Recycling

Recycling is an eco-efficient way of reintroducing valuable materials into the economy and of closing the loop. It makes metals and materials available for the manufacturing industry from consumer goods, called urban mining. Recycling contributes to resource efficiency, improves waste management and lowers environmental impacts due to metal production. As the processing of recycled material requires less energy than the processing of ore, recycling also saves on carbon emissions.

In the plant in Hoboken (Belgium), Umicore recovers 17 metals out of a wide and complex range of materials. The processed materials are by-products from other non-ferrous industries or originate from secondary sources, such as mobile phones, laptops, auto catalysts.

Umicore recovers metals in a sustainable way. It has invested over €500 million in the Hoboken plant since 1995. The site has undergone an extensive technological and environmental transformation. Sustainability is always embedded in all our processes.

Sustainability is key

Umicore pays great attention to the concepts of corporate social responsibility and sustainability and has improved its approach of these concepts over years. Social responsibility towards the community and environment is part of the Umicore culture and is widely shared by employees at all levels in the organisation.

Umicore Precious Metal Refining has partnerships such as cooperation with NGOs about reuse and recycling, focused (financial) support of regional projects and cultural cooperation with authorities. We raise awareness about the environment and recycling with 12 and 18 year old students in a playful way with our Ecomagic presentation. These approaches are owned by members of the management team. They are heavily involved in the implementation of relevant programmes with external stakeholders. Health and safety are key aspects in all business processes. Umicore has improved the communication and relationship with the neighbouring society through a number of projects and a transparent policy.
With the help of the EFQM Model

We use the EFQM Excellence Model as the tool to manage the complex requirements to our processes. The Model helps us to determine the areas for improvement but also to benefit from the synergy between the projects. One of the threats in a business environment is that people do not understand the need for agility and cannot follow the pace of change because of the amount of projects launched. The EFQM Model helps us to position those new projects and insights so that our people and our stakeholders see that we learned from previous projects and continuously improve our activities and processes.

About Umicore

Umicore is a global materials technology and recycling group. It focuses on application areas where its expertise in materials science, chemistry and metallurgy makes a real difference. Its activities are centred on four business areas: Catalysis, Energy Materials, Performance Materials and Recycling. Each business area is divided into market-focused business units offering materials and solutions that are at the cutting edge of new technological developments and essential to everyday life.

Umicore generates the majority of its revenues and dedicates most of its R&D efforts to clean technologies, such as emission control catalysts, materials for rechargeable batteries and photovoltaics, fuel cells, and recycling. Umicore’s overriding goal of sustainable value creation is based on an ambition to develop, produce and recycle materials in a way that fulfils its mission: materials for a better life.