

# Product Stewardship

Respect for people and society  
beyond compliance



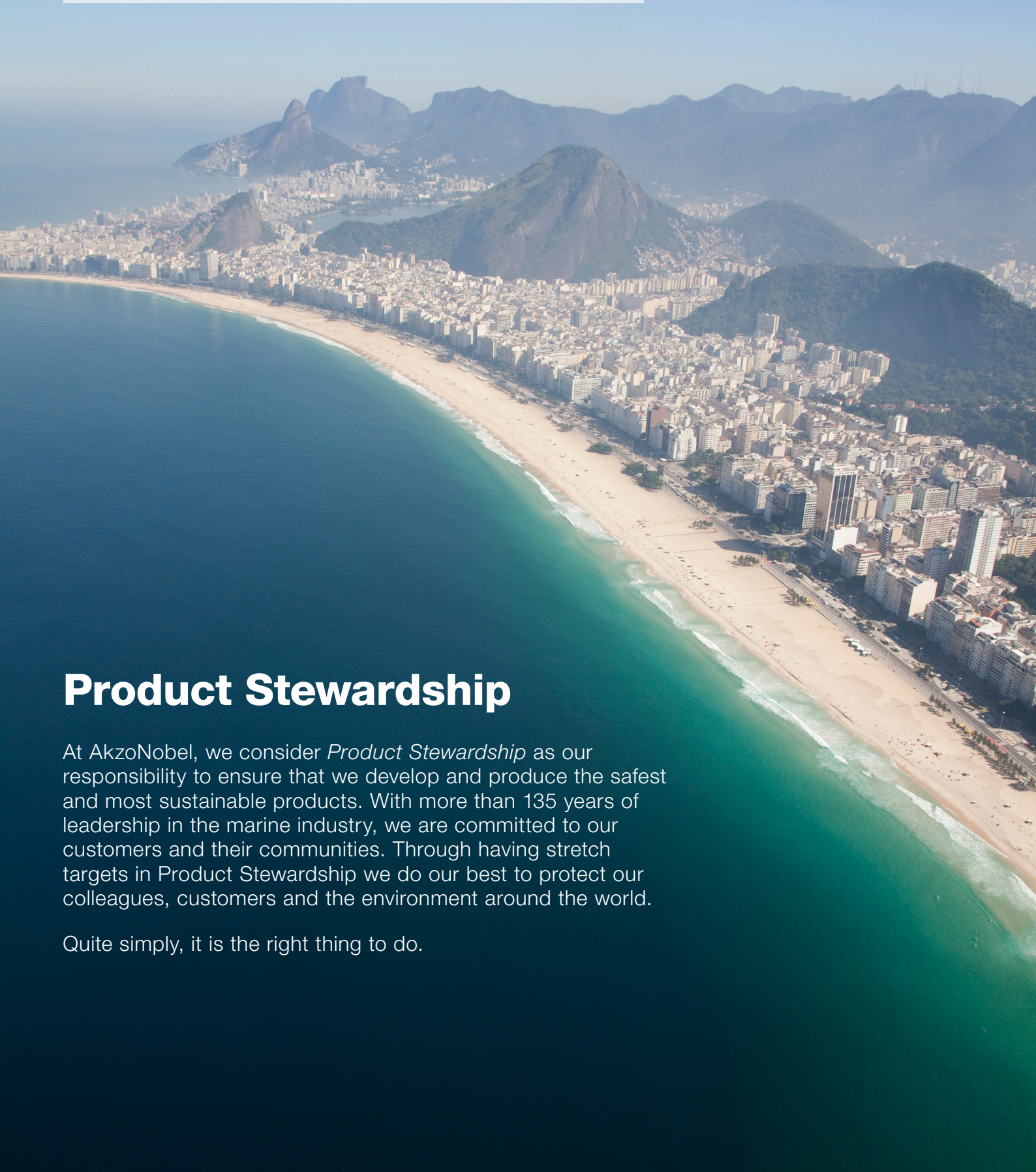
**Product:** an article or substance that is manufactured or refined for sale

**Stewardship:** the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving

## Product Stewardship

At AkzoNobel, we consider *Product Stewardship* as our responsibility to ensure that we develop and produce the safest and most sustainable products. With more than 135 years of leadership in the marine industry, we are committed to our customers and their communities. Through having stretch targets in Product Stewardship we do our best to protect our colleagues, customers and the environment around the world.

Quite simply, it is the right thing to do.



# How do we do this?

Companies throughout the world are required to ensure that their products comply with all appropriate legislation; that is simply the cost of doing business. However, at AkzoNobel, we have set our ambitions higher than just simply complying with legislation; we aim to be ahead of legislation so that we can then lead the way to safer and more sustainable products.

To do this we have created our award-winning *Priority Substance Program*, where we assess all substances used in our products for human risk, environmental risk and societal concerns through a standardised algorithm. If we discover any substance scoring more than a specific score on this assessment we undertake a full evaluation on the continued use in our products using all information available. Once a full assessment is carried out we classify the substance as either prohibited, restricted to specific end-uses or safe and take appropriate actions on those findings.

Our approach today is that all substances are evaluated in this way at the earliest stages of product development in order to ensure that what we produce now and in the future will be high quality, safe, and sustainable.



# Ahead of Legislation

In 2016, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updated the Toxic Substances Control Act which regulates substances used in the United States. In doing so, the EPA issued a list of ten priority substances that it wished to be evaluated first. Of that list, we had already evaluated some substances under

our Priority Substance Programme and subsequently restricted the use of these in our products and proved that the remainder were safe to use under normal conditions. Our Priority Substance programme is clearly well ahead of legislation.



# Track Record

AkzoNobel has led the way in Product Stewardship and our approach to safer products for many years. Some of our notable examples are:

- Removal of lead from all products
- Launch of the first biocide-free fouling control coatings
- Removal of Tributyltin (TBT) from our biocidal antifoulings
- Removal of Coal Tar from anticorrosives
- Removal of Chromates as colourants



## Measuring our Progress

We measure our progress in Product Stewardship in two ways;






**Externally**, we use the Dow Jones Sustainability Index to showcase our Product Stewardship. The prestigious DJSI is independently managed by RobecoSAM and monitors the sustainability performance of a company against a number of criteria; one of which is Product Stewardship. We have held the number one position in the DJSI for 5 out of the last 12 years and have been ranked in the top 10% at all other times.

**Internally**, we have developed a continuous improvement tool based upon the industry best practice (American Chemical Council [ACC] Coatings Care® and European Chemical Industry Council [CEFIC] Responsible Care) in order to ensure that our Product Stewardship ambitions are met throughout the value chain from raw material extraction through to final disposal of our products. We carry out annual assessments for each function within our company determining the relative maturity across the eight key elements of Product Stewardship.



# The Next Steps

We are continuously looking to see how we can build on our success and have collaborated with peer companies in the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) to develop a “Sustainable Portfolio Assessment” which combines sustainability and product safety to categorize products. We have grouped our product range into the five distinct types;

	Eco Premium	Products that have demonstrable sustainability benefits compared to the industry benchmarks
	Eco Performer	Product with demonstrable sustainability benefits which do not qualify as Eco Premium
	Performer	Industry benchmark products that are considered safe to use under their normal use conditions
	Transitioner	Products containing substances where legislative or societal signals indicate an issue in the near future
	Priority	Products containing substances that have clear phase-out requirements



The sustainable portfolio assessment is a powerful tool for product life cycle planning taking into account both positive and negative signals from sustainability and product safety aspects and ensures that we continue to stay ahead of legislation.

It is so much more than that; with this information, we can now discuss what the real impacts are based on product choices traditionally made only on technical parameters. Working with our customers, we can use the sustainable portfolio analysis to drive product choices to be safer and more sustainable.

## How you can help? Join us on our journey

We would like everyone to share our ambitions of protecting our communities through making and using safer and more sustainable products – please join us on our Product Stewardship journey. The simple first steps that you can take on this journey can be using lower volatile organic compound (VOC) products, wearing proper PPE, reducing excessive use of thinners, and proper disposal of waste.



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