



Certifications & Standards Guide

Created by **supplyCompass**



Environment



Social Impact



Animal Welfare



Quality

DISCLAIMER

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Introduction



We have rounded up the top industry supply chain certifications and standards, including leading audits, to help guide you through the sustainable production landscape. These certifications represent different parts of ethical, sustainable, and transparent fashion and homeware manufacturing. These include certifications and standards that cover fair labour practices, social concerns including animal welfare and environmental impact.

Why are certifications important?

- They help prevent greenwashing.
- They allow for greater transparency by ensuring materials, factories and traders are audited by a third party.
- They help raise awareness about sustainability and fair practices in the industry.

Overview



B CORPORATION



BLUESIGN®



BUSINESS SOCIAL COMPLIANCE
INITIATIVE (BSCI)



CARBON TRUST
STANDARD (CTS)



CRADLE TO CRADLE
CERTIFIED™



ETHICAL TRADE INITIATIVE
(ETI)



FAIR WEAR
FOUNDATION



FAIRTRADE
FOUNDATION



FLOCERT



FOREST STEWARDSHIP
COUNCIL (FSC)

Overview



**GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE
STANDARD (GOTS)**



**GLOBAL RECYCLED
STANDARD (GRS)**



HIGG INDEX



ISO 9001:2015



**LEATHER WORKING
GROUP (LWG)**



**LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL
DESIGN (LEED)**



**ORGANIC CONTENT
STANDARD 100 (OCS)**



**OEKO-TEX®
MADE IN GREEN**



**OEKO-TEX®
STANDARD 100**



**PROGRAMME FOR THE
ENDORSEMENT OF
FOREST CERTIFICATION
(PEFC)**

Overview



REGISTRATION, EVALUATION,
AUTHORIZATION AND
RESTRICTION OF CHEMICALS
(REACH)



RECYCLED CLAIM
STANDARD 100 (RCS)



RESPONSIBLE DOWN
STANDARD (RDS)



RESPONSIBLE WOOL
STANDARD (RWS)



SEDEX



SA8000 SOCIAL
ACCOUNTABILITY
INTERNATIONAL



WOOLMARK



WORLDWIDE RESPONSIBLE
ACCREDITED PRODUCTION
(WRAP)



WORLD FAIR TRADE
ORGANISATION
(WFTO)

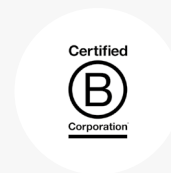


ENVIRONMENT



SOCIAL IMPACT

B Corporation



Overview

The B Corp certification is one of the most trusted and coveted, certifying the company's contribution to creating a sustainable global economy while conducting business with purpose. Using a triple-bottom-line approach to ensuring people, planet and profits go hand-in-hand with business, B Corp is used in over 70 countries by over 3000 brands.

B Corp certified businesses are expected to meet the rigorous social, environmental, transparency and accountability standards set out for them, while working towards healthier jobs and communities for stakeholders throughout the supply chain.



Labelling

The B Lab, a non-profit organization controls the B Corp certification. Companies must be recertified every three years to continue using the certification – a minimum score of at least 80/200 is required.



Location

B Lab was founded in Pennsylvania, United States but have teams around the world including Canada, Australia and New Zealand.



ENVIRONMENT

bluesign®



SOCIAL IMPACT

Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI)



Overview

bluesign® is a certification for the textile industry focusing on legal compliance in relation to environmental health and safety. The certification standard combines aspects of consumer safety, water and air emissions and occupational health, with a particular focus on the reduction of harmful substance usage at early stages of production.

bluesign® APPROVED is used for individual components including raw materials and dyes, while bluesign® PRODUCT can only be used for products with 90% bluesign® APPROVED textiles and 30 % bluesign® APPROVED accessories, requiring brands to fully commit to the certification process.



Location

bluesign® is based in Switzerland, however there are certified companies around the world.



Overview

Amorfi is a global business association for open and sustainable trade. BSCI is their supply chain management system that supports companies to drive social compliance and improvements within the factories and farms in their global supply chains. BSCI implements the principle international labour standards protecting workers' rights such as International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and declarations, the United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and guidelines for multinational enterprises of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).



Location

Amorfi is based in Belgium but has an international presence, bringing together over 2,400 retailers, importers, brands and associations from more than 40 countries.



ENVIRONMENT

Carbon Trust Standard (CTS)



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Cradle to Cradle Certified™

Overview

The Carbon Trust Standard is an independent verification for organizations that measure and reduce their environmental impacts year on year, against indicators including water, waste and greenhouse gas emissions. Separate CTS' exist for carbon, water, waste, zero waste to landfill and supply chain. Along with verification, the CTS also consults businesses and governments to develop sustainable operations by providing specialist analysis and knowledge.

Location

The Carbon Trust is based in the UK and has head offices in Europe, China, SE Asia, Mexico, Brazil, USA & South Africa.

Overview

Cradle to Cradle Certified™ is a sustainability standard that focuses on the circularity of products. Its label requires achievement across multiple attributes. These include use of materials that are safe for human health and environment, product and system design for material reutilisation (such as recycling or composting), use of renewable energy and efficient use of water, and wider company strategies for social responsibility.

Location

Cradle to Cradle™ is based in California, United States, and Amsterdam, The Netherlands, but their standard is international.



SOCIAL IMPACT

Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI)

Overview

The Ethical Trade Initiative is an organization made up of companies, NGOs and trade unions who promise to protect workers' rights globally. All the members of the ETI follow the ETI base code that is based on the standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This Code ensures child and slave labour is prohibited, living wages are paid, regular employment is provided and workplaces are safe, amongst other conditions. Over 10 million workers are impacted by the efforts of the ETI.

The ETI does not certify companies or products but ensures that its members make progress and demonstrate evidence of working towards fulfilling the conditions of the Code.

Location

The ETI is headquartered in the UK but has members from across the globe.



SOCIAL IMPACT

Fair Wear Foundation (FWF)

Overview

Fair Wear Foundation works with brands, factories, trade unions, NGOs and governments to verify and improve workplace conditions in the garment industry. FWF represent over 120 brands, bringing together the key components needed for sustainable change to improve workplace conditions.

FWF verifies whether companies comply with its Code of Labour Practices, by keeping track of the improvements made by the companies it works with. Every year, FWF publicly reports on the companies' progress through the Brand Performance Checks.

Location

FWF is based in The Netherlands but works with 11 production countries across Asia, Europe, and Africa.



SOCIAL IMPACT

Fairtrade Foundation & FLOCERT



Fairtrade



A grassroots movement, Fairtrade Foundation is about better prices, decent working conditions, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in developing countries around the world.

Fairtrade Foundation works with small farmers, producers, and traders worldwide who meet strict standards. The Mark is only used on products certified in accordance with internationally agreed Fairtrade Standards. This certification aims to empower disadvantaged producers in developing countries by tackling injustice in conventional trade.

If you meet the social, economic and environmental standards set out by Fairtrade International, you can trade under Fairtrade conditions and display the prestigious Fairtrade Mark on your products.



FLOCERT



FLOCERT is the official global certification and verification body for Fairtrade International. They audit factors like wages, safe working conditions, and supply chain transparency.

Brands don't have to include the FLOCERT logo on their products, as it's the certifying body rather than the certification itself, but it's common to see this logo on products and websites, so it's good to know the difference.



Location

The Fairtrade Foundation is an international certification, however it is headquartered in London, United Kingdom.



Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)



Overview

The Forest Stewardship Council is an international, non-governmental organisation that certifies any product made from responsibly managed forests and/or recycled sources, using their well-known tree-tick logo. FSC certification for fabric is particularly used for viscose that does not come from ancient or endangered forests, as well as natural latex, cork and bamboo.



Labelling

The three main labels include:

FSC 100%: All the fibre in the product comes from an FSC certified forest.

FSC Mix: A mixture of fibre from some/all of FSC certified forests, reclaimed/recycled fibre and virgin fibre from FSC Controlled Wood.

FSC Recycled: All fibre must be pre or post-consumer reclaimed.



Location

The FSC is headquartered in Bonn, Germany but is a global certification



ENVIRONMENT

Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)



Overview

GOTS is the leading textile processing standard for organic fibres. The aim of this standard is to define worldwide, recognised requirements that ensure organic status of textiles – from harvesting of the raw materials, through environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing, and up to labelling in order to provide a credible assurance to the end consumer.

Textile processors and manufacturers are enabled to export their organic fabrics and garments with one certification accepted in all major markets. The standard covers all textiles made from at least 70% certified organic natural fibres, mainly focusing on cotton, wool and silk.



Labelling

A textile product carrying the GOTS label grade 'organic' must contain a minimum of 95% certified organic fibres. Products with the label grade 'made with organic' must contain a minimum of 70% certified organic fibres.



Location

GOTS has certification bodies that certify entities of the textile supply chain and their products. GOTS is comprised of four reputed member organisations, namely OTA (USA), IVN (Germany), Soil Association (UK), and JOCA (Japan), which contribute to GOTS, together with further international stakeholder organisations and experts.



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Global Recycled Standard (GRS)

Overview

Global Recycled Standard is an international, full product standard that verifies the recycled content of products and responsible social, environmental and chemical practices in their production. The goal of the certification is to increase the use of recycled materials in products and reduce/eliminate the harm caused by its production.

GRS sets the requirements for third party certification of recycled content, chain of custody, social & environmental practices and chemical restrictions across each stage of production. All recycled materials entering the supply chain must have a valid transaction certificate issued by the approved control board. The products being certified must contain at least 20% recycled materials.



Labelling

Brands don't need to become GRS certified to use the logo on labels and tags. As long as the manufacturer is certified the brand can use the logo on labels and tags. However, a brand cannot use GRS on their website unless they are certified.



Location

GRS was developed by Control Union, however ownership was passed to Textile Exchange in 2011. Textile Exchange is headquartered in Texas, United States, and is present in more than 50 countries.



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SOCIAL IMPACT

Higg Index



Overview

The Higg Index was developed by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) as a comprehensive range of tools to measure sustainability, covering the environment and labour, at every stage of the apparel and footwear manufacturing process. The entire supply chain footprint of a company can be scored and verified with this range of tools. The Higg Index allows companies to not only identify areas of needed improvement but also benchmark themselves against their peers, and clearly understand specific areas for improvement through every stage of the operations of the business.



Location

SAC is based in San Francisco, USA but is used by members from across the globe.

Three specific modules exist – Product (measuring the product's environmental footprint to enable designers to make better decisions), Facility (measuring performance at individual facilities) and Brand & Retail (measuring operations from conception to end-of-use for businesses of all sizes).



QUALITY

ISO 9001:2015



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Leather Working Group (LWG)

Overview

ISO 9001:2015 is the international standard that specifies requirements for a quality management system (QMS). Organizations use the standard to demonstrate the ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements.

Location

ISO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, however the standard is used internationally across a range of industries.

Overview

The LWG is an organization whose members are stakeholders, right from tanneries to retailers, in the leather supply chain. The LWG has audit protocols to certify the environmental compliance of its leather manufacturing members – however, it does not certify farms or slaughterhouses. To ensure that leather manufacturers do not procure leather from areas connected to deforestation, transparency from material to sale is also given importance; it is, however, rated separately from environmental compliance which is the focus.

Location

The LWG is based in the UK but has members from across the globe.



ENVIRONMENT

LEED



QUALITY

Organic Content Standard 100 (OCS)



Overview

LEED or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a certification for green building structures developed by the US Green Building Council. It provides ratings for all types of buildings (including factories) from design to maintenance across 4 levels – Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum – and measures environmental impact areas such as energy and water use, indoor air quality, etc.



Location

The USGBC is headquartered in Washington DC but the LEED rating system is used worldwide.



Overview

The Organic Content Standard, administered by the Textile Exchange is used to certify the stated percentage of organic content in the final product tracking the raw material through the supply chain, from source to finished product, thus providing transparency. Unlike GOTS, it does not certify the raw material and does not address the social or environmental issues involved in the processing. The OCS 100 logo is used for any non-food product containing 95-100% organic content.



Location

The Textile Exchange is headquartered in Texas, United States with international teams and the OCS is used worldwide.



OEKO-TEX®



Made in Green



Made in Green certify that the product, made in a fully traceable supply chain, has been manufactured in factories which respect the environment and the universal rights of workers.



Standard 100



Standard 100 is a worldwide certification system for raw, semi-finished, and finished textile products at all processing levels, as well as accessory materials used. It mainly focuses on testing for substances like toxic chemicals that can be harmful to humans.



What can be certified?

Examples of articles that can be certified: raw and dyed/finished yarns, woven and knitted fabrics, accessories, such as buttons, zip fasteners, sewing threads or labels, and ready-made articles of various types.



Location

OEKO-TEX® is based in Switzerland and their certifications are international.



ENVIRONMENT

PEFC



ENVIRONMENT

REACH



Overview

PEFC stands for Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification and is an independent certifying body for sustainably managed forests and is similar to FSC. Based on international guidelines and standards as well the core ILO conventions, it is currently the largest forest certification system in the world.

It offers both sustainable forest management certification as well as chain of custody certification (for products containing forest-based material). This certification is particularly relevant to certify viscose from responsibly managed forests.



Location

PEFC is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland and has national certification systems in 35 countries across the globe.



Overview

REACH stands for the Regulation for Registration, Evaluation, Authorization, and Restriction of Chemicals. It is an EU regulation, evaluated by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) that ensures that EU-based manufacturers identify the risks of certain chemicals to people and planet and appropriately manage them in the production of their products while communicating the same to users. REACH certification is used to certify apparel and leather goods, particularly for dyes, tanning and finishes, which are all chemical-intensive.



Location

ECHA is based in Helsinki but REACH is used to evaluate products made across the EU.



Responsible Down Standard (RDS)



Responsible Wool Standard (RWS)

Overview

The Responsible Down Standard is a global standard recognizing the humane treatment of ducks and geese used for collecting down insulation. It is an independent, voluntary standard developed by a team headed by the Textile Exchange, a global non-profit, in association with relevant stakeholders. This ensures complete traceability across the supply chain. Prohibited practices including live-plucking, moult-harvesting and force-feeding and the Five Freedoms for animals are recognised. The RDS is used by companies for apparel, outdoor gear and homewares.

Location

The Textile Exchange is headquartered in Texas, United States with international teams. The RDS is used by farms and companies across the world.

Overview

Similar to the RDS, The RWS is also an independent, voluntary standard administered by the Textile Exchange and developed with relevant stakeholders including farmers and animal welfare and land conservation experts to recognize the best practices in sheep welfare and land management for growing wool. Like the RDS, the Five Freedoms for animals are recognised.

Location

RWS certified farms are located in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, Uruguay, and the United States, while supply chain certification exists in other countries across the world.



QUALITY

Recycled Claim Standard 100 (RCS)



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SOCIAL IMPACT

Sedex

Overview

Similar to the OCS 100, the Recycled Claim Standard 100 is also administered by the Textile Exchange and is used to certify any product containing 95-100% recycled content, without certifying the raw material. It is a voluntary, third party certification, does not address social or environmental issues and simply ensures transparency from the recycling stage the final selling of the product.

Location

The Textile Exchange is headquartered in Texas, United States with international teams and the RCS is used worldwide.

Overview

Sedex aims to provide services and a network for companies to ensure ethical sourcing practices and supply chains. Focusing on responsible trade, and simplifying legislation for its members, Sedex offers the Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) methodology to audit companies' supply chains across four key areas: Labour, Health and Safety, Environment and Business Ethics.

Location

Sedex is headquartered in the UK but has head offices in 5 continents.



SA8000 Social Accountability International



Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP)

Overview

This social responsibility standard is a code of conduct verification and factory certification program that enables manufacturers to demonstrate social compliance to buyers.

Largely for apparel, textiles and manufacturing, it is the leading social certification for factories to have. It shows fair treatment of workers and abides by labour provisions within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Labour Organization. It does not have a consumer facing label.

Location

Social Accountability International (SAI) is based in New York and certifies organisations in 62 countries worldwide.

Overview

WRAP is an independent, objective, non-profit team of global social compliance experts dedicated to promoting safe, lawful, humane and ethical manufacturing around the world through certification and education. WRAP certification is for the factories where goods are made, rather than the end product.

Location

WRAP is based in Virginia, United States, and has certified facilities around the world.



QUALITY

Woolmark



Overview

The Woolmark licensing program is a quality assurance and product certification program for wool textiles. Products with the logo certify fibre content and product quality to both consumers and the supply chain. Yarns, fabrics and garments are independently tested in order to qualify for Woolmark certification.

Tests include verifying wool content of the product, colour fastness to light and liquid, durability and wash testing before allowing the logo to be used.

The Woolmark logo is one of the world's most recognised brands. More than 5 billion products have been certified by Woolmark to date.



Labelling

The three main labels include:



Products created with 100% new wool.



Products created with between 50% and 99.9% new wool.



Products created with between 30% and 49.9% new wool.

Sub-brands are available within the three certification tiers to allow for bespoke fibre marketing.



Location

The Woolmark Company is headquartered in Sydney, Australia with offices in major cities across the world.

World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO)



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SOCIAL IMPACT



Overview

World Fair Trade Organisation is the largest global network of Fair Trade Organisations. Their direct impact includes 965,700 livelihoods supported through the operations and supply chains of these enterprises. 74% of these workers, farmers and artisans are women and women make up the majority of the leadership. They pioneer upcycling and social enterprise, refugee livelihoods and women's leadership.

To be a WFTO member and get verified as social enterprises that practice Fair Trade, an organisation must demonstrate that they put people and planet first in everything they do.

Fair Trade is more than just trading:

- It is a vision of business and trade that put people and planet before profit.
- It fights poverty, climate change, gender inequality and injustice.
- It is a proof of concept that showcases the enterprise models of the new economy.



Location

WFTO is based in The Netherlands, but you can find WFTO Certified companies worldwide across 76 countries.

