



WOTA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kao Corporation
WOTA Corp.
March 10, 2022

Kao and WOTA Partner in the Water and Sanitation Field In Pursuit of a Sustainable Small-scale, Decentralized Water Reuse Society

Kao Corporation and WOTA Corp. have entered into a basic agreement intended to lead to a business alliance aimed at solving social problems related to water and sanitation, and Kao has made an investment in WOTA to get this partnership underway. Going forward, we will look for opportunities to make the most of our respective technologies and know-how in the spheres of water and sanitation with the goal of co-creating a sustainable small-scale, decentralized water reuse society.



WOTA

At present, countries with emerging economies face problems in accessing safe water, a precondition for enacting sanitation measures. In parts of Asia, river water remains the source of water used for people's daily activities. In addition, it is said that by the year 2050, there may be as many as 5 billion people living without access to safe sources of water^{*1}.

In advanced countries, too, access to safe water often becomes problematic in disasters, and the recycling and reuse of after use water are not happening at a sufficient level.

*1 World Meteorological Organization (WMO) The State of Climate Services report

Kao and WOTA will join forces in a business partnership aimed at solving global issues related to water and sanitation.

By pursuing initiatives that highlight both company's strengths, we aim to create the foundation for a sustainable small-scale, decentralized water reuse society. We will promote initiatives including sanitation measures and prevention of infectious disease in regions suffering from severe water shortages, support for areas lacking access to fresh water, such as disaster-struck areas within and outside Japan, and the reuse of domestic wastewater in a decentralized model.

Below are concrete details of the major initiatives that are planned.

Main Initiatives

- **Promoting and expanding the use of the water reuse system to allow for handwashing even in places without access to clean water**

We will move forward with plans to launch pilot experiments aimed at achieving a water reuse society by installing the WOSH water reuse hand-wash stand in places lacking access to fresh water, such as in parts of Asia experiencing the depletion of water resources or in domestic disaster areas, while making the most of Kao's sanitation-related experience and expertise.

- **Accelerating implementation of the water reuse system**

Kao will make use of the cleaning and sanitation-related technology that has been cultivated over many years of Essential Research in surface chemistry to accelerate the implementation into society of autonomous decentralized water reuse systems. This includes advancing the development of technology such as special hand soap that would mitigate the running cost of devices that use the WOTA autonomous water treatment platform.



WOSH water reuse hand-wash stand



WOTA BOX water reuse plant

Over the course of more than 130 years, Kao has worked to help consumers lead fulfilling lifestyles. In April 2019, Kao established the Kirei Lifestyle Plan, an ESG strategy that includes 19 leadership actions. Kao is taking the *Yoki-Monozukuri*^{*2} concept, cultivated by the group through its corporate activities to date, and upgrading it to ESG-driven *Yoki-Monozukuri*, as well as strengthening its initiatives in consideration of the environment and society. These joint initiatives with WOTA will further Kao's commitment to improved quality of life and water conservation.

*2 Kao defines *Yoki-Monozukuri* as a strong commitment by all members to provide products and brands of excellent value for consumer satisfaction.

In addition, Kao Group Mid-term Plan 2025 (K25), which puts forth a vision of "Sustainability as the Only Path," was launched in 2021, aiming to become a life care company that supports all life and that saves future lives. An important part of Kao's plan is to make water and sanitation pivotal to its business by providing water-saving products and sanitation products like hand soap and hand sanitizer, and by contributing to awareness-building related to sanitation habits by offering a variety of informational contents on company platforms like the official website and social media, and through social engagement activities.

WOTA's purpose is to "unlock the potential of water in our life" by conducting research into small-scale decentralized water reuse and autonomous water treatment systems. Using these technologies,

WOTA will ease society off its dependence on large-scale centralized infrastructure that disposes of water once it has been used and accelerate the transition toward a small-scale, decentralized water reuse society. The aim is to find solutions to a variety of water-related problems in society, such as water shortages and environmental pollution, through repeatedly converting wastewater into usable water in a variety of scenarios and situations.

WOTA's first product, the WOTA BOX, went on the market in 2019. The WOTA BOX is a portable water reuse plant capable of reusing over 98% of wastewater from daily life. What water infrastructure requires a city-wide grid to do, the WOTA BOX does through a tiny, 0.25 m³ compartment. This makes it possible to enjoy a continuous water supply even without being connected to a water network, such as in cases of disaster. WOTA's next product, WOSH, went on the market in 2020. WOSH is a water reuse hand-wash stand that can be set up in places without any water supply system. WOSH contributes to updated public sanitation and sanitation of living spaces not only by providing running water for handwashing, but also by being equipped with a feature that sanitizes the surface of smartphones, removing over 99.9% of germs.

WOTA strives to achieve both water freedom and environmental responsibility, leading to a more creative and sustainable way of life.

Company Profiles

■ Kao Corporation

Representative:

Yoshihiro Hasebe, Representative Director, President and Chief Executive Officer

Address:

1-14-10 Nihonbashi Kayabacho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Established:

May 21, 1940 (founded June 19, 1887)

No. of employees (consolidated):

33,507 (as of December 31, 2021)

Business description:

Consumer products businesses, including Hygiene & Living Care, Health & Beauty Care, Life Care, and Cosmetics, and the Chemical business to meet the needs of industry.

■ WOTA Corp.

Representative:

Yosuke Maeda, Chief Executive Officer

Address:

1-13-13 Nihonbashi Bakurocho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Established:

October 24, 2014

No. of employees:

55 (as of July 1, 2021)

Business description:

Development of the small-scale, decentralized water recycling system. Development of an autonomous control system for water treatment.

<Related Information>

■ About WOTA Corp.

<https://wota.co.jp/en/>

■ Kao > Sustainability

<https://www.kao.com/global/en/sustainability/>

■ Kao launches new ESG Strategy “Kirei Lifestyle Plan” to support consumer lifestyle changes

<https://www.kao.com/global/en/news/sustainability/2019/20190422-001/>

■ Kao’s New Challenges for the Future: Accelerating Purposeful Business Commitment with ESG

<https://www.kao.com/global/en/news/business-finance/2019/20190926-001/>

About Kao

Kao creates high-value-added products that enrich the lives of consumers around the world. Through its portfolio of over 20 leading brands such as *Attack*, *Bioré*, *Goldwell*, *Jergens*, *John Frieda*, *Kanebo*, *Laurier*, *Merries*, and *Molton Brown*, Kao is part of the everyday lives of people in Asia, Oceania, North America, and Europe. Combined with its chemical division, which contributes to a wide range of industries, Kao generates about 1,420 billion yen in annual sales. Kao employs about 33,500 people worldwide and has 135 years of history in innovation. Please visit the Kao Group website for updated information.

<https://www.kao.com/global/en/>