

YKK®



sustainability journal  
second edition  
2022



# treating people and the planet as one

Little actions can lead to big change. YKK is moving forward with sustainability efforts from a holistic perspective to achieve the lofty goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. From creating zippers that can be recycled to powering more factories with solar to supporting communities whenever a need arises, YKK is committed to improving our collective quality of life.

Guided by the Cycle of Goodness® philosophy, articulated by YKK's founder Tadao Yoshida, YKK believes no one prospers without rendering benefit to others. Please enjoy the stories in YKK's second Sustainability Journal. You'll find YKK putting people first to create a healthier planet while supporting local communities with the belief that from small parts come big benefits.

Carbon neutral by 2050. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50%\* by 2030. Those are objectives for the YKK Sustainability Vision. Solar, along with wind and hydroelectric power, helps us get there by offsetting 70,000\* tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, creating positive change for communities where YKK operates and for the planet.

\*Scope 1 & 2 emissions

## how?

In 2020, YKK established and launched YKK Sustainability Vision 2050 with a goal of being carbon neutral by that year to help the planet and support our communities. We're putting the substance into sustainability, and solar is a top priority.

The Anaheim Project switched that sunny SoCal location to solar in 2015. Recently, YKK expanded to other territories, including Mexico. YKK will install solar on 26 different facilities by the end of 2022. The bigger vision is to see every location in 72 countries /regions across the world with a plant to generate its own power.

## why?

One word: Impact. The Anaheim Project reduces our carbon footprint significantly. Today, Anaheim is generating almost 100% of the consumed power they need in energy. Expanding to Mexico, the entire system there will generate 2,098 MWH hours annually, while eliminating on average 1060 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

We are also improving the air quality for our neighbors as we create new industry standards and inspire others to focus on renewable energy as well, with an eye toward achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. For YKK, solar power just makes good sense. Which is good for lowering our carbon footprint. And great for the planet.

# soaking up the sun to power-up clean factory production



**“The time is right—right now. We are looking at bigger projects that make an impact. Not just for our facilities, but for the community.”**

– Todd Baldwin,  
Director of Environmental Affairs,  
YKK Corporation of America

# a vision for the health of our planet and our people go hand-in-hand.

The YKK Sustainability Vision 2050 isn't just a wish. It's a way of being, inspired by our Cycle of Goodness® philosophy, grounded in the belief that no one prospers without rendering benefit to others. It's a way of doing business for the planet, for our communities and for all people.

## how?

Sustainability includes not just the environment, but employees, customers and society. We are focused on improving manufacturing as we create safe, fair, and inclusive workplaces. YKK is also part of the UN Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action with the goal to drive the fashion industry to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. The independent Science Based Targets Institute has certified YKK's GHG emissions reduction targets for 2030.\* Moving forward, YKK will accelerate efforts to make Vision 2050 a reality.

## why?

It's no secret that the fashion industry can become cleaner and more efficient. YKK wants to be part of the solution. We can't survive tomorrow without being a conscientious global citizen today. It's a big challenge. And thanks to the passion, commitment and perseverance of our people, we believe we can make it happen.

\*YKK's GHG reduction target for 2030 has been certified by SBTi as in alignment to the goal of keep global warming to 1.5°C\* target.

"This is not only for our generation but the next one."

- Asako Yoshioka, Vice President,  
Sustainability Department,  
YKK Corporation



# forest fires driven by climate change. communities driven by compassion.

When forest fires ravaged Turkey in 2021, it wasn't just a problem. It was a catastrophe. Communities came together to help, which included efforts to rebuild the forests in the short term and help address climate change.

"As a nation and people, we feel like friends, brothers and sisters working together to fight fires."

- Suat Odabasi,  
Sustainability Coordinator,  
YKK Turkey

## how?

Grassroots donations from employees provided daily living supplies for the impacted communities. In addition to that effort, YKK worked with the non-profit TEMA Foundation to donate 5,000 different kinds of pine tree saplings to the most damaged areas as part of the "We Will Grow Again" campaign.

## why?

In 2021, fires in Turkey increased by 755%. This year, Turkey had the hottest day in May in 95 years. Which is why YKK, both through individual employee efforts and company-wide initiatives, is investing locally and globally to tackle sustainability as if the world depends on it, because it does.



“With AcroPlating®, we can be more friendly to the environment and to our employees.”

– Masayuki Imori,  
AcroPlating® Engineer  
YKK Corporation

# turning gold into silver just got a whole lot greener.

## how?

In 2015, a YKK engineering team was tasked with creating a better way to plate metal fasteners. Five years later, what began with two people ended with 30 and a new process that is superior to electroplating. AcroPlating® technology results in greater durability against corrosion and has fewer defects such as cracks and pinholes. And the possibilities of AcroPlating® technology have just begun to be explored.

## why?

Traditional electroplating uses harsh chemicals like cyanide and chromium. Not only are these chemicals difficult to work with, they're dangerous for the employees who handle them. AcroPlating® finishing technology eliminates those chemicals and doesn't require heat sources. It also reduces sludge, creates less water waste, and puts fewer unfriendly elements into the environment. It's a win-win for employees, customers and the planet.

Since time immemorial, humans have strived to turn silver into gold. In fastener manufacturing, however, AcroPlating® finishing technology allows us to convert brass into desirable silver finishes while providing a cleaner, safer alternative to traditional electroplating, reducing greenhouse gas emission by 96%\*, which is 100% better for all of us.



\*3Y zipper with GSBN8 slider in NH3 finish

# one zipper.



TouchLink's® invisible technology gives customers a product passport that shows the garment's journey, which can keep it moving in the repair, recycle, and upcycle circle.

“TouchLink® can have a big impact. You are opening up to a whole new world with your product.”

– John Holliday,  
Senior Product Development Manager,  
YKK (U.S.A.) Inc.

## touchlink™

# endless connections.

### how?

Imagine, a small chip inside a zipper pull changing an entire industry. With TouchLink®, the only limits on progress are the imagination. Without compromising quality, strength, or durability, TouchLink® opens up a brand new world. It creates a product passport so that a brand and consumer have fluid access to invaluable information throughout a product lifecycle.

### why?

Hang tags are often removed. QR codes can wear out or fade. With TouchLink® technology in the zipper pull, the chip can not only convey how to care for the garment, but it is not subject to heat or wash cycles. It can be removed so the zip can be recycled, and it can tell processors what materials are in the garment. It's an opportunity to encourage recycling without sacrificing the durability you'd expect from a YKK® zipper.



An Ethiopian health worker examines an Amhara resident for signs of the disease trachoma.



# lending a helping hand across oceans and down the street.

YKK has supported The Carter Center to help communities for over 40 years. So when COVID-19 made their disease-prevention work in Africa even more difficult, YKK helped by providing medical-grade N95 masks when they were in very short supply.

“It’s not just about the communities, but making the employees feel that the work they are doing has real societal value.”

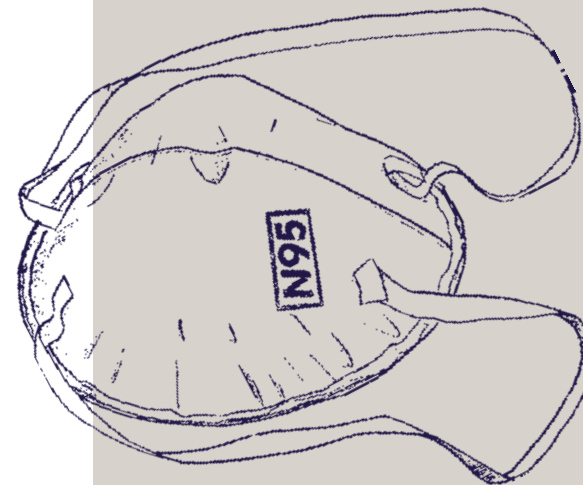
–Jessica Cork  
Vice President of Community Engagement and Corporate Communications,  
YKK Corporation of America

## how?

YKK cares about The Carter Center and believes in the tremendous work they do. Their philosophy matches our own: give a community what it needs, not what you think it needs. Or, as our Founder would say, “be a local.” These efforts start in communities and extend around the world.

## why?

One word: perseverance. From navigating complex governmental rules in China, Ethiopia, and Sudan to dealing with shipping delays, YKK employees worked to help deliver nearly 45,000 N95 masks to Ethiopia and Sudan, so The Carter Center was able to resume drug distribution to assist in preventing or eliminating devastating diseases such as river blindness and trachoma.





**designed to last longer yet easily remade. It's a beautiful contradiction.**



YKK's goal is to make things last longer. It's a founding principle of sustainability. The Mono-Plastic VISLON® zipper is the next step—a breakthrough in circularity to create something that can last, but also be easily remade.

**“When you speak of circularity, you have to change the perspective of use and design of products.”**

-Enrico Degara,  
Chief Sustainability Officer,  
YKK Italia SPA

### how?

The more materials anything has, the harder it is to recycle. A zipper is made of a minimum of five different materials. We were able to reduce it to three. Inspired by a valued customer who believed polyamide can be recycled more times with lower degradation of quality, we created a polyamide zipper that is more resistant to wear and tear. It's a shared vision for quality without compromise.

### why?

To be truly committed to our sustainability goals, we must create products that are built to last but also can be broken down and remade. Next up? Creating zippers from polyamide that are not only recyclable, but also made of recycled materials. Together, we can keep moving forward and achieve beautiful circularity.

**collecting plastic waste is good. making zippers out of the waste is even better.**



In 2018, a YKK employee saw the plastic waste problem in Sri Lanka. Then, he saw a solution. With a global team of colleagues and partners, PET bottles were made into yarn, which were crafted into Natulon® Ocean Sourced™ zippers, which turned into momentum for change.



Collection bins for discarded PET bottles, placed in Sri Lankan factories.

“It’s important that each person thinks about sustainability and what they can do. **Everyone** in the world can do something better.”

-Ryohei Nagahata  
Managing Director & Factory  
Director, YKK (Lanka) Pvt Ltd.

### why?

Working with YKK, India, Japan and USA, YKK in Lanka turned recycled yarn into zipper tape. They also delivered large PET collection bins so that people could deposit plastic bottles at neighboring factories. These bins not only collect waste to become feedstock for new zippers, they inspire hope and encourage different companies to work together for the good of the planet. It’s the beginning of a beautiful cycle.

### how?

With waste management not fully functioning in Sri Lanka, there's no standard for the disposal of plastic waste. It ends up in rivers which flow into the Indian ocean and pollute the island's beaches. The collection bins in the YKK Lanka factory's export processing zone keep bottles out of the ocean, so they can be recycled instead.

# a little hope about making a big difference

Sustainability is grounded in the very root of the word, “sustain” which means to “strengthen or support over time.” For YKK, creating products with greater durability has always been a hallmark of the company. And today, YKK is making products that are better for the environment and safer to manufacture. But there’s much more to be done.

Today, YKK’s commitment to sustainability is comprehensive, with a lens aimed at achieving a carbon neutral footprint as the touchstone of the YKK Sustainability Vision 2050. This long-term plan comes with a sense of compassion to care for employees, the community and the planet in equal measure. Thank you for joining us on this journey.





**Let's write a new  
chapter for the planet.  
And for each other.**

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Since the company's founding in Tokyo in 1934, YKK has continuously set industry standards for quality, service, value, and innovation in the production of zippers, plastic hardware, hook and loop fasteners, webbing tapes, and snap and buttons. With integrated production and supply systems in 72 countries and regions around the world, YKK is positioned to meet the needs of

increasingly diversify and require shorter product cycles. Guided by the CYCLE OF GOODNESS® philosophy - no one prospers without rendering benefit to others - YKK aims to contribute to a sustainable society through its products and manufacturing operations and constantly seeks new ways to serve the changing needs of its customers while at the same time investing in its employees and giving back to its communities.

# YKK®

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**YKK**

*Little Parts. Big Difference.*