

Global Standard Statement concerning the OECD Alignment Assessment of the Global Organic Textile Standard with OECD Due Diligence Standards

30 June 2025

Global Standard gGmbH, the non-profit organisation behind the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), is pleased to announce the results of the OECD Alignment Assessment of GOTS Version 7.0. This independent, standards-only evaluation was carried out as part of the OECD's pilot project to assess sustainability initiatives in the textile sector against the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector (OECD Garment Guidance).

The assessment found that GOTS Version 7.0 demonstrates strong alignment with the OECD Garment Guidance. Out of 167 criteria evaluated, 69% were found to be fully aligned, 29% partially aligned, and only 2% not aligned. While the overall classification is "partially aligned" according to OECD methodology, the results confirm that GOTS is among the most advanced verification initiatives assessed to date. The findings affirm the robustness of GOTS's framework and its close alignment with international expectations on responsible business conduct.

Assessment Scope and Methodology

GOTS was formally invited to participate in June 2023 and joined the process shortly thereafter. The assessment evaluated GOTS's normative documents adopted before or on 24 September 2023, including the GOTS Standard Version 7.0, the Manual for the Implementation of GOTS version 7.0, the GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities version 1.0, and the GOTS Complaints Procedure. The assessment process was carried out between September 2023 and August 2024, based on the OECD's Alignment Assessment Tool. Global Standard released updated versions of the Implementation Manual (Version 7.2) and the Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities (Version 1.1), incorporating feedback from the preliminary findings. Within the scope of the alignment assessment, only minor clarifications and language adjustments were taken into account. At the same time, the more substantive amendments incorporated by GOTS in the revised documents following the assessment launch were considered as outside the scope of the OECD assessment.

Analysis of the Assessment Results

The OECD report affirms that GOTS Version 7.0 provides a comprehensive and integrated due diligence framework. The OECD confirmed that GOTS Version 7.0 **"includes expectations related to all six steps of the OECD Garment Guidance, with a strong degree of alignment."** These steps encompass embed responsible business conduct into policy and management systems (Step 1), identify actual and potential harms (Step 2), cease, prevent or mitigate adverse impacts (Step 3), track implementation and results (Step 4), communicate how impacts are addressed (Step 5), and provide for or cooperate in remediation (Step 6). This comprehensive coverage reflects GOTS's systematic approach to operationalising responsible business conduct across the textile supply chain.

The report further highlights that **"companies along the supply chain are eligible to apply for certification."** By recognising that GOTS allows certification not only of brands but also of textile processors, manufacturers, traders, and retailers, the OECD underscores the Standard's potential to embed due diligence practices across all tiers of the textile supply chain. This inclusive structure helps mainstream responsible business conduct beyond the downstream actors, extending it to those directly involved in production. As a result, GOTS contributes to embedding due diligence as a shared responsibility throughout the supply chain, fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement among all Certified Entities.

The OECD's recognition that GOTS Version 7.0 **"sets out consistent due diligence expectations across labour, environmental and integrity risks"**. This affirmation highlights the integrated nature of the GOTS framework, which treats all key areas of responsible business conduct with equal rigour. By applying the same due diligence principles to all these risk areas rather than addressing them in isolation, GOTS enables Certified Entities to manage human rights, environmental and governance in a coherent and structured way.

The OECD also recognised the value of the GOTS guidance documents, specifically the Manual for the Implementation of GOTS and the GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities. These documents play a critical role in translating the Standard's requirements into practical actions for Certified Entities. Notably, the terminology used in both documents is closely aligned with that of the OECD Garment Guidance, which facilitates conceptual clarity and ease of implementation.

While the results are overwhelmingly positive, the assessment also identified areas for improvement. Specifically, the OECD noted minor discrepancies in terminology across the Standard, the Implementation Manual, and the Handbook. It also raised concerns regarding the GOTS Complaints Procedure, emphasising the need to align it more closely with the effectiveness criteria for grievance mechanisms as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

GOTS Response and Ongoing Improvements

The OECD's recognition marks a significant milestone for GOTS and reaffirms its commitment to continuous learning and improvement. It also provides valuable external validation of GOTS's approach and offers constructive guidance on further aligning the system with evolving best practices in responsible business conduct.

It is important to note that many of the OECD's suggestions have already been addressed in the most recent versions of the Manual for the Implementation of GOTS (Version 7.2) and the GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities (Version 1.1), incorporating required clarifications, enhanced cross-referencing, and adjustments in terminology.

Looking ahead, Global Standard is undertaking the revision of GOTS from Version 7.0 to Version 8.0. The revision process is based on the ISEAL Code of Good Practice. The draft of GOTS Version 8.0 integrates most of the OECD's recommendations, particularly those aimed at clarifying the degree of obligation associated with specific provisions as provided in GOTS, the Manual for the Implementation of GOTS, and the GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Certified Entities. The proposed changes also address identified inconsistencies in the formulation of requirements and ensures clearer cross-referencing of the due diligence criteria across the three core documents.

In response to OECD observations concerning GOTS Complaints Procedure, Global Standard is undertaking a comprehensive review to improve the document aiming to incorporate and operationalise the effectiveness criteria outlined in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

GOTS is continuously working towards strengthening auditor capacity to assess due diligence performance. In November 2024, Global Standard released the GOTS Due Diligence Handbook for Auditors, providing detailed guidance on auditing against GOTS due diligence requirements. Besides, in June 2025 Global Standard conducted a pilot training programme designed to enhance auditor competence in evaluating due diligence systems at Certified Entities.

Global Standard remains committed to supporting all supply chain actors, particularly small and medium-sized Certified Entities, in fulfilling their due diligence obligations. This includes the development of targeted implementation tools, digital solutions, training, and ongoing assistance to ensure that responsible business conduct is both achievable and scalable throughout the textile

supply chain. The outcome of this alignment assessment affirms GOTS as one of the most advanced standards for promoting responsible business conduct in the textile sector.

The Statement of Appreciation

Global Standard extends its sincere appreciation to the OECD for its constructive engagement and methodological leadership throughout the assessment process. GOTS remains committed to fostering collective progress by enabling Certified Entities to uphold international standards, catalyse systemic change, and contribute to more sustainable, resilient, and rights-respecting textile supply chains.