

Talking dirty – pollution

The winning article in this year's **Pharmaceutical & Cosmetic Review/ Coschem Diploma in Cosmetic Science** essay competition is written by **Nikita Venter**. As the writer of the top essay, Venter's work is published in this Student Focus and she's received a prize sponsored by the magazine.

Pollution, a fashionable 'swearword', has left many an opportunity for cosmetic chemists to combat its effects. In 2016, Mintel stated that consumers are aware that air pollution is affecting both their skin and hair, which has resulted in many new anti-pollution ingredients launched on the market. According to Euromonitor International, China, India and Pakistan contain cities with the highest levels of pollution in the world, which no doubt has pioneered the development of anti-pollution cosmetics. Interestingly enough, in China, health concerns are driving sales, whereas Westerners are more concerned with premature skin ageing.

There are countless opportunities for developers and brand owners, but where to start? It remains obvious that planning plays an essential role. Before thinking of finished products, one needs to think of a target market. People living in rural areas won't be placing much importance on anti-pollution cosmetics, whereas protection against the sun would be a winning formula for them. If you want a product that sells, look at urbanised areas, and even go as far as heavy industrialised ones.

Pollution types on the radar

Countless products on the market protect against air pollution, but we can take it a step further and investigate chemical pollution. Perhaps one can formulate a product that can be multifunctional in the sense that it caters for protection against more than one type of pollution. Is a specific age or ethnic group being targeted? Once the obvious questions have been answered, the formulator or brand owner needs to decide exactly

what function their product needs to serve. Taking a look at products on shelf, these either provide protection or a means of treatment. For anti-pollution products, prevention or treatment benefits, or a combination of both could work

In western markets consumers demand multifunctional products, so keep this in mind when formulating. Remember while

anti-pollution discussions emerged a few years ago, the topic has only just become established in the cosmetics industry. So consumers need to gain trust in the efficacy of the finished product. Consumer trust plays an obvious role in the sales of a product, which well-established brands enjoy. While these brands may enjoy a head-start in this new category, there is currently no standardised method to quantify the efficacy of an anti-pollution product. Where sunblock uses SPF testing, a standardised measure of efficacy is yet to be developed for anti-pollution products.

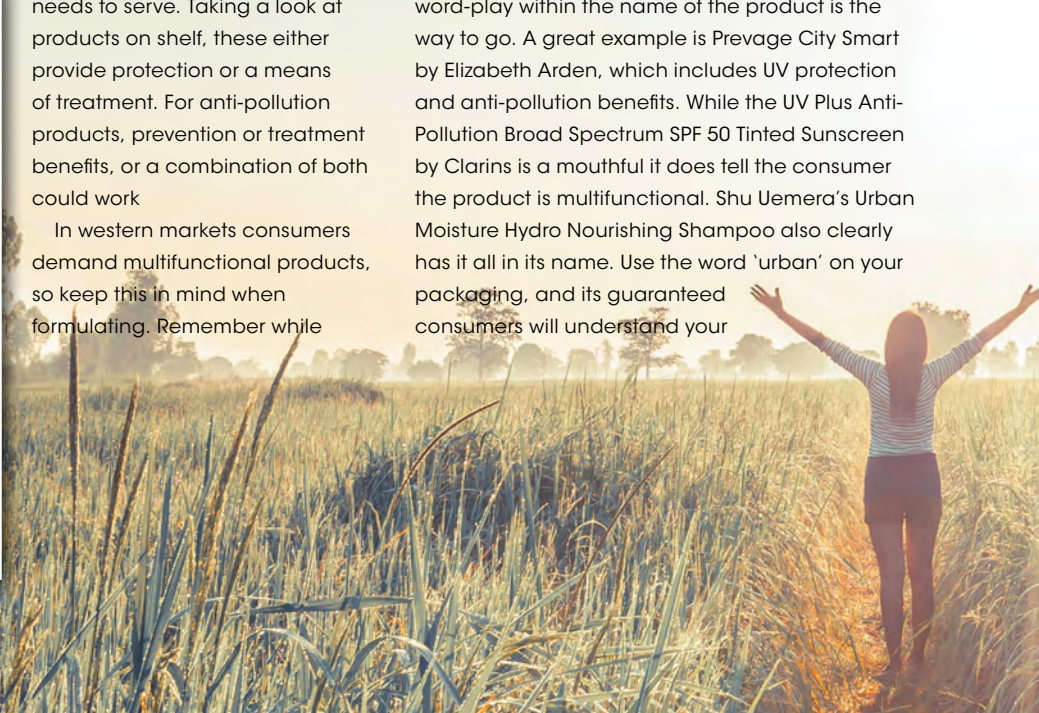
Your choice of ingredients is key when developing an anti-pollution product. You must think of the mechanism of action of the active ingredient to drive your marketing. Lipotec's Pollushield contains chelating and free-radical scavenging properties, binding to all the pollutants on the skin and getting rid of reactive oxygen species. Covestro's Baycusan is a film former and prevents pollutant particles from being absorbed.

The increasing demand for green products is another point to consider. The green shift can easily be accommodated with plant extracts, vitamins and antioxidants with anti-pollution properties.

For anti-pollution hair care products, Provital's Keracyn 73400 is an antioxidant derived from artichokes that protects the cuticle. Croda's Heliogenol is a sunflower extract that protects hair with its anti-oxidative activities.

Claims and consumer groups

When it comes to claims, Mintel says many brands don't claim anti-pollution on their packaging. Even though we cannot always make consumers understand the science behind the concept, word-play within the name of the product is the way to go. A great example is PreVage City Smart by Elizabeth Arden, which includes UV protection and anti-pollution benefits. While the UV Plus Anti-Pollution Broad Spectrum SPF 50 Tinted Sunscreen by Clarins is a mouthful it does tell the consumer the product is multifunctional. Shu Uemera's Urban Moisture Hydro Nourishing Shampoo also clearly has it all in its name. Use the word 'urban' on your packaging, and its guaranteed consumers will understand your



meets cosmetics

product's function. For hair care, Nexxus City Shield Conditioner also gets it right.

Want to go natural? Ren clean skincare's Anti-Pollution Mist not only clearly states the product's use, but the free from claims substantiate its naturalness. South Africa's African Extracts Advantage Intensive Day Cream contains bio-active Rooibos and plant extracts and clearly states on the packaging: 'it reduces signs of ageing and protects against environmental stress'.

opportunity that needs to be seized, as the statistics speak for themselves: sun care is a huge category and product sales are predicted to rise.

All eyes on Africa

All this talk about pollution, but no mention of the opportunities available in Africa – our very own stunning continent, rich in culture and biodiversity, and what's more, all of this is in our backyard. With anti-pollution being the hot topic, the Ethnic market is ripe for the taking. It would be a shame not to explore every angle – you can compare it to having a swimming pool that you never use. A hot summer's day comes around, you aren't in the mood for a swim, yet you listen jealously to the neighbours splashing about whilst the braai is on the go. In the February 2017 edition of P&C Review, Ingredient's Claudia Fiannaca stated, 'within the next 10 years, the African beauty market will be increasing two-fold, showing a projected annual growth of five to 10 percent'. The expected worth of the African beauty and personal care market in 2017 was US\$13.2 billion, showing the market should not be underestimated.

Anti-pollution products are also gaining traction in the male grooming market. Ponds Men Pollution Out cleanser contains a charcoal mask and coffee bean scrubs to combat pollution. Eisenberg Paris has a complete collection aimed at anti-pollution for men and ClarinsMen Super Moisture Balm is yet another example of a male grooming anti-pollution product.

Remember pollution does not discriminate. Children are just as exposed as adults. A parent that is knowledgeable on the importance of UV protection will most certainly be well-informed about pollution protection. So why not tie anti-pollution into a sunblock formulated for children? It is an



South Africa contains a wealth of Ethnic diversity, and we have diverse botanicals in our backyard. This provides an opportunity for us to stick to our roots and make the most of the African botanical theme, to address consumers pigmentation and natural hair care needs.

Partner studio editor of the Huffington Post, Janine Jellars, wrote in an article on the Ethnic hair category that black consumers in South Africa spend up to six times more on hair care products than white consumers. She also stated the Ethnic hair care market is shifting towards a natural theme.

There are many international examples of anti-pollution hair care products, like Shu Uemera's Urban Moisture Hydro Nourishing Shampoo, Nexxus' City Shield Conditioner. And Anti-Pollution Frequent Use Shampoo by J.F. Lazartigue. For the African Ethnic market, this is most certainly an area of great opportunity for new product development.

Africa's Ethnic diversity creates a platform to explore relevant anti-pollution skin and hair care products. But remember – you need to understand the market before launching something new. Ethnic groups are not perturbed by ageing, but rather pigmentation, which is also caused by pollution.

There are many gaps that can still be filled, and innovation will most certainly pave the way. •



ABOUT

Nikita Venter is a sales representative at Savannah Fine Chemicals where she works across all industries with pharmaceuticals being her biggest portfolio. She has completed Module 1 of the Coschem Diploma in Cosmetic Science and has an honours degree in Zoology. Before joining Savannah two years ago, Venter worked for the Social Insects Research Group at the University of Pretoria. Her research focused on honeybees, yet after developing a deathly bee allergy, she made a positive career change.