Factsheet

OEKO-TEX® STeP

Independent certification for sustainable production facilities

OEKO-TEX® STeP certification sets the highest standards for both social and environmental aspects of textile and leather production. This certification is a sign of responsibility towards employees and the environment, and supports a company's journey towards more sustainable production.

OEKO-TEX® STeP certified production facilities make an important contribution so that products along the value chain can be recognized with the OEKO-TEX® MADE IN GREEN label. The certification enables also an easy and transparent communication of sustainability commitment to customers and other stakeholders.

Product description

STeP enables a holistic consideration of manufacturing conditions from a sustainable point of view and encompasses analysis and assessment in the six core modules of sustainable textile production:

- **Chemical management** is covering the optimization of different aspects, which includes a risk assessment of chemicals used in the facility, ban and substitution of hazardous chemicals to reach a clean input management. Thanks to the cooperation with GoBlu, our customer can use The BHive®, a smart chemical inventory system that allows them to track the performance of their chemical inventory and determine in seconds which chemical products meet the sustainability requirements of STeP, ZDHC and many brands/retailers.
- **Environmental performance** is considering a wide range of aspects to improve the efficiency of resources used, handling and storage of chemicals, waste management, responsible handling of wastewater and emissions (e.g. reduction of carbon footprint and water usage).
- **Environmental management** module is requesting a management system that captures a documented description of the processes and activities to achieve environmental targets with continuous improvements towards greater sustainability.
- **Social responsibility** deals with the ILO core conventions and is covering a wide range of aspects like prevention of child labor and discrimination as well as regulation of wages and grievance mechanism, including the surveillance of working hours and prevention of forced labour.
- **Quality management** is looking at the traceability, responsibilities, and documentation of goods flows within the facility, the correct implementation of risk management and the commitment to ongoing improvements.
- **Health and safety** is covering measures for safety at the workplace and proving safety of buildings and production plants (e.g. use of PPE, safety measure at machines, escape route plans and building construction measures) as well as implementing risk prevention and regular trainings.

The STeP certification comprises a three-level scoring system:

- **Level 1:** entry level
- **Level 2:** good implementation of best practices with further optimisation potential
- **Level 3:** exemplary implementation of best practices

Each facility receives a detailed STeP report, including the results of the online assessment tool and the expert audit. The associated STeP certificate indicates both a final overall rating and the individual scoring for each of the six core modules.

The compelling benefits

- The STeP certification is designed especially for production facilities and enables a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the sustainable production processes and conditions achieved.
- A great advantage for STeP certified facilities is the tracking of their key performance indicators: a facility can show their reductions regarding energy use, water use, air emissions etc. over time.
- Services and certificates already provided or attained (e.g. ISO 14001, SA 8000, BSCI, ISO 9001) can be integrated into STeP.
- With STeP, companies are able to increase the efficiency of their production processes, improve social and environmental conditions as well as strengthen their economic situation and competitiveness.
- As part of the OEKO-TEX® STeP certification wet processing companies analyse their chemical performance with regard to goals of our OEKO-TEX® STeP Manufacturing Restricted Substances List, which is compliant with the ZDHC MRSL requirements.
- The STeP certificate is the prerequisite for OEKO-TEX® MADE IN GREEN, our product label for articles tested for harmful substances and produced in a sustainable way.

Your path to OEKO-TEX® STeP

1. Complete the application form online on the OEKO-TEX® website and confirm the terms of use.
2. Upon receipt of the access data from the responsible OEKO-TEX® institute, complete the web-based STeP assessment tool.
3. The OEKO-TEX® institute evaluates the information provided and the documents submitted.
4. The OEKO-TEX® institute verifies the data obtained in the form of an on-site audit at the production facility.
5. The OEKO-TEX® institute draws up a detailed audit report including a final assessment and issues the STeP certificate.

Validity

The STeP certificate is valid for 3 years.