



Cork | Photo source Elisha Terada on Unsplash

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SWEDISH STARTUP CREATES BIODEGRADABLE, CORK PHONE CASES

 SUSTAINABILITY

Swedish-based 15:21 is helping preserve the Portuguese cork forests by making phone cases out of biodegradable cork

Spotted: Swedish-based 15:21 is creating natural and biodegradable phone cases. The cases are made from cork, which looks like leather as it ages, according to the company.

Most phone cases are made from plastic, which is difficult to recycle. Cork is 100 percent biodegradable. It is also naturally water-resistant, the company says. Cork trees are not harmed when it is harvested.

The Swedish phone cases are also an effort to save Portugal's cork forests. Traditional demand for cork has declined as wineries started to use more plastic corks and aluminium screw caps. "This sudden change of demand has resulted in a deforestation of cork oaks, [but] by inventing new commercial uses for cork, we support the survival of the cork forests," the company said.

In addition to cork phone cases, 15:21 also makes cork passport holders and other accessories.

10th May 2019

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Takeaway:

Cork forests absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide and is comparable to the Amazon in terms of biodiversity. By creating a new demand for cork, the company is helping preserve the forests – and helping decrease demand for plastics. Springwise has spotted several innovative efforts to reduce the consumption of plastic. A Thai supermarket is wrapping goods in banana leaves instead of plastic. In the UK, a company is producing recyclable coffee cups from recycled paper.