

Ex-PUMA Chief Sourcing Officer Anne-Laure Descours Joins Haelixa Board

Descours will help Haelixa boost transparency and trust in fashion by scaling traceability and authentication for recycled, premium fibers and products.

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, September 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Anne-Laure Descours, former Chief Sourcing Officer of PUMA, has joined the Board of Swiss DNA-tracer company. Descours will be key in advancing [Haelixa](#)'s mission to achieve transparency and trust in the fashion and textile industries, scaling physical traceability and authentication solutions for recycled and premium fibers, and finished products.



Patrick Strumpf, CEO of Haelixa, with new board member Anne-Laure Descours, former Puma Chief Sourcing Officer

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Anne-Laure Descours

Descours' appointment comes at a pivotal time, as the fashion and textile industries face regulation fatigue despite ongoing demand to trace supply chains. At the same time, NGOs, activist groups, and watchdogs are intensifying scrutiny, while fraudulent materials and counterfeit goods erode consumer trust and brand/manufacturer relationships. According to the European Union Intellectual Property Office, counterfeit goods in the EU alone cost an estimated €16 billion of lost

revenue annually.

Haelixa's technology makes its mark by tackling these risks. It enables physical traceability and verification of origin, combating fraud and counterfeit problems across the entire value chain.

Descours is a respected and passionate industry leader who has taken a leading stance on responsible supply chains at PUMA and within leadership forums such as Zero100. The executive

sees an opportunity for Haelixa's physical tracer to solve material and product verification challenges for brands and manufacturers, and will facilitate closer partnerships between Haelixa and leading manufacturing groups within global supply chains.

The appointment marks a first at traceability companies, which typically favor finance, technology, and investment executives for their boards. Female board members are even rarer. Descours has long spoken out about the strengths women bring to leadership roles:

"The collaborative and empathetic traits women tend to show unite teams and encourage openness and collaboration, rather than friction and unhelpful competitiveness."

Descours brings over three decades of sourcing experience to the board role and recently joined the Gildan Activewear Board of Directors. She explains why she chose to accept Haelixa's request to join the board:

"For brands, the accuracy of tracing solutions has been a challenge, but with Haelixa's technology, once you spray it [invisibly] on the fibre or product, there is no way you can cheat on that. It is a non-removable application that will give the brand and the manufacturer peace of mind, and it's basically two for one: traceability and anti-counterfeit protection."

Patrick Strumpf, CEO of Haelixa, says that Descours' appointment offers the company key advantages at a time when brands and manufacturers are grappling with new regulations, harsh economic conditions, and loss of momentum on sustainability initiatives:

"Our biggest challenge is getting our solution to the right people. We found it easy to run pilots with sustainability teams, but didn't manage to jump across to the sourcing teams and therefore establish recurring business."

Accessing manufacturers and explaining the technology to them has also been a challenge, according to Strumpf, and one that Descours will assist Haelixa in overcoming. Descours believes that physical traceability is as much a risk mitigation tool for manufacturers as for brands:



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"When things go wrong in the supply chain, the brand passes the burden to the manufacturer, so this is a tool that protects the manufacturer's business if they mark materials and products on site before shipping, proving provenance later in the value chain."

Strumpf adds that while spraying on Haelixa's physical tracer comes at a cost, so does fraud:

"Major scandals can hurt brands, particularly on premium materials or products, and our technology has two key ways of protecting businesses: verifying fibre origin and flow through the supply chain, and anti-counterfeiting to prove the brand mark and quality."

Sharing the longer-term vision, Strumpf explains: "We want to become the main platform for end-to-end product traceability, due to the flexibility to spray our invisible DNA tracers onto materials or products at any stage." Regarding textile circularity, Strumpf adds: "By marking textile waste at sorting and recycling facilities, we can trace and verify the flow and percentage of mechanically recycled fibres into new materials and products."

Descours, who spearheaded the RE:FIBRE polyester textile-to-textile recycling initiative at PUMA, adds:

"When it comes to textile recycling, tracking and tracing feedstock and fibres has a heavy workload and can involve blockchain technology, which is complex for a brand to implement. Haelixa has a solution with the trust from a brand-protection perspective: once you've sprayed it, it's permanent."

Anne-Laure Descours joins fellow board members Patrick Strumpf, Dr. Gediminas Mikutis, co-founder and CTO of Haelixa, and Stefan Karlen, CEO of ImpactOne and ex-CEO of Panalpina. Descours will continue to be based in Hong Kong.

About Haelixa:

Haelixa was founded in 2016 as a spin-off from ETH Zürich, is the only company offering DNA-



A bottle of Haelixa's DNA marker — an invisible, safe liquid used to trace material origin

based physical tracers that permanently mark materials to prove origin and authenticity. Its patented spray-on solution is applied invisibly to textiles, apparel, precious metals, and gemstones, enabling secure traceability and anti-counterfeiting.

Trusted by brands such as C&A, OVS, and Hugo Boss, Haelixa has already traced more than 30 million garments and received over 20 international awards for innovation in supply chain transparency.

www.haelixa.com

About Anne-Laure Descours:

Anne-Laure Descours, former Chief Sourcing Officer at PUMA, brings more than 35 years of sourcing and supply chain leadership to Haelixa's Board. At PUMA, she oversaw global product development and sourcing while driving sustainability and digital transformation across the supply chain. She also serves on the Board of Gildan Activewear, one of the world's largest vertically integrated apparel manufacturers. A French national based in Hong Kong since 1994, Descours previously held senior positions at Li & Fung and Otto International.

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