



## MEETING OF THE CDG ARABLE CROPS – COTTON, FLAX AND HEMP SECTOR

Personal data redacted

Monday 27 June 2022

# THE BREMEN COTTON EXCHANGE AND THE DNFI

---



- Member of the Discover International Fiber Initiative DNFI since 2009
- Chair of the DNFI since 2018
- DNFI is a platform for the natural fiber community
- Strong members like Bremen Cotton Exchange, Cotton Inc. and IWTO

We consider all fibers in the textile industry important, and we advocate for a balanced treatment from the side of political measures

# INITIAL SITUATION

---

## Initial Situation

- Inconsistent sustainability language, lack of common terminology, relatively lax or varying labelling requirements.
- greenwashing, consumer confusion, less textile sustainability.

## Solution?

- EU is proposing that companies substantiate the environmental claims they make on clothing using a harmonized Methodology with Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)

## Not Yet!

- PEF does not consider e.g., renewability and biodegradability, adverse impacts of microplastic pollution and the full environmental footprint of fossil fuel fibres. PEF risks misleading consumers about the impacts of their products, and ultimately undermining the EU's sustainability objectives.
- Natural Fibers like cotton and hemp will suffer in this unfair environment. Greece and Spain are the large European cotton Producers.

# PEF - DANGEROUS SHORTCOMINGS

## WHAT DOES PEF AIM TO MEASURE?

The PEF focusses on measuring and communicating harmful environmental impacts, with 16 environmental impact categories currently identified in the methodology:

OZONE DEPLETION	HUMAN TOXICITY - CANCER EFFECTS	HUMAN TOXICITY - NON-CANCER EFFECTS
ECO-TOXICITY - FRESHWATER AQUATIC	PARTICULATE MATTER/ RESPIRATORY INORGANICS	PHOTOCHEMICAL OZONE FORMATION
ACIDIFICATION	EUTROPHICATION - TERRESTRIAL	EUTROPHICATION - AQUATIC FRESHWATER
EUTROPHICATION - MARINE	LAND USE	RESOURCE DEPLETION - WATER
RESOURCE DEPLETION - FOSSIL FUELS	RESOURCE DEPLETION - MINERALS AND METALS	

## WHAT DOESN'T PEF MEASURE?

However, there are critical environmental impacts that aren't included in the methodology that could significantly distort the credibility and truthfulness of the EU's environmental impact ratings of clothing and footwear products.



**MICROPLASTIC  
POLLUTION**



**FULL IMPACT  
OF FOSSIL FUELS**



**RENEWABILITY**



**RECYCLABILITY &  
BIODEGRADABILITY**



**DURABILITY**



**PRODUCTION  
PRACTICES**



**SOCIAL IMPACTS**

## CRITERIA MISSING

---

### Microplastic pollution

- Synthetic textiles discharge microplastic fibres through laundering and wear, releasing microplastics into the environment, and food chain.
- is not included in the current PEF methodology, so no negative scoring despite harmful impact to planet and human health.

Cotton, like all natural fibers, is [biodegradable](#). This must be taken into account in an assessment.

## CRITERIA MISSING

---

### Social Impacts

- Natural fibres provides an income for rural, remote, and poor communities which is inseparable from their sustainability.
- 150 Million people make a living with cotton production; Cotton is 50% of Benin's export income. Alpaca sales are crucial to 46 of Peru's poorest provinces
- Greek and Spanish agriculture, gins, hemp industry

**Socioeconomic** impacts must be considered as part of sustainability claims made on clothing and footwear labels.

## CRITERIA MISSING

---

### Duration of service life

- The European Environmental Agency (EEA) recognises that natural fibres have better durability and lower impacts in the use phase and end-of-life, compared to synthetic fibres.
- Inherent attributes of animal fibre-based clothing, including its odour resistance and wrinkle resistance result in less frequent laundering, reducing water, energy and detergent use.

**Durability** life of a product should be a criterion in the PEF methodology.

## CONCLUSION FOR CDG AGRI

---

- We support PEF
- We support the textile industry as well as the agriculture
- We support of all textile fibers.

**However:** The production of **natural fibers** in Europe (cotton, hemp, flax etc.) against this background of PEF is getting into discussion and is in alarming disadvantage. We need **support**.

[\(https://www.makethelabelcount.org/\)](https://www.makethelabelcount.org/)

**We insist on a level playing field**



THANK YOU