RB’s purpose is to protect, heal, and nurture in the relentless pursuit of a cleaner and healthier world. This starts with building sustainability into product design in our innovation process. That’s why in 2012 we committed to ensuring a third of our net revenue comes from more sustainable products by the end of 2020 — we’re nearly there as we close 2020. It’s also why we are investing in science to embed sustainable chemistry into our future product innovations.

Designing with safer ingredients
Ingredient management and governance are priorities within our approach to product stewardship and safeguarding consumers. Ingredients are controlled through a Restricted Substances List (RSL) within a global system that reduces the use of ingredients of potential concern. Our suppliers also provide information on materials and we screen for chemicals of high concern during product design and procurement activities. These measures form the basis of control and are a foundation from which we drive the selection of even safer and more sustainable alternatives. These are promoted through our Sustainable Innovation Calculator (SIC) which is feature of all new global product development.

Our innovation teams, designing new products and/or reworking existing products, are guided by the RSL and the SIC to choose progressively safer and yet equally effective alternatives. As a final safeguard, no new or updated products can enter the market without a full Product Safety Evaluation which confirms compliance with the RSL.

We monitor emerging issues associated with our ingredients and, as a minimum, annually review our RSL and ingredient watch list. This review, carried out by senior leaders within our cross-functional Ingredient Steering Group, considers safety, sustainability, regulatory, and external affairs. For example, any new concerns, changes to existing limits or the acquisition of new product leads to product impact assessments. These can initiate timebound ingredient removal programmes that make sure any products on the market are brought up to the same standards applied to new innovations.

Where new scientific information emerges that changes our understanding about the ingredients we use, we develop new policy positions on their use. These include guidance to aid the selection of safer chemistries, and progressively continue to develop more sustainable products.

Making ingredient information transparent
Our ambition is to fully inform consumers about our brands, with transparency through clear product labelling and online information, perhaps where on-pack space is limited. This labelling continues to improve as we update labels and launch new products. Although it does take time to make these changes, now, more than ¾ of our revenue comes from those products with updated labelling or online information. RB also launched a number of products that specifically use safe and effective alternatives, often from natural organic origins to meet growing consumer demand. These include our new range of eco-certified detergents, Botanical Origins.

RB aims to play our part in combatting climate change and helping to protect ecosystems. Careful management of the ingredients we use, and the footprint of our products helps reduce their environmental impact, while also developing new products that are increasingly demanded by consumers. In doing so, we also appreciate the importance of working with partners, suppliers and our customers. Collaboration both helps to find new solutions and creates greater impact that improves our collective chemical and environmental footprints.

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