



## Press Release

For immediate release

Ganesh Kasekar  
GOTS Representative in South Asia  
[kasekar@global-standard.org](mailto:kasekar@global-standard.org)  
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### GOTS kicks off third decade with significant growth and forward momentum

GOTS, the world's leading standard for organic textile certification, ended 2022 with record high numbers: 24 GOTS approved Certification Bodies reported a total of 13,549 certified facilities (+10 percent) in 84 countries (+5 percent). "This all-time high in certified facilities spread across the globe confirms that GOTS meets the needs of the textile industry for a one-stop solution to fulfil their sustainability commitments and goals regarding organic textiles" says Claudia Kersten, GOTS Managing Co-Director.

As an ever-evolving benchmark of excellence in the textile processing industry, GOTS has undertaken a comprehensive revision of its standard in 2022 to further enhance its efficacy. Through an improved and more inclusive Standard Setting Procedure (SSP), distinguished professionals from diverse stakeholder groups collaborated closely with the Standard Development Unit of GOTS to refine the criteria. Two public consultation periods yielding over 650 distinct public comments helped shape the new Standard, Version 7.0, which will be released in March 2023. "Our steadfast commitment to addressing the textile industry's pressing sustainability challenges is exemplified by the evolution of the GOTS Standard," remarked Rahul Bhajekar, GOTS Managing Co-Director.

The recent suspension of Control Union India serves as evidence of the efficacy of the existing GOTS system. To further strengthen integrity, GOTS has instituted a suite of Quality Assurance initiatives. Among the key measures are significantly expanded Quality Assurance and IT staff, substantially raised requirements for certified gins, and deepened collaboration with other standard-setters and partner organisations. One outcome of this collaboration is the recent Organic Cotton & Textiles Conference, which was held in Indore, India from February 27<sup>th</sup> – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. GOTS partnered with IFOAM – International Organics and the Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA) to host the event, which convened a diverse range of stakeholders from across the textile supply chain to promote the advancement of the organic textile sector, address its challenges, and devise solutions regarding regulatory, technology and data issues, as well as on the ground.

As part of the organisation's efforts to strengthen and expand the global organic textile sector, GOTS recently hosted its inaugural GOTS conference in Africa. The conference, themed "Toward an African Value Chain," was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November 2022, and brought together 112 attendees from 21 countries, including producers, processors, brands, and certification partners. The conference provided a platform for in-depth discussions, problem-solving, and networking opportunities.

In addition to these initiatives, GOTS launched its first-ever consumer-targeted

marketing campaign, "Say No to Greenwashing, Say Yes to GOTS!", to raise awareness about the importance of certified organic textiles. The centrepiece of the campaign is the "Faces from Field to Fashion" video series, which showcases the individuals behind the production of GOTS certified organic textiles. The campaign has reached millions of consumers worldwide and led to a 49 percent increase in media coverage on GOTS. According to Claudia Kersten, "this consumer awareness campaign is a step towards our mission of making organic textiles a significant part of everyday life. It highlights the importance of strict rules from field to fashion and independent third-party certification for organic textiles and the positive impact they have on people and the planet. We are delighted with the response the campaign has received so far and look forward to continuing to work towards a more organic sustainable future for the textile sector."

The South Asia Region continues its growth in the region in terms of certified entities. Some highlights of 2022 included projects tackling chemical management and partnering in an initiative to create job opportunities for physically challenged people in the textile sector. These were executed along with GIZ in Mumbai and Tirupur region respectively. Also, along with GIZ Bangladesh, GOTS helped continue to develop the "Green Button" certification.

The year also saw leading brands and retailers like IKEA, VARNER GROUP, INDISKA coming under the GOTS scope. Some other notable brands, including BESTSELLER and CARREFOUR headed further with "Organic in Conversion" concept. GREENDIGO, a domestic brand from India, launched its range of 100% GOTS certified products in infant and children's category.

Opportunities to educate and engage with industry professionals included numerous tradeshows, conferences such as "Chromatex Mumbai", which focused on the dye and chemical industry, Global Spin Conclaves at Mumbai and Chennai, Made in Bangladesh week at Dhaka – Bangladesh, FICCI Tag, as well as various events organised by CRB – Centre for Responsible Business in India.

**About GOTS:** The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is a comprehensive and highly regarded standard in the textile industry that promotes the production of certified organic fibers. It covers all stages of post-harvest processing, including spinning, knitting, weaving, dyeing, and manufacturing, and holds both environmental and social criteria. GOTS prohibits the use of GMOs, hazardous chemicals, and child labor, and mandates strict waste water treatment and social compliance management systems. Developed by leading organizations in the industry, such as the Organic Trade Association, Japan Organic Cotton Association, International Association Natural Textile Industry, and Soil Association, GOTS ensures the organic integrity of textiles from the field to the final product. As a non-profit, self-financed organization, GOTS provides consumers with a trustworthy label for organic textiles and encourages sustainable practices in the industry.