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adidas Details Progress on Supplier Audits, Sustainable Materials Use in 2013

by Mike Hower

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adidas says it surpassed its goal of using 15 percent Better Cotton by 2013, sourcing more than 23 percent last year. | Image credit: Better Cotton Initiative

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In 2013, adidas issued 66 warning letters to suppliers across 14 countries, and terminated nine manufacturing agreements for social and environmental non-compliance, according to the footwear company's 2013 Sustainability Progress Report, [Fair Play](#), an annual overview of achievements and challenges as well as a progress update on its 2015 sustainability targets.

The audit coverage of the company's supply base in higher-risk countries such as China, India, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam was greater than 75 percent, the report says. This was achieved in part by the adidas' "SMS for workers" project, launched at the end of 2012, which was introduced to five facilities in Indonesia and one in Vietnam, covering almost 35,000 factory workers. Some 1,346 factory social and environmental audits took place, which involved management and worker interviews, reviews of factory policies, practices and documents as well as facility inspections.

adidas says its Sustainability team also conducted 148 training sessions and workshops for suppliers, licensees, workers and adidas employees.

According to the report, all adidas Sport Performance footwear newly created for 2013 contained fewer parts, incorporated sustainable elements — such as [heel counters](#) made from recycled food containers, which the company estimates will divert 1,500 tons of polystyrene waste from landfills — and focused on minimizing materials waste through [pattern efficiency](#).

The report also highlights progress on the company's goals for water, sustainable materials and energy use:

- By the end of 2013, adidas saved 50 million liters of water after reaching two million yards of [DryDye fabric](#) used in production. The company plans on rolling this technology across further product ranges.
- adidas surpassed its goal of using 15 percent [Better Cotton](#) by 2013, sourcing more than 23 percent of all cotton as Better Cotton. The company has committed to source 100 percent of cotton across all product categories in all its brands as 'sustainable cotton' by 2018.
- As part of adidas' Green Company program, four additional locations received ISO 14001 certification in 2013. Thanks to energy management trainings, energy consumption was reduced at supplier level.

adidas says it has continued to be an active participant in the task forces of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), supporting the development, refinement and completion of the [Higg Index 2.0](#). The company is collaborating with other brands to establish a more efficient industry-wide monitoring tool, both for brands and suppliers.

Speaking of sustainable materials, last month adidas [announced a long-term partnership](#) with recording artist and producer Pharrell Williams on a new adidas Originals line of shoes and apparel made with yarn and fabric made from marine

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plastic. The first adidas Originals x Pharrell Williams products will debut this summer.



Mike Hower is Marketing Communications Manager at Carbon Lighthouse. With a background on both sides of the communications podium — as a journalist and strategic communicator — he is committed to helping organizations address climate change through sustainability innovation. Previously,... [\[Read more about Mike Hower\]](#)

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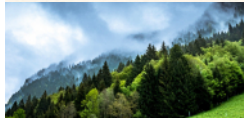
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