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GOTS hits milestones, releases new rules and tools supporting the textile industry towards sustainability and responsibility

2023 Highlights:

- GOTS Version 7.0 released
- GOTS certified entities grow by 8% and expand to 89 countries
- GOTS releases Due Diligence Handbook for certified entities
- Farm-Gin Registry implemented in India, creating a direct link and better evaluation of incoming data
- GOTS collaborates with European Space Agency and Marple for AI organic cotton project
- #Behindtheseams campaign reaches 21 million+ unique individuals

Stuttgart, Germany – As the world's premier processing standard for certified organic fibres, the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), managed by non-profit Global Standard, recognises 2023 as a year of significant milestones. From expansion of GOTS-certified facilities to the release of a new standard version, GOTS remained a beacon for businesses navigating changing legislation, social and environmental demands.

Coming out of one of the strongest years for GOTS, 2023 culminated with 25 GOTS-approved certification bodies reporting a noteworthy 14,676 certified facilities (an 8% growth from 2022) in 89 countries.

GOTS in Africa in 2023 was a year of access and visibility, building upon the successes of the first GOTS conference held in Africa in November 2022. Like the other worldwide GOTS regions, Africa saw certification increases, recording a 21% growth in the number of GOTS-certified facilities. In addition, and interestingly, regional coalitions of small and medium organic textile processors have begun to adopt GOTS-approved chemical inputs for wet processes. These

regional coalitions have expressed readiness for certification and a commitment to integrating into the GOTS value chain. Looking into 2024, we hope to support more textile entities in Africa to understand the value of GOTS and hopefully record the first Indigenous African certification body.

Ushering in GOTS Version 7.0

As of 1 March, facilities that become GOTS-certified will operate under the new GOTS Version 7.0, released in March 2023 with a one-year transition period. GOTS Version 7.0 and its accompanying [Implementation Manual](#) provides a comprehensive solution for companies who want to produce organic textiles and be supported to ensure compliance with environmental and human rights due diligence along the entire value chain, from field to finished product.

“At GOTS’ core is providing solutions. GOTS was always instrumental for pioneers in the textile industry to voluntarily demonstrate their commitment to sustainable value chains, as a risk management tool and for operational efficiency,” said Claudia Kersten, Managing Director of Global Standard. “With the new and upcoming supply chain regulations, GOTS acquired the additional role of helping companies show compliance with laws.”

GOTS Version 7.0 also introduced a six-step due diligence process and [handbook](#) that equips GOTS-certified operations to proactively identify, assess and mitigate adverse impacts throughout their value chains.

Looking to the future

GOTS initiated in 2023 two major projects in India, the globe’s largest producer of organic cotton. The Farm-Gin Registry was introduced for the 2022-2023 harvest season, which acts as a link between farm and gin and is a tool to strengthen integrity by collecting organic raw seed cotton data producing farm or farm group.

In a world first, GOTS, the European Space Agency (ESA) and software company Marple launched a new project that aims to show the potential for remote satellite monitoring of organic cotton cultivation systems. The project trained artificial intelligence (AI) to use ESA satellite data to detect cotton fields across India and automatically classify them according to their cultivation standard. By integrating standardised yield metrics, this innovative approach will enable GOTS to generate realistic estimates of organic cotton yields in specific areas. In addition, the project is expected to empower GOTS to recognise cotton fields that have not yet obtained organic certification but possess the potential for a transition to organic cultivation. The first results of the project will be announced in June.

Educating the consumer

GOTS, in its ongoing commitment to stakeholder education, orchestrated in November an immersive 360-degree awareness and educational campaign. Successfully engaging both consumers and industry professionals, the initiative shined a spotlight on GOTS-certified companies and their products, which empowered consumers to make more conscientious

choices while shopping. With an impressive turnout of over 250 certified entities, the campaign made a significant global impact, reaching more than 21 million unique individuals worldwide.

[Read the full 2023 Annual Report here.](#)

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About Global Organic Textile Standard

GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard), managed by non-profit Global Standard, is the world's leading standard for organic textile certification. It sets strict environmental and social criteria for the entire textile value chain, from the harvesting of raw materials to the finished product. GOTS certification ensures the integrity of finished organic textiles and provides comprehensive solutions for the industry and assurance to consumers worldwide. For more information, visit www.global-standard.org.