

The Future on the Road: How Continental Is Transferring Technologies from Concept Tires to Series...



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BY [CONTINENTAL AG](#)

The Future on the Road: How Continental Is Transferring Technologies from Concept Tires to Series Production

- Continental sets new standards in the use of sustainable materials in series tires
- Pioneer in implementation: in some cases, it takes just one year to go from concept to series production
- Tire manufacturer is already using silica from rice husk ash, carbon black from end-of-life tires and polyester from recycled PET in series tires

Hanover, Germany, January 23, 2024. At leading international trade fairs such as IAA Mobility, Continental presents innovative technologies that set new standards. One topic of focus is sustainability. As early as 2021, the tire manufacturer focused on the use of silica from agricultural waste, polyester from recycled PET and other renewable and recyclable materials with the Conti GreenConcept concept tire. Continental has now incorporated many of these technologies into its series tires. With the UltraContact NXT, the company launched the most sustainable series tire to date last year. This underlines Continental's claim to be the most progressive manufacturer in the tire industry when it comes to sustainability.

Sustainable innovations belong on the road and not in a showroom. We ensure that innovations and concept tires are made available to our customers and go into production as quickly as possible, without any compromises in terms of safety and performance. We were the first to integrate pioneering technologies such as recycled PET into series tires. And we

were also the first tire manufacturer to launch a model with a particularly high share of renewable and recycled materials. We walk our talk when it comes to making our world more sustainable,

says Jorge Almeida, Head of Sustainability at Continental Tires.

Polyester from PET bottles: From the presentation to series production in just one year

PET bottles often end up in waste incineration plants or landfills. By using the ContiRe.Tex technology, Continental and its partners have succeeded in producing high-quality polyester yarn for tires from recycled PET bottles. Depending on the tire size, between nine and fifteen PET bottles can be reused per tire. The PET bottles used come exclusively from regions without a closed recycling loop.

The premium tire manufacturer brought the Conti-Re.Tex technology to production readiness in less than a year. This is remarkable, because in addition to the conversion of corresponding production processes in the tire plants, the use of new raw materials is always a complex balancing act for the engineers and material experts at Continental. After all, only when all the materials are perfectly coordinated with each other can customers benefit from safe, energy-efficient and durable high-performance tires. Series tires with Conti-Re.Tex technology have been available from specialist tire dealers in Europe since April 2022.

Series tires with up to 65 percent sustainable materials

The Conti-Re.Tex technology is also part of the most sustainable passenger car series tire on the market to date. With the UltraContact NXT, Continental offers a tire with a particularly high proportion of sustainable materials. Many of the technologies contained in the tire were part of the Conti GreenConcept concept tire, which was presented to the public for the first time at IAA Mobility 2021. These included silica made from rice husk ash or recycled PET bottles. Production of the UltraContact NXT started in July 2023 in Lousado, Portugal. With up to 65 percent renewable, recycled and mass-balance-certified materials, the series tire combines a high proportion of sustainable materials with maximum safety and performance. All 19 dimensions received the top EU tire label rating (“A”) in rolling resistance, braking in wet conditions and exterior noise. By 2030,

Continental is aiming to use over 40 percent renewable and recycled materials in its tires. The UltraContact NXT is an important step for the tire manufacturer on the way to achieving its ambitious sustainability goals.

Innovations along the entire value chain

Thanks to the balanced interplay of efficient and sustainable technologies and materials, Continental products are particularly efficient when driving. The Conti CityPlus technology presented at this year's IAA Mobility, for example, increases the overall energy efficiency of a car tire by up to 10 percent. This means lower CO2 emissions for cars with combustion engines and greater range for electric vehicles. This is achieved by optimizing tire behavior in inner-city stop-and-go traffic, which can increase the range of passenger cars by up to three percent. For electric vehicles, this corresponds to a saving of around 0.6 kWh per 100 kilometers. Continentals latest technology could also be used in production in the near future. The premium manufacturer is in contact with several original equipment customers who have expressed interest.

Systematically moving toward greater sustainability

Continental is continuously working to advance innovative technologies and sustainable products and services along the entire value chain, from the procurement of sustainable materials to the recycling of end-of-life tires. By 2030, the premium tire manufacturer is aiming to use more than 40 percent renewable and recycled materials in its tires. Continental aims to achieve a proportion of 100 percent sustainable materials in its tires by 2050 at the latest.

Communications Manager Sustainability

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