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## Innovative solution to combat PFAS chemicals wins award: Oxyle receives the Green Business Award

This year's Green Business Award goes to Oxyle. The Zurich-based scale-up impressed the jury with its innovative solution to combat PFAS, the so-called "forever chemicals." These highly toxic substances accumulate in our groundwater and drinking water, as well as in our bodies. Founder Dr. Fajer Mustaq and her team have developed a technology that removes PFAS and permanently breaks them down. With this, Oxyle makes a significant contribution to protecting the environment and human health. As an independent foundation, the Green Business Award is being presented for the seventh time to companies that combine ecological impact with economic success.

Switzerland is heavily contaminated with PFAS. Studies show that these highly toxic forever chemicals can be detected at more than half of all groundwater monitoring sites and in human blood samples.<sup>1</sup> All soils examined also contain PFAS – even remote locations such as the Matterhorn.<sup>2</sup> These substances increase the risk of cancer and infertility, damage the immune and hormonal systems, and, due to their extreme stability, remain in the environment for centuries.

This is precisely where Oxyle comes in: the ETH spin-off has developed a technology that not only removes PFAS from water but completely destroys them. With this solution, Oxyle convinced the jury of Switzerland's most important sustainability award. Doris Leuthard, former Federal Councilor and President of the jury, says: "The classification of PFAS contamination is still relatively new and much remains unclear. One thing is certain: in addition to political solutions to prevent PFAS, we also need approaches like Oxyle's that permanently break down chemicals already circulating in the environment."

### What are PFAS chemicals?

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are odorless and tasteless chemicals that are extremely persistent – hence the term "forever chemicals."<sup>3</sup> Due to their water-, grease- and dirt-repellent properties, they are used in countless everyday products: outdoor clothing, cosmetics, Teflon pans, dental floss and even toilet paper. At the same time, PFAS enter soils, bodies of water and plants through industrial wastewater, firefighting foams or sewage sludge, and spread further throughout the environment. Over time, they also find their way into food, drinking water and everyday consumer goods.

### From a childhood dream to innovation

Oxyle's founder and CEO, Dr. Fajer Mustaq, grew up in Delhi and was confronted with the issue of water pollution from an early age. These formative experiences motivated Mustaq to found Oxyle. Together with her team, which now numbers 30, she develops customized, scalable and energy-efficient solutions that fully eliminate even the short-chain PFAS that have so far been particularly

<sup>1</sup> [Federal Office for the Environment \(FOEN\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [ZHAW Life Sciences and Facility Management](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office](#)



difficult to break down.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Fajer Mustaq is delighted to receive the award: “Protecting our waters has been a personal conviction of mine for a long time, and it’s one our team shares. We’re very honored to see Oxyle’s work recognized with the Green Business Award.”

### **Sustainable innovations in the spotlight**

The Green Business Award was presented for the seventh time. At the final event at Impact Gstaad, Oxyle prevailed against two companies: Voltiris, which uses solar modules for greenhouses without reducing crop yields, and Everllence, whose large-scale heat pump supplies entire cities with climate-neutral district heating. The Green Business Award is Switzerland's most prestigious sustainability award and offers finalists a unique opportunity to finance their growth. “With the Green Business Award, we want to give visibility to companies that demonstrate that sustainability is a business opportunity. Our finalists show what is possible when the economy takes responsibility,” says Cédric Habermacher, Director of Green Business Switzerland. The selection process follows a multi-stage procedure. The main jury includes prominent figures such as Michèle Rodoni, CEO of die Mobiliar, Axpo CEO Christoph Brand, and Prof. Dr. Reto Knutti of ETH Zurich.

#### **Green Business Award**

Since 2019, the Green Business Award has been presented annually to the most innovative Swiss companies that combine ecological impact with economic success. In the first phase of the selection process, around 40 national scouts from the fields of business, environmental protection and science nominate the best solutions in their industry for the award. An interdisciplinary jury of experts then selects the five best solutions and awards them the Green Business Excellence label. These five companies present themselves with a pitch to the main jury, chaired by former Federal Councilor Doris Leuthard. This jury includes 14 other well-known personalities, including Reto Knutti (ETH professor of climate physics), Michèle Rodoni (CEO of Mobiliar), Christoph Brand (CEO of Axpo), Bertrand Piccard (founder of Solar Impulse) and business journalist and entrepreneur Patrizia Laeri. Three of these five companies will be named finalists for the Green Business Award, and one of them will receive the coveted award on 13 February 2026 as part of Impact Gstaad's Impact Circle.

#### **Green Business Switzerland**

Green Business Switzerland highlights the positive link between entrepreneurial success and sustainable action. Behind this forward-looking collaboration of key stakeholders from business and environmental protection are organizations including the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), economiesuisse, The Association for Sustainable Business (öbu), the Swiss Environmental Foundation, Swissteclintech, Scienceindustries, Swissem, Swiss Textiles and WWF Switzerland.

#### **Partners**

**Axpo, economiesuisse, die Mobiliar and Swiss Post support the award as partners and, at the same time, act as pioneers of sustainability in their respective industries.**

[Further information on the “Green Business Award”](#)

#### **Media contact**

Sara Gutierrez-Osmani

[communication@greenbusiness.ch](mailto:communication@greenbusiness.ch)

Tel: +41 44 254 66 00

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<sup>4</sup> [Website Oxyle](#)