

products

Wash your hands of it all



In a South African township, a hand-washing device called the Mahlangu hand-washer is combating the spread of disease. The ingenious design involves converting the cap of an empty bottle into a homemade tap. The cap is pierced and then a long, skinny cone made from a readily available material like cork is inserted. One end of a length of wire is pushed through the cone, and the other is wound around a weight, like a stone, to nestle in the palm of the hand. The bottle is held above the hand facing downward, and when the weight is pushed up, the water is released and trickles down the wire toward the weight. Used carefully, a one-litre bottle can perform up to 60 hand-washes.

kudzulife.blogspot.com/2008/12/mahlangu-hand-washer.html

Organic Gum

Chewing gum, which is made of synthetic chicle, sugar and flavouring, doesn't just give you cavities – it also sticks to the pavement, costing millions in street cleaning. Now a small cooperative in the Mexican rainforest is bringing back the original chicle processing skills to make the Chicza Rainforest Gum, a certified organic chewing gum. The chicleros, as they are called, preserve the rainforest while getting the white sap from the trees. "We don't kill the trees like farmers do when they clear land to grow corn or graze cattle," they say. "We leave a wound, it's true, but eight years later it is healed and producing chicle again." The other bonus is that the gum is biodegradable and starts to break down right after chewing.

www.chicza.com



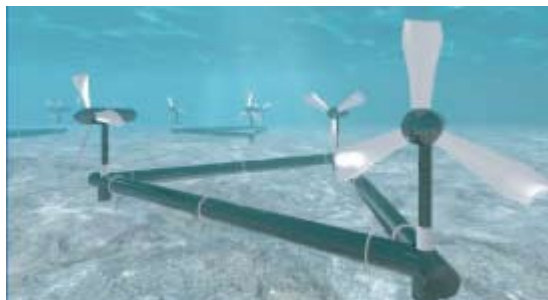
Fashionable footwear



Eco-friendly fashions seem to be getting more hip and elegant. Take the new range of boots by industrial design student turned shoe-designer Camila Labra, for example. Made almost entirely of plastic shopping bags, these durable ankle boots are not only waterproof – their slouchy ankle-length design is also in tune with the latest shoe trends. Labra insists that no-one will be able to tell the difference between a pair of these boots and leather ones. The line of boots is named Dacca after Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, one of the cities in the world suffering most from plastic bag pollution.

www.botasdacca.blogspot.com

Marine turbines



Although the tides around the U.K.'s coasts have the potential to provide up to a quarter of the nation's electricity without any carbon emissions, the stormy seas have made it difficult for any electricity generating project to succeed. However, a Welsh renewable energy company has now teamed up with ship propulsion experts to design a new marine turbine which they believe is far more robust. Cardiff-based Tidal Energy Ltd. will test a 1 megawatt tidal turbine off the Pembrokeshire coast at Ramsey Sound, big enough to supply around 1,000 homes. Their DeltaStream device, invented by marine engineer Richard Ayre while he was installing buoys in the marine nature reserve near Pembrokeshire, will be the first tidal device in Wales and is set to become fully operational in 2010.

www.tidalenergyltd.com/

Saving water

Today you decided to take a shorter shower. But how much water did you save? Don't know? Then the Econa water saving device could be a smart investment. This bluetooth information transfer device aims to make consumers more conscious of their water use at home. The product's user-friendly visual and graphic design enables the consumer to keep track of water use over an extended period. The main control unit even has programmable software and a USB port that allows you to upload the information to your computer.



'Lifelights' for Rwanda



Renewable energy lanterns have just hit the Rwandan markets as an alternative to the old, polluting and potentially dangerous kerosene lights currently being used in the country. The technology behind the Lifelight is primarily LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) which provide an impressive amount of light for their size, efficiency rating and non-toxic nature. The lantern can be charged by either sunlight or on its own patented wind-up technology, and is designed to last for years with minimal maintenance and cost.

<http://www.freeplayfoundation.org/lifelight.html>