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Materials

The fashion industry depends heavily on natural resources. While the environmental impacts associated with fabric and textile processing can be harmful to nature, there are fabrics that leave a lighter footprint. We make every effort to source sustainably, guided by our Material Ethics policy.

Our material ethics

H&M Group is committed to ensuring that sourcing the raw materials used in our products is done in a sustainable way and that social and environmental impacts are taken into consideration during the entire sourcing process.

Raw material production and sourcing must be in line with both local laws as well as international standards and must not lead to degradation or destruction of ecosystems and biodiversity. Securing our supply of raw materials from an ethical perspective is an extremely important part of H&M Group's business model. We are committed to ensure that the natural raw materials used in our products are produced in a way that contributes to sustainable development, respects human rights, preserves natural resources, and helps maintain biodiversity. No vulnerable or endangered species must be used.

Some highlights from our Material Ethics policy:

- Suppliers of natural raw material must comply with all applicable environmental, health & safety, labour and social laws and regulations (including applicable land tenure and use rights).
- We do not allow any wood or other forest-derived materials, including man-made cellulosic fibre, to originate from ancient and endangered forests, or forests operations damaging high conservation values.
- No endangered and/or vulnerable species* may be used in the production of our products.

- By 2020, all cotton sourced for H&M Group will come from more sustainable sources**.
- By the end of 2025, 100% of all wood used in our products, including man-made cellulosic materials, will be sourced from well-managed and FSC™-certified forests.

Read our [Material Ethics policy](#)

How we evaluate materials

At H&M Group we use third-party lifecycle assessment (LCA) data to evaluate the environmental impact of recycled and other sustainably sourced materials. This includes individual LCAs as well as external material benchmarks based on LCA data, such as the Material Sustainability Index (MSI) by Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC). We encourage material manufacturers to contribute to the MSI by submitting their data and having their material transparently benchmarked. This helps everyone make better informed choices.

Ensuring integrity

For our more sustainable materials we typically require the use of credible third-party certification schemes (if they exist) or set up other robust schemes to ensure sustainable sourcing and integrity. Standards we use to certify our materials against include: Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), Organic Content Standard (OCS), Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), Global Recycled Standard (GRS), Recycled Claim Standard (RCS), Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), Responsible Down Standard (RDS) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

The rules behind our on-product sustainability claims

H&M Group brands can claim, on a product level, the sourcing of more sustainable materials. To make such claim credible and transparent, the general rule is that at least 50%*** of a product must consist of more sustainable materials. Our brands can set that bar higher, but not lower. Any such claim must also be accompanied by a description of the more sustainable material and in what part of the product it appears. If a product fulfils the requirements, it is up to each brand within H&M Group to decide on the details and if they want to make such claim, and whether or not to use the logo (e.g. GOTS, OCS, GRS, RWS) of the standard against which the material is certified.

Commonly sourced materials

Cotton

Cotton is the raw material we source the most. It has many benefits but it is also a challenging commodity. Our goal is for all cotton in our range to be sustainably sourced by 2020. Read more about [cotton](#).

Recycled polyester

Polyester is an artificial fibre made from oil, which is used widely around the world, especially common in sportswear. Recycled polyester is a more sustainable option made from oil-based waste, such as PET drinks bottles — a way of preventing plastic waste from ending up in landfills.

Recycled polyamide

Polyamide is another popular oil-based fibre, often used to make underwear and tights, but also outerwear. We get our recycled polyamide from materials like old fishing nets and carpets. We also utilise leftover waste from production, a way of saving natural resources and reducing what ends up in landfills.

Lyocell

Lyocell is a fibre made from the cellulose from wood. This is a renewable material made from natural resources requiring little or no irrigation or pesticides, making it a more sustainable option than cotton. We mainly use TENCEL™ branded Lyocell fibres which are derived from sustainable wood sources. It is produced in an environmental responsible closed loop production process, which transforms wood pulp into cellulosic fibres.

Recycled wool

Recycled wool is ideal for heavier, outdoor garments. It comes from the waste or cut-offs created during production, or from clothes gathered via our garment collecting initiative. By recycling wool, we save raw materials and reduce what ends up in landfills. We also use recycled wool in knitted sweaters, hats, gloves and scarves.

Organic linen

Linen is a beautiful and durable material made from flax plants. Our organic linen derives from plants grown without chemical pesticides or fertilisers — better for farmers' health and the environment. The fabric is of the same high quality as conventional linen but without any genetically modified fibres.

Organic silk

Conventional silk comes from silkworms living in mulberry trees. Organic silk guarantees that the trees are grown in an environmentally friendly way, using natural and sustainable farming techniques. Organic silk has the same high quality as conventional silk.

FSC™ natural rubber

The Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC) is a global, independent, non-profit organisation that develops sustainable forestry certification standards. Our FSC™ natural rubber comes from well-managed rubber trees. Natural rubber is a renewable and recyclable material that requires little energy and few chemicals to produce.

Recycled glass

Glass is easy to recycle without any loss in quality. Beads made of recycled glass can be used for embellishments for clothes, accessories and home decor. Recycling glass means we save natural resources such as sand or limestone.

Recycled plastic

We get our recycled plastic from PET plastic drinks bottles, plastic bags, shampoo bottles and other plastic containers. We then use this plastic to make, for example, some of our popular accessories. Being able to repurpose plastic waste and incorporate it into new fashion pieces is a great way of

avoiding harm to our planet.

FSC™ certified wood

FSC™ certified wood comes from FSC™ certified forests that have been audited by a third-party accredited certification body.

FSC™ recycled wood

Wood products carrying the FSC™ Recycled label have been verified by a third-party certification body as being made from at least 70% post-consumer reclaimed materials, i.e. wood and or wood fibres that have been reclaimed from a product after that product has been used for its intended purpose.

FSC™ recycled paper

Paper products can contain any balance of pre-consumer and post-consumer reclaimed material if all applicable parts of the product are verified as reclaimed. The FSC™ Recycled label is not, however, a guarantee that the wood originally comes from an FSC™ certified forest.

Recycled cashmere

Recycled cashmere comes from post-consumer and post-industrial waste or cut-offs from production. By recycling cashmere, we save raw materials, use fewer chemicals, water and land but also reduce what ends up in landfills.

Recycled down and feathers

Recycled down comes from feathers recovered from, for example, old blankets, pillows or cushions. By recycling down we save raw materials, use fewer chemicals, water and land but also reduce what ends up in landfills. Recycled down can be used in the same applications as virgin down.

Organic jute

Jute is a fibre extracted from the bark of the white jute plant. It requires little water, no chemical pesticides or fertilizers and contains no GMOs.

Recycled silver

Recycled and refined silver is obtained from all above-ground sources which could be industrial scrap and old silver products such as candle holders, flatware, coins and scrap jewellery. By recycling metals, all the negative impacts of mining are avoided and a lot of energy is saved.

* As defined by CITES - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species - and the IUCN red list of Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable listed species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list.

** Currently, this means certified organic cotton, recycled cotton, or from Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) sources.

***Unless higher criteria apply based on the standard used to certify the material. An exception from

the 50% general rule is also made for mechanically recycled cotton. This is because of quality challenges from higher recycled content caused by the shortening of fibres in the recycling process. For mechanically recycled cotton, the minimum content is instead 20%, but due to the remarkably better sustainability performance of recycled cotton compared with virgin cotton, it is still be big improvement in sustainability. H&M Group is working to develop recycling technologies to overcome these challenges.

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