

ECOLOGICAL PANELS THAT RECYCLE WASTE OF OLIVE OIL PRODUCTION AND PLASTIC

[Ecoplan](#), a small company operating since 1994 in southern Italy (Calabria Region), shows that the recycling of waste in a territory, associated with innovative approaches, is an economically viable opportunity. Ecoplan produces a new material recycling olive pomace that abounds in the territory and post-consumer plastics.

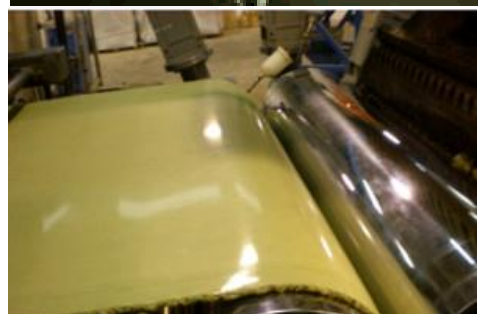
Ecoplan operates in a territory, the Gioia Tauro valley, characterized by olive groves and the residue of the production of olive oil is available in large quantities: 250,000 tons per year, which produce pollution and require a substantial commitment to their disposal. The olive oil production engenders mill residues consisting of pulp, skins and pits of the olives.

Regarding plastic, the industrial waste and post-consumer plastic collected in the territory are the predominant material used by Ecoplan. Also these materials are not only available in any area, but they create major problems for their disposal.

Ecoplan has developed a new quality product using these two types of waste, building high-performance technology panels which do not contain glues and do not emit formaldehyde and alternatives to panels produced in traditional materials. These panels can replace those produced with wood, avoiding leverage and cut down trees, and those traditional in plastic, using 50% less plastic that comes from recycling. The production cycle is low-impact because it does not produce waste water and production refuses are reground, thus avoiding creating further waste.

This innovative material has been exhibited at the architectural competition [Solar Decathlon Europe 2012](#), held in Madrid by the Department of Energy of the United States, where the house presented by Italy had the patio and outdoor areas in Ecomat panels. This house placed third, competing with 19 others coming from countries such as Brazil, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Norway, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Hungary.

The Ecomat material is impact-resistant, slip-resistant, shatter and water-repellent, it is not attacked by fungi, bacteria and insects, it has a strong resistance to weather, chemical products and salt.



It is used by many Italian schools for the production of counters, for its quality of being 100% recyclable and producing zero formaldehyde emissions. Thanks to its characteristics, this material is now widely used in various sectors: transport, construction, bathing facilities, exhibitions and performing arts, public and private furnishings.

The company also won the competition for the construction in Ecoplan panels of the [Salone del Gusto](#) in Turin, where the international Slow Food event *Terra Madre* will be held in October 2014.

This eco-friendly material that comes from the recycling of a land waste can not only inspire the Mediterranean countries to establish contacts and initiatives of economic internationalization, but it shows that small size and high intelligence local business can play an important role in improving the environment and at the same time producing wealth.

To know more

[Ecoplan website](#)

[Solar Decathlon Europe](#)

