, Chiapas, Campeche and Tabasco. In addition to this, it offers training and development programs for suppliers in the region and assured purchase plans for palm fruit production.

UUMBAL® is a project for the planting of 10,000 hectares of African palm in areas that had previously been destined for livestock activity, and through this reconversion the soils are used and reforested. One out of every four hectares is used for the conservation of nearly 300 species of flora and fauna, according to an inventory carried out in partnership with the Chiapas University of Sciences and Arts (UNICACH).

## Principle 1: Reliability



Ensueño® has a vertical integrated process with recycling capacities that are born from direct collection in communities to the preform of the bottle. It has 30 waste supply routes, more than 6,200 collection points and two recycling plants located in Querétaro and Nuevo León with the capacity to process more than 50,000 tons of PET and HDPE.

## Principle 2: Relevance



The ecodesign of Ensueño® bottles received the Sustainable Packaging award in 2012, awarded by the Mexican Association of Packaging and Packaging, A.C., for being the first bottle in its category made with 100% recycled PET. With this design, it is possible to divert on average 8,000 tons of PET from sanitary landfills.

The reformulation of the product has turned the sector around, making Ensueño® the only one in Mexico that obtains its softening agent from palm oil. Aware of the discussion around this raw material, the brand has focused on obtaining it responsibly through UUMBAL®, which supplies palm oil produced on farms and extraction plants certified under the principles of sustainable agriculture and fair work with Rainforest Alliance.

## Principle 3: Clarity



The product information is explained in a clear way to the consumer with simple wording and with graphic communication identified on the bottles that are made of 100% recycled PET material; as well as the communication in text of being the “only one of vegetable origin”.

## Principle 4: Transparency



The recycling process and production of 100% recycled PET containers can be consulted on the company's social networks. Tours of recycling plants are offered to students, organizations, and consumers upon request.

The corporate portal has a section that details information about the AIEn Recycle program, as well as the supply of raw materials. For detailed information on these and other initiatives, the annual sustainability report can be consulted. In addition to this, according to the learnings that have been had with the training of the United Nations Organization as well as specialist consultants in sustainability, Ensueño will carry out during the year 2021 modifications in the design of its label so that it can provide more information to the consumer.

## Principle 5: Accessibility



To make the information available to the consumer, an icon has been prominently displayed on the front panel of the product highlighting "100% recycled bottle". Together with the producer's information, the brand's website is printed on each bottle.

There is a special section within the product's website where its plant origin is exposed.

The brand's social media are used as platforms to be in constant communication and direct interaction with customers and consumers, as well as to answer their questions about product information and have a more efficient channel. Facebook: Ensuenomx, Twitter: @EnsuenoMexico or Youtube: EnsuenoMexico



## Principle 6: Three dimensions of Sustainability



### ENVIRONMENTAL - SOCIAL - ECONOMIC

**ENVIRONMENTAL:** The certification (RFA) ensures that UUMBAL® has been audited with rigorous standards that require significant steps towards long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The production plants where Ensueño® is manufactured have the Clean Industry certificate from PROFEPA, a voluntary government environmental audit program, which demonstrates compliance with regulations under national and international parameters, and with good operating and engineering practices, the The certification logo is printed on all the boxes where the product is transferred to the supply stores.

Ensueño® uses the most efficient renewable resource flows by stopping the use of virgin resin to make its bottles, as well as optimizing it using post-consumer material. This achieves a 13% reduction in climate change compared to a container made with virgin resin. The said reduction has been calculated by means of an LCA in accordance with the ISO 14040 and ISO 14044 standards. The difference between the use of virgin resin was analyzed and compared with post-consumer recycled resin.

**SOCIAL:** The attribute "Unique of Vegetable Origin" reveals the history of the development of national supply, which supports the Mexican countryside and offers a better present and future to rural communities. The RFA certification verifies respect for Human Rights and the improvement in the quality of life of farmers. As explained in the special section within the product's website where its plant origin is exposed

Through Fundación AIEn, the brand donates more than 40 thousand bottles of product per year to various associations and causes.

**ECONOMIC:** Shares positive alternatives to handling plastic bottles with the consumer, by giving a second life to the bottles that have already been disposed of before they are lost in landfills. This supports the generation of an alternative economy for people in vulnerability. In addition, the substitution of international purchases for local products through UUMBAL® triggers an economic spill, formal jobs, among others. This information can be consulted in detail on the UUMBAL® website.

## Principle 7: Behavior Change and Long-Term Repercussions



Circular economy trends and growing information on the proper handling of plastics allow Ensueño® to be a benchmark in the category for being the first to include recycled material in its packaging as well as having managed to manufacture bottles made with 100% post-consumer materials. The brand also promotes environmental education in the community with its various direct collection initiatives.

# Principle 8: Innovative Approach and Utilization of Multiple Channels



Ensueño® is a brand which differentiates itself from others, thanks to the positioning of its recycled packaging that is made known on the label, social networks, corporate page and interaction with customers and consumers.

Through Grupo AIEn, the brand works in synergy both nationally and internationally, seeking continuous improvement of its packaging through the AIEn Recycle program which is recognized by retail clients such as Walmart, resulting in receiving the Sustainable Supplier Award in 2019.

The information to support the statement "Unique of plant origin" is sent directly to the consumer, through advertising campaigns that have been scheduled in various media such as commercials on television, cinema, radio and digital platforms. Through these platforms the process of obtaining palm oil is disclosed on the brand's website, facilitating consumer access to the information by promoting education on the subject in a clear and transparent manner.



## Principle 9: Collaboration



The Ensueño® brand represented by its corporate group AIEn, collaborates with business chambers such as ECOCE and APR that are focused on recycling issues, as well as the analysis of national legislation on environmental issues with CAINTRA, CIPRES and ConMéxico.

## Principle 10: Comparability



Currently there are no national or international parameters that allow us to make comparisons that could be validated by a certification body. However, it participates in the sustainability questionnaires of The Sustainability Consortium that serve as an indicator to understand the classification of various parameters of the product against the competition.

## Key learnings

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