



GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD  
ECOLOGY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## **WHY GOTS?**

# HOW OFFICIAL BODIES, ORGANISATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONS SUPPORT THE GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is recognised as the world's leading processing standard for textiles (clothing, home textiles, personal care products and food contact textiles) made from certified organically produced raw materials. It includes strict environmental and social criteria for operations along the entire textile supply chain. GOTS is recognized in all markets around the globe and the numbers are growing; in 2019 more than 7.700 facilities were certified to GOTS.



Numerous official bodies, international and national organisations consider GOTS a sound and credible standard that ensures the integrity of organic textile products from field to finished product. Below we provide a short overview of each.

### → **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

- ✓ The USDA National Organic Program's (NOP) "[Labeling of Textiles That Contain Organic Ingredients](#)" (May 2011) policy memorandum explicitly recognizes GOTS and its label grade 'organic:' "Textile products that are produced in accordance with the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) may be sold as organic in the U.S." USDA clarifies that 'made with organic' is also a codified label grade and can only be used for textiles certified to NOP or GOTS.

### → **International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)**

- ✓ IFOAM [endorses](#) GOTS as the minimum reference for organic textile processing. This endorsement includes the recommendation to governments not to start development of redundant standards and regulations but to make references to GOTS as processing standard for organic labelled textiles.

### → **Greenpeace**

- ✓ Greenpeace International's [Textile Procurement Policy](#) (October 2012) states that all cotton-based textiles (including t-shirts, shirts, sweat-shirts, trousers, and bags) that can be used by volunteers, activists, or staff) must be certified to GOTS or the equivalent. The objective of the Greenpeace textile procurement policy is to ensure that all cotton-based textile products made for use by Greenpeace have minimal environmental impact and are procured in line with the organization's core values.
- ✓ Greenpeace Germany published "[Textile Labels under the Magnifying Glass](#)" (October 2013), a guidebook for toxic chemical-free clothes which compares eco-labels. It emphasizes GOTS' high rating.

### → **Swiss Olympic**

- ✓ Swiss Olympic, the umbrella organization for the Swiss sporting associations and the Swiss National Olympic Committee, published its "[Guidelines on Textiles](#)" (2011) to address "the social welfare and ecological conditions along the whole production chain." Regarding environmental issues the procurement policy calls for clothing and textiles containing more than 75% natural fibers to be certified to GOTS or an equivalent.

### →The Consumers Initiative (Die Verbraucher Initiative e.V)

- ✓ The Consumer Initiative Germany is a lobbying organization focusing on the environmental, health, and social protection of consumers, arguing for the environmentally and socially responsible production of goods. Its [“Sustainability Labels Ranking,”](#) developed by an independent multi-stakeholder initiative, places GOTS in the highest “especially recommended” category.

### →German Council for Sustainable Development: Sustainable Shopping Basket

- ✓ The German Council for Sustainable Development has drafted a Sustainability Code to advance the concept of sustainability and to make companies sustainability performance transparent and comparable. Its [“Sustainable Shopping Basket”](#) provides concrete ideas and recommendations regarding consumption, and states that GOTS is a “trustworthy” product label.

### →United Nation’s International Trade Centre (ITC) Standards Map

- ✓ The United Nation’s International Trade Centre’s (ITC) [“Standards Map”](#) (2010) provides information on over 150 standards, codes of conduct, and audit protocols addressing sustainability issues in global supply chains. The Standards Map has strict rules for inclusion such as public criteria or the existence of an implementation system. GOTS was one of the first voluntary standard organisations and the first textile organization to enter all relevant data about GOTS into the data base. This data base has developed into a valuable information tool for the textile industry and those involved in public procurement.

### →Natural Resources Defense Council

- ✓ The U.S.-based Natural Resources Defense Council highlights GOTS in its [article](#) about how textiles companies are reducing their impacts on the environment. The organization notes that “GOTS standards are also crossing over to conventional clothing. As companies attempt to get a handle on their suppliers and maintain quality control, the list of environmental criteria is coming in handy. While consumers won't see a GOTS tag on conventional cotton jeans, some companies are asking suppliers to use only GOTS-certified dyes and chemicals on conventional cotton clothing.”