

#MakeTheLabelCount
www.makethelabelcount.org



Make the Label Count brings together an international coalition advocating for product-level sustainability claims in the EU to be representative of a garment's true sustainability.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION?



The European Union is reviewing and developing sustainability legislation relevant for the natural fibres textile industry.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION?

The EU is shifting to a climate-neutral and circular economy, which means products need to be more energy efficient, durable, reusable, repairable, and recyclable. Because the fashion and textile industry has such a big environmental footprint, EU legislators is reviewing sustainability claims on apparel and footwear, as well as ecodesign requirements.

Make the Label Count wants to work with European legislators to ensure textiles sustainability claims are transparent, accurate and complete, allowing producers and consumers to make informed choices about the clothing they make and buy.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

A sweep of textile and clothing websites by the European Commission found more than 50% of environmental claims to be unsubstantiated, confusing, or simply untrue. Essentially - greenwashing is rife in the fashion world.

Having a standardised or harmonised methodology that everyone uses for their environmental claims can assist towards a greener industry, but only if that methodology is credible. It needs to provide a solid basis for fully transparent consumer information.

To tackle this issue, the Commission was proposing that companies substantiate the environmental claims they were making on their products using the Product Environmental Footprint method (PEF).

WHAT IS PEF?

The PEF was created by the EU to measure the environmental impact of a wide variety of products in the market using 16 impact categories. Now the Commission is developing the PEF to measure the environmental impacts of apparel and footwear and it's likely to be the most developed, product-focused instrument of its kind.

But there are problems. The PEF methodology is based on Lifecycle Assessment (LCA) and was created in 2013. However, being a decade old, it no longer accurately reflect the latest environmental science that has developed in this time.

It fails to account for the adverse impacts of microplastic pollution from synthetic textiles, or 'plastic' clothing waste ending up in landfill.

It also fails to adequately consider key sustainability factors including the benefits of using renewable and biodegradable raw materials

The apparel and footwear sector will be the first time the PEF will be used to compare farmed products with mined products – and other product categories, including interiors, will be forced to follow suit.

Because it's based on LCA principles, PEF does not account for the formation of the oil and natural gas from which fossil fuel fibres are made, whereas all the impacts of forming natural fibres are accounted for in PEF – resulting in an inequitable comparison. It omits or downplays the inherently circular attributes of natural fibres.

WHAT DOES PEF CURRENTLY FAIL TO COMPREHENSIVELY INCLUDE?



**FULL IMPACT OF
FOSSIL FUELS**



**PRODUCTION
PRACTICES**



**RENEWABILITY AND
BIODEGRADABILITY**



**DURATION OF
SERVICE LIFE**



SOCIAL IMPACT



**MICROPLASTIC
POLLUTION**



WATCH OUR PEF EXPLAINER VIDEO FOR MORE DETAIL

WHAT HAS MTLC BEEN DOING?

OCTOBER 2021

Officially launched the MTLC campaign

MAY 2022

Submitted response to EU public consultation on Microplastics

OCTOBER 2022

Farm visit with EU legislators to Knitwit Stable in the Netherlands

JUNE 2023

PEF Technical Briefing with MEPs

November 2023

Amendments offered to MEPs on the Green Claims and Waste Framework Directives

**EU legislators outreach:
280 emails &
61 meetings**

JANUARY 2022

Supported a joint MEP letter distributed to the European Commission

MAY 2022

Publication of white paper

MARCH 2023

Submitted response to public consultation on the public consultation on ESPR

SEPTEMBER 2023

Submitted response to the call for evidence on the European Commission's Textile Labelling Rules revision

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1

Join the Make The Label Count Coalition and help us advocate for improvements to PEF for clothing sustainability claims on labels in the EU.

Interested? Let's meet: hello@makethelabelcount.com

2

Head to our [website](#) to learn more and download our latest white paper on how to improve the PEF methodology for textiles and apparel.

3

Keep up to date: sign up to our [newsletter](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

“ If the Commission proceeds to use the PEF without updating it, the fashion and textile industry won't make the green transition we all want to see. ”

DALENA WHITE,
MTLC Spokesperson and Secretary General of
the International Wool Textile Organisation

“

Credible claims in the fashion industry is a fundamental step towards ensuring consumers make informed choices when buying garments. The fact that this is now being implemented at EU level is wonderful. But it is fundamental for claims on labelling to be accurate and comprehensive, so it does not misrepresent or unfairly favour certain fibre groups. This is why I am proud to be working on the Make the Label Count campaign, calling for a level playing field for sustainability claims and in doing so, drive the change we so urgently need.”

LIVIA FIRTH, MTLC Spokesperson
and Eco-Age Creative Director

#MAKETHELABELCOUNT

“

Life Cycle Assessments can only be compared if they follow exactly the same methodology and boundaries. Such a suite of generic LCAs for textile fibres does not exist. The EU cannot create non-fiscal barriers to trade that will negatively impact some of the poorest on the planet, without first commissioning the studies required.”

VERONICA BATES KASSATLY,
Independent Analyst

#MAKETHELABELCOUNT

“

As the EU shifts it's scrutiny of the fashion industry up a gear, it's vital that the tools they propose to use to substantiate fashion's sustainability efforts are as accurate as they can be. Without amendment to the PEF we risk entrenching the industry's reliance on fossil fuel based fibres and disincentivising materials with greater potential for circularity.”

GEORGE HARDING-ROLLS,
Changing Markets Foundation

#MAKETHELABELCOUNT

“

An ambitious EU strategy for sustainable textiles can succeed only if a strong focus on skills, technologies and innovation is not missing.”

MEP MARIA GRAÇA CARVALHO,
Portugal

#MAKETHELABELCOUNT

“

By 2030 textiles placed on the EU market should be long-lived and recyclable, made to a large extent of recycled fibres. They [clothes] will not need to be thrown away and replaced as often as now and that way consumers will actually gain a nice alternative, an attractive alternative to fast fashion.”

VIRGINIUS SINKEVICIUS,
Commissioner for Environment

#MAKETHELABELCOUNT

“

We think natural fibres are becoming incredibly relevant in the sustainability discussion. Biodegradability should be in every criteria catalogue. Looking at cotton, we know that almost 150 million people earn their living growing cotton, especially in developing countries. This social and economic aspect should never be forgotten, not in any criteria index.”

ELKE HORTMEYER,
Bremen Cotton Exchange

#MAKETHELABELCOUNT