

# Corticeira Amorim: Preserving the Present, Building the Future

Aug 14, 2020

Cork oak forests are inherently sustainable. As a resource, they are invaluable due to their ability to effectively sequester carbon dioxide for long periods of time. They are mainly located in the Mediterranean Basin and significantly foster biodiversity. In Portugal alone, cork oak forests harbour over 200 species of animals and 130 species of plants per square kilometre. Regular cork harvesting and the use of such a sustainable natural raw material for the manufacture and production of cork-based products could be a cause for serious concern. But cork manufacturer, Corticeira Amorim has proven that it is possible to make use of this natural and renewable resource in a wholly sustainable and responsible manner.

Based in Portugal and founded in 1870, Corticeira Amorim is an international company that has enshrined sustainability into its operations and strategy. Developing materials for industries such as the automotive, aerospace, packaging, construction and transportation sectors, while also producing many general-use products, such as cork stoppers for wine bottles, Amorim consistently operates according to a clear motto: *'Preserving the present, building the future'*.

Amorim's ethos is manifested through the company's sustainable approach to forest management. The forests supported by the company are estimated to sequester an average of 4.6 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, whereas Amorim's operations only generate 6% of this amount. Cork oak forests act as an important carbon sink, since the trees are not cut down during the cork harvest and live, on average, for over 200 years. The company plays an important role in the promotion of sustainable forest management, certification of cork producers, forestry development policies and exchanging knowledge with forest producers. Such stewardship ensures that cork oak forests effectively maintain their natural sustainability.

The manufacture of cork products is also carried out in an inherently sustainable manner. Amorim's approach is simple – it uses 100% of the cork that is harvested, a clear example of an effective circular economy paradigm. The company has developed materials that use any cork left behind after the production of cork stoppers. Any dust produced during manufacturing processes, such as sanding or cutting, is also utilised as an important energy source – enabling Amorim to meet more than 60% of its energy needs.

Industries around the world are placing an increasing priority on sustainability. Acknowledging the negative impact of climate change, sectors are facing increasing scrutiny and pressure from consumers to optimise and change their processes to more sustainable models. However, the cork industry is already inherently and uniquely CO<sub>2</sub> negative due to the carbon retention properties of cork oak trees.

With its approach to the management and manufacture of cork, Corticeira Amorim proves its sustainable leadership – going above and beyond by optimising its processes in a climate friendly manner, and maximizing the positive impact of an industry that is already naturally sustainable.

[This article was written for TBD Media Group in association with Corticeira Amorim for the 50 Sustainability and Climate Leaders Campaign.](#)