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## A sustainable textile STeP ahead

### An increasing number of OETI's textile customers are "STeP by OEKO-TEX®" certified.

Among the OETI customers now using the certification system for textile companies are "VOSSEN GmbH & Co. KG", which exports its high quality towels, bathrobes and bathmats to more than 43 countries worldwide. "Feinjersey Colours und Feinjersey Fabrics GmbH", which is part of the Feinjersey Group, a globally active network of textile firms. "Arula GmbH" as part of the "Huber Holding AG" with a largely European market and flag and banner producer „FAHNENGÄRTNER“ with national Austrian key accounts like "Blizzard Skies" and the major Austrian bank "BAWAG PSK".

They are not alone: "Roughly 270 companies worldwide are currently undergoing the assessment- or auditing process for STeP or are already STeP certified", reports Helene Melnitzky, OETI's Head of Ecology.

### STeP in detail

Sustainable Textile Production (STeP) by OEKO-TEX® is a certification system for production facilities of all processing stages from fibre production, spinning mills, weaving mills, knitting mills to finishing facilities, manufacturers of ready-made textile items and logistics companies.

Through modular analysis of all relevant company areas such as management of chemicals, environmental performance, environmental management, occupational health and safety, social responsibility and quality management, the STeP certification allows a comprehensive and reliable view of the sustainable management provided by a production facility.

### Advantages from a customer's perspective

VOSSEN, which was founded in 1925, has an output of 5.5 million high quality terry towelling products. The textile manufacturer has been an OETI and OEKO-TEX® customer for decades. Managing director Werner Blohmann describes the benefits from his point of view: „STeP is a tool of the OEKO-TEX® family, which is easy to use and at the same time delivers specific and meaningful information. STeP's modular approach allows a simple implementation. What is more, many "good suggestions for the implementation are provided", so Blohmann.

Another long-term OETI customer is Feinjersey Colours und Feinjersey Fabrics. The leading company for production and finishing of knitted fabrics is based in Vorarlberg and employs around 200 staff. Sustainability is a driving force for the implementation of STeP: "High quality products not only have to be made from high quality raw materials but also need to be sustainably and responsibly produced with regards to humans and the environment", states Günter Schneider, member of Feinjersey's management board and responsible for Development, Sales and Distribution.

Mathias Kerp, managing director of Arula argues similarly: “Sustainability is a very important value for us and our customers. Thus, for us “STeP by OEKO-TEX®” is an ideal approach to further strengthen this topic. Arula is a subsidiary of “Huber Holding AG“ and a leading specialist in knitted fabrics made of natural fibres and cellulosic fibres and guarantor for a sustainable production “made in Austria”.

Gerald Heerdengen, Managing director of FAHNENGÄRTNER, which employs around 100 people sums it up: “We have only one planet and this should be motivation enough to operate on a sustainable basis – not only in terms of the environment but also concerning social factors. I am of the opinion that STeP covers this whole spectrum very well.”

With STeP all four customers have now created the precondition to label their products with “Made in Green by OEKO-TEX®”.

### **Made in Green by OEKO-TEX®**

If a product is certified based on “OEKO-TEX® Standard 100” and is supplied by a “STeP by OEKO-TEX®” certified production, it is allowed to carry the Made in Green (MIG) label. Each item certified with Made in Green features a unique product ID or QR code. This enables consumers to trace the product transparently across the supply chain.

FAHNENGÄRTNER are in the planning process whilst VOSSEN are already in the implementation phase. For Gerald Heerdegen one advantage is: “Made in Green is the next step to shape the whole production cycle – including our preliminary distributors – smoothly and “green”. Mathias Kerp summarizes: “Made in Green is a future-oriented concept that we will continue to support.”

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