#### #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.

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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.

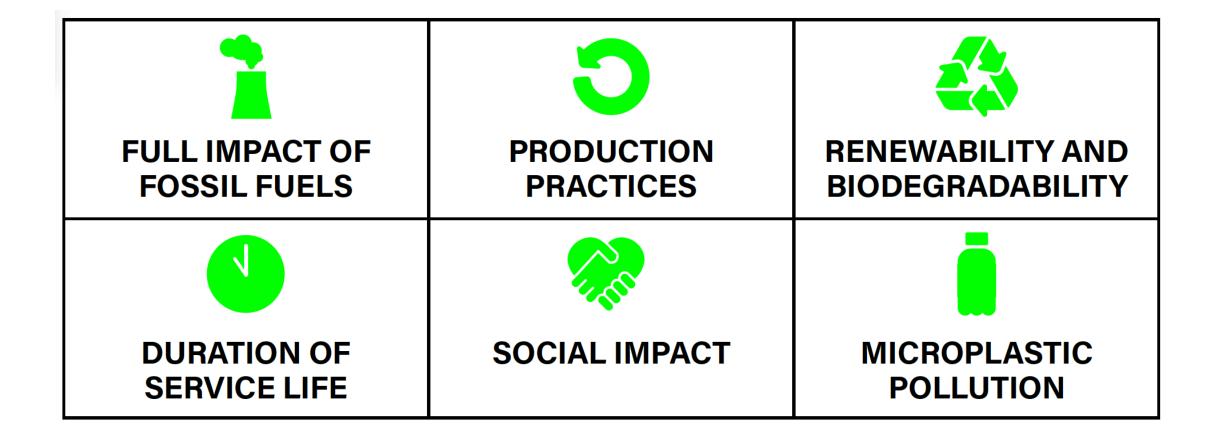
But there are problems. The PEF methodology is based on Lifecycle Assessment (LCA) and was created in 2013. However, being a decade old, it no longer accurately reflect the latest environmental science that has developed in this time.

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.

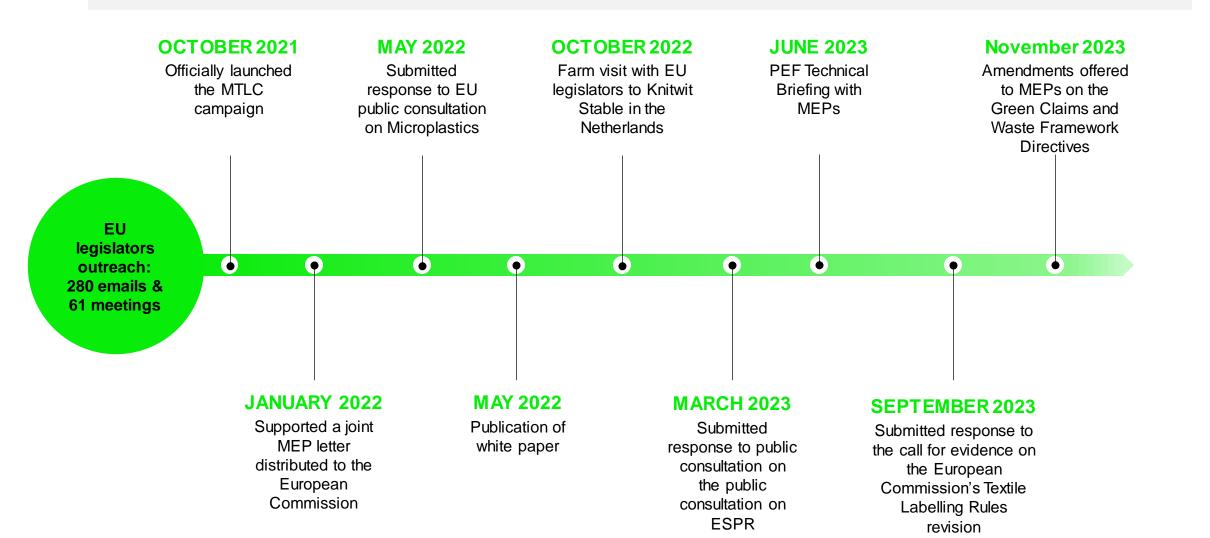
# WHAT DOES PEF CURRENTLY FAIL TO COMPREHENSIVELY INCLUDE?



### WATCH OUR PEF EXPLAINER VIDEO FOR MORE DETAIL



## WHAT HAS MTLC BEEN DOING?



# WHAT CAN YOU DO?



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: <u>hello@makethelabelcount.com</u>



Head to our <u>website</u> to learn more and download our latest white paper on how to improve the PEF methodology for textiles and apparel.



Keep up to date: sign up to our <u>newsletter</u>, follow us on <u>Twitter</u> and <u>LinkedIn</u>.

## 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 Life Cycle Assessments can As the EU shifts it's scrutiny of is a fundamental step towards ensuring only be compared if they follow the fashion industry up a gear, consumers make informed choices exactly the same methodology it's vital that the tools they when buying garments. The fact that this is now being implemented at EU level is wonderful. But it is fundamental propose to use to substantiate and boundaries. Such a suite of fashion's sustainability efforts generic LCAs for textile fibres for claims on labelling to be accurate are as accurate as they can does not exist. The EU cannot and comprehensive, so it does not create non-fiscal barriers be. Without amendment to the misrepresent or unfairly favour certain to trade that will negatively PEF we risk entrenching the fibre groups. This is why I am proud to industry's reliance on fossil fuel impact some of the poorest be working on the Make the Label Count based fibres and disincentivising campaign, calling for a level playing field on the planet, without first for sustainability claims and in doing so, materials with greater potential commissioning the studies drive the change we so urgently need. for circularity. required. GEORGE HARDING-ROLLS, VERONICA BATES KASSATLY, Changing Markets Foundat LIVIA FIRTH, MTLC Spokesperso and Eco-Age Creative Director ependent Analyst " " By 2030 textiles placed on We think natural fibres are An ambitious EU the EU market should be longbecoming incredibly relevant strategy for sustainable lived and recyclable, made to a in the sustainability discussion. textiles can succeed large extent of recycled fibres. Biodegradability should be in They [clothes] will not need to every criteria catalogue. Looking only if a strong focus be thrown away and replaced at cotton, we know that almost on skills, technologies as often as now and that way 150 million people earn their living and innovation is consumers will actually gain a growing cotton, especially in nice alternative, an attractive developing countries. This social not missing. alternative to fast fashion. and economic aspect should never be forgotten, not in any criteria index. 99 VIRGINIJUS SINKEVIČIUS, MEP MARIA GRAÇA CARVALHO, Portugal ommissioner for Environment ELKE HORTMEYER, Bremen Cotton Exchange