Clariant also presented its robotic laboratory, AMICA, that offers the company to step up the pace of product innovation so as to overcome current limitations of existing preservation systems and to develop the next generation of product preservation. Also showcased was its ingredients selector tool to make the right surfactant choice based on Performance factors such as mildness to skin and hair, hair colour retention, and skin conditioning benefits; as well as Application factors such as foam properties, sensory and after-feel, and sustainability profile. An extensive mapping of the product carbon footprint (from cradle to gate) of the surfactants portfolio allows customers to make informed product choices.

# MyMicrobiome sees expanding interest in certification of cosmetic products

Each person has his or her own microbiotic signature, which is determined by our genetic heritage and is partly formed at birth. It is then modified throughout our life by various factors such as our food, the environment, where we live, the air we breathe, as well as the objects or individuals with which we come in contact.

With skin being the largest exposed organ, it is also one of the largest microbial habitats. However, we are just beginning to understand the microorganisms' complex relationships with each other and our bodies, in addition to the cosmetic and drug products we apply to our skin.

One company that is attempting to do just that is MyMicrobiome, which started out as a repository of information on the subject, but has since evolved to emerge as a leading independent certification body specializing in microbiome-friendly cosmetics and textiles. The ambit of products certified by the company has also expanded from skin care to include body and intimate personal care, in addition to intimate textile products like gloves.

While the first MyMicrobiome-certified products were tested as far back as 2019, in the last five years several such products have been launched across the world, according to Dr. Kristin Neumann, Founder of the company.

The need for microbiome-friendly certification arises from the fact that personal care products typically contain preservatives and surfactants, and these have an impact on the bacterial flora present on the body. While the flora is complex and contain several species, about ten bacterial strains account for the majority. For example, the oral microbiome is dominated by a bacterial species called *Streptococcus*, of which five – *S. mitis*, *S. sanguinis*, *S. mutans*, *S. salivarius*, and *S. anginosus* – can be used to test oral care products.

The company now offers testing standards for cosmetic products for adult skin, infant skin, scalp, vagina, mouth, foot and nose. For each it offers a different panel of key microbes depending on the usage of the product. For a product to bag the tag of 'microbiome-friendly' it should not influence the healthy skin's microbiome and leaves the microbes untouched.

The certification offered by MyMicrobiome is recognised by trademarks in several countries including India, where a few dermatology creams from leading pharmaceutical companies have been so labelled. The company is now in discussions with a leading distributor of personal care products to India to expand their offerings in the Indian market, where here is currently no regulation on the subject.


Ms. Hedy Scheck, Chief Marketing and Sales Officer, MyMicrobiome, sees an excellent fit between the age-old health practices in Ayurveda and modern microbiome science, as both underline holistic practices, and link physical and mental well-being.