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On **June 30, 2020, Toyobo Co., Ltd.** announced the establishment of R Plus Japan, Ltd., a new company that will seek to recycle used plastics.

Toyobo and 11 other companies forming a plastic value chain —Suntory MONOZUKURI Expert, Rengo, Toyo Seikan Group Holdings, J&T Recycling, Asahi Group Holdings, Iwatani, Dai Nippon Printing, Toppan Printing, Fuji Seal, Hokkai Can, and Yoshino Kogyosho— have established R Plus Japan as a joint venture to solve plastics-related challenges through recycling and contribute to the creation of a more sustainable society.

R Plus Japan, which commenced business in June 2020, will continue to seek additional investors. Sumitomo Chemical and others are currently considering joining the project.

A technology under development by Anellotech (a US-based biochemical company) to make raw materials for polyester from wood drew Toyobo's attention, motivating it to participate since 2017 in a project between Anellotech and the Suntory Group among others to develop polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles made entirely of plant-derived materials. The application of technology borne of this project makes possible the efficient recycling of used plastics.

Technologies for recycling used plastics

Currently in Japan, most used plastics other than PET from beverage bottles are incinerated. The chemical recycling technology R Plus Japan is focusing on makes it possible to break down PET and other plastics and return them directly to raw materials (including benzene, toluene, ethylene, and propylene). Compared with conventional chemical recycling, the new technology involves a simpler process, potentially reducing carbon dioxide emissions and the amount of energy required for processing.

R Plus Japan, together with Anellotech, will promote the development of used plastics recycling technology with little environmental burden. The project involves collaboration across industries, with the participation of companies that sort collected plastics, trading companies, beverage companies, and producers of monomers, polymers, and packaging films and containers. R Plus Japan aims to commercialize the technology by 2027 to contribute to solving shared global challenges associated with used plastics.

This note is the most recent addition to the [full report](#).

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