

NATURAL COSMETICS PRODUCER VISIT

part of **GreenGate Methodological Toolkit₂**

Created within the project GreenGate₂.

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Natural cosmetics producer visit

INTRO

Ever wondered how natural skincare products are made? Get ready for an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of a real natural cosmetics manufacturing plant! You'll see how fresh ingredients are turned into awesome skincare and beauty products and you will learn what makes the difference between natural and standard cosmetics.

- Aim:**
- Learn how natural cosmetics are made.
 - Understand the difference between natural and conventional cosmetics.
 - Discover how ingredients impact human health and the environment.
 - Explore sustainable packaging and eco-friendly production practices.

Tools: ▷ printed worksheet (appendix 1.) for each participant

MOTIVATION

1. Discussion:

- What ingredients are found in the cosmetics we use every day?
- How do synthetic chemicals impact our health and contribute to water pollution?
- What should "natural" cosmetics mean?

2. Task for at home:

- Participants check the ingredient list of their own cosmetics and identify potentially harmful substances. For example:
 - Parabens (ethylparaben, butylparaben, isobutylparaben, isopropylparaben, methylparaben and propylparaben)
 - Phthalates (found in fragrance)
 - BHT
 - Microplastics

In this activity, 'natural cosmetics' means products made from ingredients that are of natural origins and are gently processed - no petroleum derivatives or harsh chemicals. But be careful: in the beauty world, the word 'natural' isn't legally defined, so brands can use it just to sound eco-friendly.



You can also use the GreenScan app to identify ingredients. For more information on potentially harmful substances, please visit: <https://green-gate.eu/blog/category/harmful-ingredients/>.



EXCURSION SCHEDULE

- The proposed schedule should be discussed with the producer and adjusted according to his/her suggestions.
- Before the start of the excursion, distribute a printed worksheet (in appendix 1) to each participant.

1. Welcome & Introduction (15 min)

- Welcome by the plant staff.
- Safety instructions to participants.
- Presentation on the principles of natural cosmetics (sustainability, skin health, eco-friendly production).
- Discussion on certifications (organic, cruelty-free, zero-waste). Which certification the producer has or doesn't have and why.

2. Full Tour (60 min)

- **Step 1: Ingredient Sourcing** – Where do natural ingredients come from?
- **Step 2: Production Process** – Mixing, extracting, packaging.
- **Step 3: Sustainability Practices** – How they reduce waste and carbon footprint.

3. Q&A & Discussion (30 min)

- Why do some cosmetics have harmful chemicals?
- How does packaging affect the environment?
- What should consumers look for when choosing cosmetics?

Post-Visit Activities (these activities can be done back in the classroom/workshop room to reflect on the excursion):

- **Reflection Writing:** "What surprised you about natural cosmetics?"
- **Campaign Project:** Create a poster or video educating people about choosing healthier, eco-friendly cosmetics.
- **DIY Activity:** Create your own DIY natural product (e.g., deodorant, lotion, or lip balm). <https://green-gate.eu/blog/category/diy-tutorials/>
- **Product Comparison:** Analyze a natural vs. conventional product (ingredients, impact).



Appendix 1. Worksheet for participants

Hey hey! 🙌 While you're cruisin' through the tour, keep those ears wide open and try to catch the answers to a few lil' questions below. 🤖 If your brain's like "uhhh... no clue," don't stress - there'll be a quick Q&A at the end of the tour where you can ask for more answers and anything else you are curious about. 💬✨

General Questions for the Manufacturer:

- When a product says it's 'natural' - what does that even mean?" 🌿🤔
.....
- What's the deal with sketchy ingredients in cosmetics? Why are they even in there?" 🤔🚫
.....
- How are beauty brands trying to be more eco-friendly and not wreck the planet?" 🌍🙌
.....

Are Your Cosmetic Products Safe for You & the Planet?

- What are some ingredients in makeup and skincare that might not be the best for you? 🚫
.....
- How do these ingredients affect the environment? 🌿💧
.....
- How can you choose beauty products that are better for your health and the planet? ✅✨
.....
- Why does eco-friendly packaging matter, and how does it make a difference?
.....



Appendix 2.

Correct answers (trainer's guide)

General Questions for the Manufacturer:

- **What makes cosmetics "natural"?**
 - The producer should use ingredients from plants, minerals, or animals instead of synthetic chemicals. But in the beauty industry, the word 'natural' isn't legally defined, so sometimes brands can use it just to sound eco-friendly.
- **Why do some cosmetics have potentially harmful ingredients?**
 - Many are added to make products cheaper, last longer, create foam, or smell stronger, but they can be unfavourable for skin and nature.
- **How does the company avoid pollution?**
 - For example, they might use biodegradable ingredients, sustainable farming, or eco-friendly packaging.

Impact of Cosmetics on Health & Environment:

- **What are some common adverse chemicals in cosmetics?**
 - Parabens, sulfates, artificial fragrances, microplastics, BHT, oxybenzone, petroleum products
- **How do these chemicals harm nature?**
 - When washed down the drain, they pollute rivers and harm fish and plants.
- **What's the best way to choose safe cosmetics?**
 - Use the GreenScan app to see a detailed description of each ingredient.
- **Why is the type of packaging important?**
 - Plastic takes hundreds of years to break down and it dissolves into nano and microplastic. Glass could be recycled all over again, does not dissolve any substances into cosmetic products but could be fragile and heavy. Metal as aluminum is light, unbreakable but the extraction process and production have a big influence on the environment. Paper is considered a renewable source but also has its limits.