

Guide to key environmental fashion sustainability certifications

Inspirational sustainability guides

BCome.

The sustainability platform transforming the fashion industry.

BCOME is the platform for sustainability management in the textile and apparel industry. A smart, reliable, secure software that enables fashion businesses to build responsible supply chains, guarantee transparency and bring it to the final customer. Founded in 2019, BCOME has more than 1 million traced, measured and evaluated products on the market.

Empower sustainability transformation with data, knowledge and technology.

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Stay up to date with the latest content on intelligent methodologies for global sustainability management and find the answers your brand needs to boost its transformation in the fashion industry.

“ Whether as a professional in the fashion industry or as a consumer of clothing and footwear, the world of textile certifications can be complex for anyone who decides to approach it. There are multiple options aimed at certifying any aspect related to the supply chain, but how to identify those standards that can add value to your company? What certifications does your target audience know and consider essential when choosing a brand? Which ones are your competitors using? Find out what sustainability certifications can do for your business and how to find out which ones are right for your brand. ”

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Standards and certifications for the fashion industry

To choose the right certification it's essential to know what criteria it measures. In order to identify which standards may be of interest to your business, below we show you an outline of the main areas on which the most popular certificates in the fashion industry act:

Standards and certifications for the fashion industry

Environmental standards and certifications

Raw material

Adita Birla, BCI, C2C, CMIA,
Fairtrade Agriculture, FSC, GOTS, GRS,
Lenzing, LWG Bronze, LWG Gold,
LWG Silver, OCS, PEFC, RCS, RDS,
Refibra (Lenzing), RWS, SFI, USDA.

Wet process

BLUESIGN, Ecolabel,
Made in Green by OEKO-TEX,
STeP by OEKO-TEX

ISO 14001, ISO 50001

Social standards and certifications

Raw material

Material Process

Wet Process

Manufacturing

SA8000, BSCI, SMETA
WRAP, Sedex, Fairtrade

ISO 45001

Standards and certifications for the fashion industry

Main reasons why sustainability certifications could benefit

your business:

1. Certifications can work as an impact evaluation system that records the progress of the objectives achieved.
2. They can be used as marketing tools that provide credibility when communicating brand values.
3. Certified companies often also receive additional promotion from the organizations that grant such certifications.

Environmental certification scheme for fashion industry



Environmental certification



GOTS is the worldwide leading textile processing standard for organic fibers, including ecological and social criteria, backed up by independent certification of the entire textile supply chain. The aim of the standard is to define world-wide recognized requirements that ensure the certified organic status of textiles in order to provide credible assurance to the end consumer. It involves better use of water and energy resources and the use of soil-friendly pesticides and fertilizers. It also addresses social issues: Non-forced labor, prohibition of child labor, freedom of association, banning discrimination.

Environmental certification



The OCS applies to any non-food product that ensures a minimum of 5% of organic material. It verifies the presence and amount of organic material in a final product, the Standard does not cover the certification of the raw material itself. It tracks the flow of a raw material from the source to the final product and this process is certified by an accredited third party. It can be used as a business-to-business tool to give companies the means to ensure that they are getting what they are paying for and selling.

Environmental certification



The USDA organic regulations describe organic agriculture as the application of a set of cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that support the cycling of on-farm resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. These include maintaining or enhancing soil and water quality; conserving wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife; and avoiding use of synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering.

Environmental certification



Better Cotton is the world's leading sustainability initiative for cotton. Their mission is to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment.

The BCI certificate that ensures good environmental practices in fields (management of resources, pesticides, biodiversity), ethical working conditions for farmers and a good management plan to ensure economic sustainability.

Allows the use of transgenic seeds.

Environmental certification



The Lenzing Group is an international group that produces wood-based viscose fibers, modal fibers, lyocell fibers and filament yarn extracted from certified wood sources and using sustainable processes (waste management, appropriate wastewater and emissions, and responsible use of raw materials, water and energy). In addition Lenzing Group also ensure high standards of sustainability and ethical conduct.

The Lenzing Group markets its products under the brand names TENCEL™, VEOCEL™, LENZING™ ECOVERO™ and LENZING™.

Environmental certification



The GRS is an international, voluntary, full product standard that sets requirements for third-party certification of Recycled Content, chain of custody, social and environmental practices, and chemical restrictions. The GRS is intended for use with any product that contains at least 20% recycled material and uses the ISO 14021 definition of recycled Content. It also includes social policies (prohibition of forced labor and child labor, right to association, health and safety in the workplace, regularization of overtime) and environmental policies (monitoring and compliance with the legality of resource use, waste management and restriction of hazardous chemicals)

Environmental certification



The Recycled Claim Standard (RCS) is an international, voluntary standard that sets requirements for third-party certification of Recycled input and chain of custody. RCS label enables to market textiles made from recycled raw materials, it ensures that at least 5% of the fabric comes from recycled material. The RCS label applies to companies in the textile sector with activity in spinning, knitting, printing, manufacturing, weaving, dyeing, distribution, and branding, but also for recyclers and processors of recycled materials. The goal of the RCS is to increase the use of Recycled Materials.

Environmental certification



The RDS aims to ensure that down and feathers come from animals that have not been subjected to any unnecessary harm. RDS claims that at least 5% of feathers come from farms where ducks and geese are treated with dignity and have not suffered unnecessarily.

Environmental certification



The RWS is a voluntary global standard that addresses the welfare of sheep and of the land they graze on. The RWS provides verification of the practices that are happening at farm level, giving brands a clear solution that will allow them to make claims about their wool sourcing with confidence.

RWS assures that at least 5% of wool is extracted from animals living in dignified and safe conditions and using agricultural practices that promote biodiversity and are not related to deforestation.

Environmental certification



The LWG is a membership organization composed of over 1450 members across the leather value chain, including leather manufacturers, brands, suppliers, traders, and associations. The group develops audit certification standards to assess the environmental performance of leather manufacturing facilities and promotes responsible practices in the leather supply chain. The LWG assesses the environmental performance and compliance of leather manufacturing facilities.

Environmental certification



The Bluesign certification is one of the best-known labels for textiles tested for harmful substances in the world. It certifies high product safety in the global apparel and footwear industry. Bluesign guarantees that products are harmless to the human environment.

Environmental certification



The Oeko-Tex Standard 100 is an independent global test and certification system for raw textile materials, intermediate products and end products throughout the textile processing chain. Oeko-Tex Standard 100 ensure products have been tested for harmful substances and produced in a sustainable manner, i.e. in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible manner.

Environmental certification



Made in Green by Oeko-Tex® is a traceable product label for all kinds of textiles and leather products that have been manufactured in environmentally friendly facilities under safe and socially responsible working conditions. The objective of Made in Green is to provide product traceability and ensure the product is made of materials that have been tested for harmful substances, according to the Oeko-Tex ® guidelines.

Environmental certification



STeP by Oeko-Tex® is an independent certification system from the textile and leather chain who want to communicate their achievements regarding sustainable production of their supply chain to the public in a transparent, credible and clear manner. The goal of STeP is to implement environmentally friendly production processes in the long term, to improve health and safety and to promote socially responsible working conditions at production sites. STeP differs from other certification systems because it includes a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the production conditions instead.

Environmental certification



EU Ecolabel is a voluntary scheme to help companies market more environmentally friendly products. Assessments are based on life cycle analysis, EU legislation, international treaties and certification systems. EU Ecolabel ensure that a product has a reduced environmental impact throughout its chain thanks to the ISO 14024 (environmental labeling) certification, the use of substances hazardous to the environment and health is limited in manufacturing and that the consumption of raw materials is minimized, as recycled materials are used. It also ensures that the performance and durability of the product is improved, ensuring energy savings.

Environmental certification



The ZDHC program is a global partnership with more than 50 companies focused on eliminating hazardous chemicals from the textile industry. Members are committed to defining and developing a list of restricted substances for manufacturing (MRSL) in the clothing and footwear industry. The MRSL list in the ZDHC program treats hazardous substances potentially used and discharged into the environment during manufacturing and related processes, not just substances that may be present in finished products. Practices and ensure that the principles are upheld.

Environmental certification



14001

ISO 14001 specifies the requirements for an environmental management system that an organization can use to enhance its environmental performance. ISO 14001 is intended for use by an organization seeking to manage its environmental responsibilities in a systematic manner that contributes to the environmental pillar of sustainability. ISO 14001 provides a framework for protecting the environment and responding to changing environmental conditions, in balance with socio-economic needs.

Environmental certification

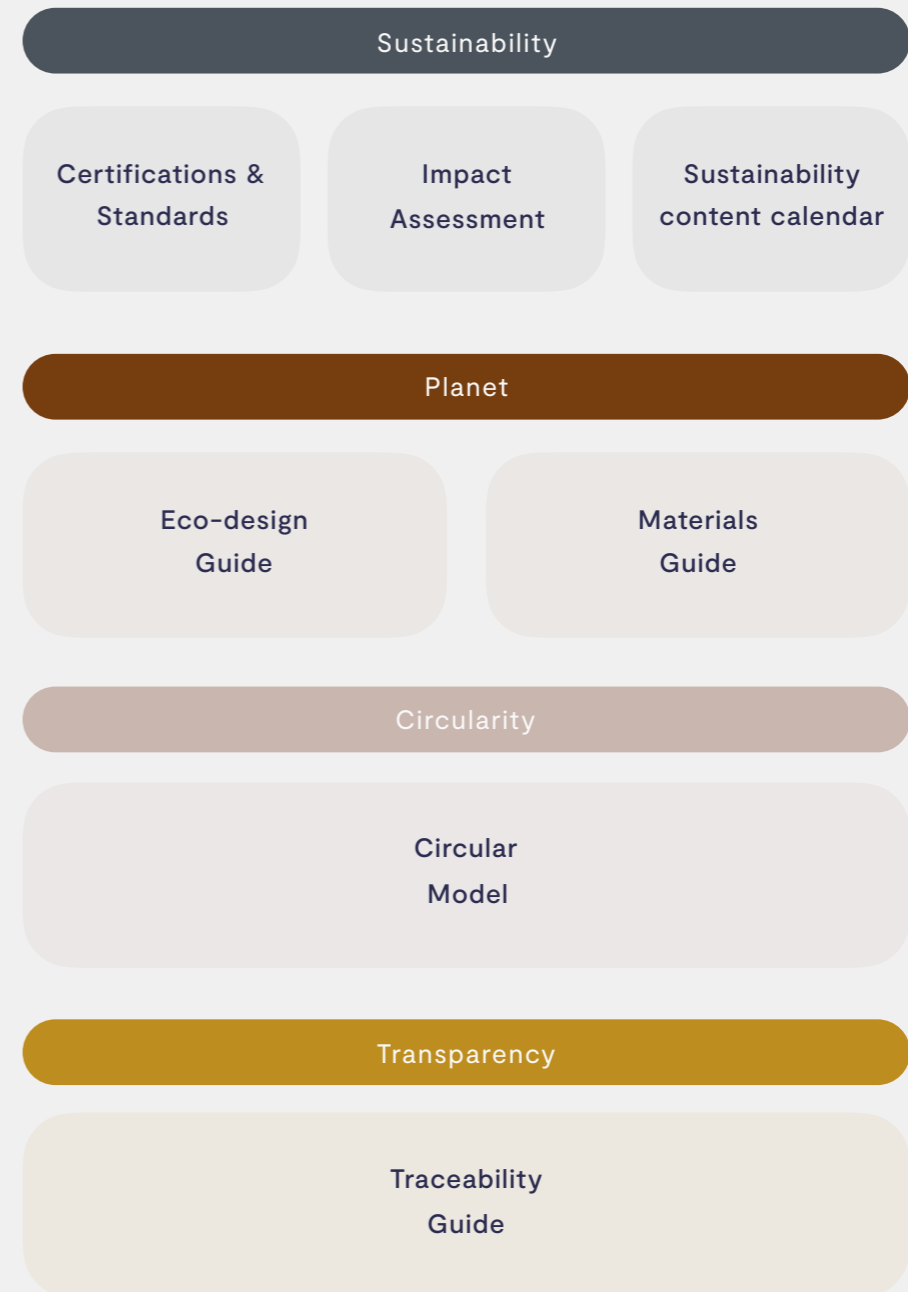


50001

ISO 50001 is an international standard for energy management systems that provides organizations of any size with a tool to systematically optimize energy performance and promote more efficient energy management. The purpose of which is to enable it to continuously improve energy efficiency, energy security, energy use and energy consumption with a systematic approach.

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