On 25th September 2015, member countries of the United Nations adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved by 2030.

The concept of Sustainable Development provides a comprehensive definition of development as it links ecological services and quality of life with economic growth. The 17 SDGs provide a common language and measurement framework to achieve sustainable development.

Please see how certification to GOTS helps to ensure compliance with each of the 17 goals.

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is the worldwide leading textile processing standard for organic fibres, including ecological and social criteria, backed up by independent certification of the entire textile supply chain.

GOTS certification helps obtain leadership position with regard to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
GOTS mandates fair remuneration for workers. The wages must meet basic needs and employers need to provide some discretionary income. In addition, there must be no deductions from wages used as a disciplinary measure.

Crop rotation is mandatory in organic farming. Therefore, the farmers engaged in cultivating organic fibres also grow organic food as a part of rotation, contributing to food security and reduction in hunger.

Organic farming is practised without use of hazardous pesticides or synthetic fertilisers, hence reducing farmers’ exposure to harmful chemicals, and the pollution of air and water from these sources. For processing stages, GOTS mandates that working conditions must be safe and hygienic.

When textile workers receive a decent income, they can send their children to school. The ban on child labour in GOTS leads to more opportunities for children to get an education.

For all textile processing stages, GOTS mandates that no discrimination is practised, whether based on gender, marital status, sexual orientation, etc.

GOTS mandates that potable drinking water and access to clean toilets must be provided at the workplace, and also at staff accommodation, wherever this is provided by the employer.

GOTS mandates that data on source of energy and consumption per kilogram of textile output must be maintained. The companies are also expected to provide training to staff on energy conservation.

With increasing demand for sustainable clothing, companies engaged in eco-friendly processing get more work. Therefore, there is economic benefit for participating companies as a result of more orders, the premium on organic products and preferred supplier status from buyers for organic textiles.

GOTS prohibits harmful and hazardous processing methods, driving the industry to innovate alternate non-hazardous and sustainable techniques. GOTS certification helps market entry. It also improves the prospects for enterprises in less developed countries, leading to improved industrial performance.

GOTS mandates that no discrimination is practised in hiring, compensation, etc., based on race, caste, religion, gender, marital status or for any other reason.

Decent earnings and absence of hazardous chemicals lead to better health and enhance harmony with nature. Limited overtime at the workplace provides more time with families and, hence, builds stronger communities.

GOTS mandates that local legal norms for air emissions, waste water and sludge disposal must be followed. It prohibits on-site waste burning or uncontrolled land-filling of waste. In organic farming, the soil serves as a sink for atmospheric CO₂. Thus, GOTS significantly contributes to the reduction of the total global emissions through carbon sequestration.

GOTS prohibits the use of hazardous chemicals. In addition, GOTS mandates that wastewater must be treated before discharge. There are strict norms for pH, temperature, organic content and oxygen demand of the wastewater being discharged by certified facilities. With the strongest restriction on AOX, GOTS prevents toxic effects and thus, secures aquatic life.

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Violence and physical punishment is prohibited in GOTS-certified facilities. Corruption, extortion & bribery are also prohibited as part of GOTS ‘Ethical Business Behaviour’. Participatory decision making is encouraged and the right to collective bargaining is respected. GOTS-certified facilities have non-discriminatory rules & policies.

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GOTS itself is a result of harmonisation and continues to evolve in partnership. We work with stakeholder organisations representing organic farming, textile and chemical industry, also labour interests, retailers and consumers, as well as with other standards organisations, NGOs and governments.

GOTS-certified textiles consist of at least 70% certified organic fibres / raw materials. Strict environmental and social criteria in processing lead to responsible production. GOTS itself is a tool to internalize external costs so that the real price is paid for a product. Simultaneously, GOTS helps sustainable public procurement and promotes consumer awareness about sustainability.