RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF AMORIM'S NEUTROCORK®

Corticeira Amorim commissioned an evaluation of the carbon footprint of Neutrocork®, one of the new-generation technical stoppers, developed from natural cork using cutting-edge technology, recommended for wines with a certain complexity and embraced by thousands of winemakers around the world.

1. CHALLENGES

At a time when protecting the environment is more important than ever, consumers increasingly prefer cork stoppers because of their impeccable sustainability credentials, in addition to their superior technical capacities in terms of safeguarding the quality of wines.

The study aims to understand the carbon footprint of Neutrocork®, in order to:

- Obtain an estimate of the carbon footprint associated to Neutrocork®;
- Understand the contribution of each production phase to the total footprint, in order to identify most relevant areas;
- Identify opportunities to improve the environmental performance of Neutrocork®;
- Enable future measurements and quantifications resulting from changes and improvements.

2. CONTEXT

The company:

Corticeira Amorim is the largest producer of cork products in the world, with yearly sales of 702 million euros and clients in over 100 countries. Organised into five Business Units (BU) - Raw Materials, Cork Stoppers, Floor and Wall Coverings, Composite Cork and Insulation Cork - Corticeira Amorim offers a vast portfolio of sustainable high-quality products and solutions for use in industries as diverse and demanding as aeronautics, auto, construction, and winegrowing.

About Neutrocork®

Neutrocork® is one of Corticeira Amorim new-generation technical stoppers, developed from natural cork using cutting-edge technology, consisting of uniform-sized micro cork granule composition pressed into individual moulds. Its main feature is its great structural stability. This stopper is recommended for wines with a certain complexity.

3. APPROACH

To calculate Neutrocork's carbon footprint, a study was commissioned by Corticeira Amorim. For this study, conducted in 2018, by PricewaterhouseCoopers, a life cycle analysis (LCA) methodology was used, following the guidelines of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, developed by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Resources Institute. This is a standard method that allows evaluation of the impacts of a product or service on the environment during all stages of its life, from the extraction of natural resources to final waste processing. A Business to Business (Cradle to Gate) approach was adopted, meaning that the carbon footprint was calculated until the conclusion of the production process, including its distribution to UK.

4. RESULTS

The carbon footprint including all the production phases and final transport to UK represents a total of -342 kg CO2e/tonne of products, equivalent to -1.8 kg CO2e/1000 stoppers (i.e. -1.8g CO2e per stopper).

Scenario considering the carbon sequestration at the forest stage

Furthermore, since production of Neutrocork® stopper is integrated within the overall cork production chain, the study considered the carbon sequestration of the cork oak forest associated to cork production, delivering an even higher result - corresponding to a total of -73,342 kg CO2e/tonne of product, equivalent to -392 kg CO2e/1000 stoppers (i.e. -392g CO2e per stopper).

Conclusion

The results of PricewaterhouseCoopers study confirm that Neutrocork® stopper has a positive impact on the environment, thus reiterating Corticeira Amorim commitment to sustainable development.