

Creating facts

GftZ plans to release standard for sustainable use of used textiles this year

The collection and sorting of used textiles requires special care. The Gemeinschaft für textile Zukunft (Future of Textiles Association) standard therefore will define requirements for each process step in order to create the highest value added possible.

Currently, there are no specific requirements for a high-quality and value-added sorting and recycling of used textiles. Developing and implementing a consistent standard for the sustainable use of old textiles is therefore a priority for GftZ. At the association meeting on February 16th, 2015 it was decided that such a standard will be published during the year.

The collection and sorting of used textiles requires special care. Contrary to mixed collections such as light-weight packaging or paper, wearable textiles are reused straight after sorting. This means that each individual piece of fabric has to be checked for potential reuse or recycling. Even during collection it has to be ensured that the processes used do not degrade the quality of the collected material through mechanical strain or cross-contamination with humidity and waste and therefore prevent the reuse of potentially wearable textiles.

The GftZ standard will define quality criteria for collection, sorting and recycling processes for used textiles and will be guided by current business practices. Furthermore, the standard will differentiate between “high-quality” and “harm-free” processes and will specifically name „non suitable“ procedures. This, in turn, can lead to the development of uniform quality criteria for the collection and recycling of textiles that may be used in tender procedures.

The association is open to a dialogue with interested stakeholders and will discuss the above mentioned approach with relevant state-level authorities and institutes.

Press Release

27.02.2015

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