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MARKS & SPENCER LAUNCHES FIRST EVER CARBON NEUTRAL BRA

Marks & Spencer has today launched the high street's first ever carbon neutral bra – part of the new Autograph Leaves lingerie collection.

The Carbon Trust Footprinting Certification Company has independently certified the footprint of the entire Autograph Leaves collection, which includes four styles of bra, three knickers and a set of suspenders. The calculation takes into account each item's complete life cycle - from component manufacture to transportation and even the energy customers use washing and drying their underwear.¹

The collection was manufactured at the M&S eco-model factory MAS Intimates Thurulie, Sri Lanka. The innovative renewable energy features and reduced waste initiatives implemented at MAS Intimates have helped reduce the carbon intensity of the energy used by an estimated 33%, compared to typical factory production.

Paschal Little, Head of Lingerie Technology at M&S said: "Nature is the inspiration behind Autograph Leaves so it's fitting that this range benefits the environment too. As the UK's lingerie market leader, we think it's right that we should lead the way in exploring new, more sustainable manufacturing options. As a result of this project we know raw material production, such as lace manufacture, is a major contributing factor to the bra's footprint, so we're now working with our suppliers to find better alternatives for the future."

The factory's local community is also benefiting from this initiative. M&S has purchased offsets through a carbon credit project run by Conservation Carbon Company. Working in partnership with nine local farmers, M&S is planting over 6000 trees in the desolate land between the Kanneliya and Polgahakanda forest reserves. Sri Lanka's forests are home to approximately 90% of the country's endemic species but are disappearing at a rate of 1.6%

per year. To counter this 75% of the trees planted are native species, creating more natural habitats and enabling wildlife to move more easily between the two forests.

The project will also help tackle rural poverty in the region by improving the livelihood of the farmers involved. The other 25% of trees will be income generating varieties such as mango and lime trees that offer additional nutritional and financial security to the farmers and their families.

Under its extended Plan A commitments, M&S has pledged that each of its 2.7 billion individual products will have a Plan A attribute by 2020, with a target of 50% by 2015.

Mike Barry, Head of Sustainable Business at M&S said: "The complexity of a bra's supply chain makes it the ideal product to learn about the practicalities of carbon footprinting, as it contains 21 component parts from 12 different suppliers. We're already applying the lessons we've learned to other product areas and have taken an important step towards our goal of giving every single M&S product a Plan A attribute."

The Autograph Leaves collection is available on line from the 13th April and will be in stores from this weekend.



Autograph Leaves Multiway Bra 32A – 40DD, £22

Autograph Leaves Knickers 6-22, £9.50

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Notes to editors:

1. The Carbon Trust Footprinting Certification Company

The calculation exercise was conducted by M&S and MAS Intimates Thurulie – taking into account the lifecycle of the entire Autograph Leaves range. The Carbon Trust Footprinting Certification Company provides independent verification of the carbon footprints of products and services against PAS 2050, the global standard for product carbon footprinting, the Carbon Trust's Footprint Expert™ and the Code of Good Practice.

The Carbon Trust Footprinting Certification Company is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to ISO 14065:2007 to provide greenhouse gas verification.

The Carbon Trust Footprinting Certification Company was created with the sole purpose of providing independent and objective certification of product carbon footprint measurements. With this single-minded focus, the team have become experts in product carbon footprints certification worldwide.

Offsetting information

The carbon footprint of a typical Autograph Leaves bra is around 2kg CO₂e. The footprint varies depending on the style and size of the bra/underwear, as some garments involve more complex production or more raw materials. For example, the footprint of a basic non padded bra is around 1.70 kgCO₂e compared to a larger push up bra at 2.20kgCO₂e

M&S has purchased offsets equivalent to 1,440 tonnes CO₂e through a carbon credit project run by Conservation Carbon Company. This offsets more than the current production run of the Autograph Leaves Collection.

About Plan A

Marks & Spencer launched its eco and ethical plan, Plan A, in January 2007 with the overall goals of making M&S carbon neutral; sending no waste from our operations to landfill; extending sustainable sourcing; being a fair partner and setting new standards in ethical trading and helping customers and employees enjoy a healthier lifestyle.

In March 2010 M&S extended Plan A further by encouraging all of its customers and employees to live 'greener lifestyles' and embedding sustainability into the way it does business. The original 100 Plan A commitments were extended to 180 and the new targets have deadlines of 2015 and beyond

Product Information

Autograph Leaves also comes in the following:

- Autograph Leaves push up bra 32A – 40DD £22
- Autograph Leaves multi-way bra 32A – 40DD and 32DD to 38G £22
- Autograph Leaves non- padded bra 32A – 40DD and 32DD to 38G £20
- Autograph Leaves padded bra 32A – 40DD £20

- Autograph Leaves knickers available in thong, brazilian and hi-leg brief - £9.50
- Autograph Leaves suspenders - £12 – available in selected stores only.