Textile Sustainability: How Can Turkish Businesses Play a Leading Role?

WORKSHOP DIARY
10:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

THANK YOU TO OUR EXPERTS AYDIN ÜNSAL, HERBERT LADWIG, ISA CEM TOPBAS AND MEHMET ERYILMAZ
in collaboration with Izfas and with support of our sponsors, Egedeniz and Maytex, and our experts for the day.

The hosts, Simone Seisl, Carlotta Cataldi and Atila Ertem, welcomed 70 professionals from both Turkish and international textile businesses. Most of the participants came to Izfas specifically for the workshop and everyone contributed actively in the various workshop formats.

We had an even mix of attendees, with both newcomers to textile sustainability and participants at an advanced or expert level.

Simone introduced the Mission and Vision of Textile Exchange and the three core platforms of TE: Fiber & Materials, Integrity & Standards, and Supply Chain. The benefits of becoming a TE Member were also explained.

Atila pointed out that cotton supply chains should be sustainable, fair and traceable, and that farmers need technical support. Turkey, with its long and unique history in organic cotton, needs to share knowledge and best practises.

Cem underlined the role of Control Union in Turkey with an increasing number of social as well as environmental standards and regulations that they are engaged in, e.g. HIGG.
10:30 WORKSHOP 1: PREFERRED FIBER & MATERIALS
WORKSHOP 1

Question 1: What are the main issues and barriers that are restricting growth? (Responses from all tables gathered in clusters)

ECONOMIC BARRIERS
Loss of yield and profit during transition period
No economic support for this from government
Lack of subsidies for organic cotton
Price – yield support
Price difference between conventional and organic cotton

DIFFICULTIES IN MARKETING
No market for rotational crops (food crops)
Promotion of organic products
Lack of marketing from government

INPUT
Labour: Organic cotton production requires more labour
Seed: No organic certified seed with government seed certified
Organic pesticide and fertilizer: More expensive and insufficient quantity of organic pesticide and fertilizer

POLICY - Governmental policy for rising organic product consumption

EDUCATION
Lack of awareness – “What is organic?” “What is ecology?”
Both farmers, traders and consumers lack education
Lack of technical knowledge (at the field)

MANUFACTURING
Orders are too small

STANDARDS
Too many

COMPETITION
WORKSHOP 1

Question 2: Part 1: What are the already existing solutions and low hanging fruit in Turkey to facilitate growth? Part 2: What solutions and opportunities can we create together?

Today: opportunities and solutions: closing the gap in production between organic and sustainable textiles vs. conventional textiles.

MARKETING
Turkey as first organic cotton producer – opportunity to differentiate.

GOVERNEMENT
Find governmental financial support and support for set cotton price.

EDUCATION
Educate producers. Create awareness in consumers. Create awareness in brands on the different schemes.

COLLABORATION
Creating a lobby group to explain the demand for a balanced support system for a balanced support system.

CSR: More focus on CSR and less on profit for now.

ACCESS: Easy to access.

SUPPORT TO FARMERS: Technical and input support.

Tomorrow: how do we create opportunities and solutions for the future together?

EDUCATION
Explain the benefits to the end-user/consumer using social media. Consumer based market, not brand based! Connect consumers & farmers. Transferring existing know-how to farmers. Share research results and make them more widely known. Create more organic fairs. More focus on fashion and design.

MARKETING

COLLABORATION
Create an accreditation institution overarching all cotton standards and inform differences and benefits to the consumer. Umbrella organization for all standards. Organize/create tax free areas for organic producers.

GOVERNMENT
Ministry of Industry and Agriculture should arrange a budget to financially support farmers and producers. Government shall give purchasing guarantee for the organic cotton. Government support for conversion period.

BRANDS: Strategy commitment for big buyers.
After lunch, the focus was on the processing and selling of sustainable products and textile services in Turkey and beyond.

Aydin gave insight on the history of organic cotton products made in Turkey in general and of Egedeniz in particular, and also evidence of integrity and sustainability and how India took the leadership. He showed that Turkey has many opportunities to become a leading country again.

Simone listed a number of business models that stand for innovative implementation of “value web“ strategies like LCA, NCA, EP&L, C2C etc.

Mehmet introduced the work of Eko Tar in Turkey including the advantages and disadvantages of local vs imported organic cotton.

Herbert told us the success story of GOTS followed by a film that explains GOTS to the end consumers.
14:45 WORKSHOP 2: SUPPLY CHAIN SUSTAINABILITY
WORKSHOP 2: Q&A IN A “FISHBOWL”

How many of us are wearing something “organic” was the first question and that it is our mission to carry it into the world. The GOTS woolen suit of Herbert proved that sustainable fashion has no limitations and can look great.

Topics everyone could relate to included cost of production, integrity, competitiveness, innovation and if only what is being bought is being produced.

On the other hand: If you want to change the market - take responsibility and do it!
THANK YOU AND HOPE TO SEE YOU IN HAMBURG
IN OCTOBER 2016
WWW.TEXTILEEXCHANGE.ORG