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# postmagazine

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## Design file: Lizette Smook

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**Who?** Lizette Smook's mission is to make innovative products from materials most people would discard, such as dinner plates from rice husks, towels from plastic bottles and bed sheets from bamboo. Smook founded her company, Innovasians, three years ago in Hong Kong to help companies become greener and cleaner.



**Why are the products unique?** Her handsome beige dishes and cutting boards are crafted from the skin of rice husks, which are bound with bio-resin and then heat-compressed. They are reusable, biodegradable and microwave safe.

Bamboo fibres can be harvested to make fabric for bed sheets, says Smook, who studied science in South Africa, where she was born. Bamboo is ideal for mass production because it grows extremely quickly, requires no pesticides and uses only 33 per cent of the water that cotton production requires.

Her non-snag towels (pictured) are made from organic cotton and recycled plastic bottles and are, according to Smook, more durable than conventional towels.



Another fabric gaining international recognition is e-leather.

"Traditionally, the leather that is harvested from cows comes from their backs because that is where the thickness and grain is most consistent," Smook says. "The rest is discarded and thrown into landfills, where it produce copious amounts of methane gas."

E-leather is leather that has been broken down into a fibre form, using hydro-electricity. It is then reconstructed to reduce waste.

"It is leather - only it doesn't stretch like leather. It's easy to clean, more durable, tear-resistant and lighter," Smook says. "[India's] Jet Airways used the fabric in their seats and found they were 40 per cent lighter."

**Why did she jump from working for mass producers such as Nike and Next to founding a sustainable design company?** "Actually, that was the impetus - when you see the impact on the environment that cheap, disposable fashion has, you realise that trends come and go, but the fabric and pollution created from producing these textiles lingers," Smook says.

**Where are her products used?** Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts uses the rice dinnerware in its staff canteens and for guests with babies. Hong Kong hairdresser Emmanuel F uses the towels.