

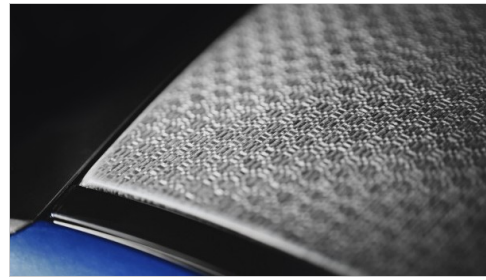
BMW adopts natural fiber composites for series production models to cut CO₂e emissions

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Developed in collaboration with Swiss clean tech company Bcomp, these flax-based lightweight components aim to help BMW reduce CO₂e emissions in future vehicle models

BMW announced plans to utilize natural fiber composites in its series-production models after successful application in racing cars, the automaker said in a press release on June 17. After years of development and research, these composites, derived from renewable raw materials, have been deemed suitable for meeting the strict requirements of roof structures in vehicle homologation.



Source: BMW

Developed in collaboration with Bcomp, a Switzerland-based clean-tech company, these flax-based lightweight components aim to help BMW reduce carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions in future vehicle models. The German carmaker has invested in Bcomp through BMW i Ventures, its corporate venture capital arm.

BMW has been a pioneer in lightweight vehicle construction to improve fuel economy and reduce CO₂ emissions. The use of natural fibers with a reduced CO₂e footprint in composite materials has become increasingly important for the German carmaker. These materials are particularly suitable for use in visible body exterior and interior trim components. BMW claims that using natural fiber composites in place of carbon fiber composites in the roof of next-generation BMW vehicles will lead to a 40% reduction in CO₂e emissions during production.

The use of innovative reinforcement parts made of natural fiber materials began in the 2019 Formula E season by BMW M Motorsport and has since extended to models like the BMW M4 DTM and M4 GT4, replacing carbon fiber plastic parts. Bcomp became an official partner of BMW M Motorsport in 2022. The new lightweight materials will face rigorous testing in the BMW M4 GT4 during the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring.

Franciscus van Meel, CEO of BMW M GmbH, highlighted the role of natural fiber composites in reducing CO₂e emissions and confirmed their readiness for series production, anticipating their future use in BMW M product ranges. “Natural fiber is an innovation that perfectly exemplifies BMW M’s claim, ‘Born on the racetrack. Made for the streets.’ This is why we are delighted to confirm the series maturity of these materials, a breakthrough we achieved with our official partner Bcomp. We are now looking forward to the use of these materials in future BMW M product ranges,” van Meel said.

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