



Regional Strategy Meeting: Turkey and Central Asia October 12, 2017 in Washington D.C.

The [Organic Cotton Round Table](#) (OCRT) is an annual multi-stakeholder event, held as part of Textile Exchange (TE)'s Textile Sustainability Conference. It brings together the organic cotton community to act collectively and to incubate new ideas. For the first time this year, we are focusing on five specific regions and we would like to invite you to join our Africa session.

Since its inception five years ago, the OCRT has focused on addressing key challenges in the stability and sustainable growth of the organic cotton sector on a global level through its three Task Forces: Business Models, Seed and Soils, and Consumer Engagement. Under these Task Forces, the OCRT has already identified needs for a number of initiatives and has either catalyzed, or been an incubator for, their development. Such initiatives include the [Organic Cotton Accelerator](#), the [Chetna Coalition](#), [aboutorganiccotton.org](#) (a microsite dedicated to organic cotton), and an inventory of non-GMO seed availability. In 2016, to meet demand for organic cotton strategies specific to Turkey and the surrounding regions, Textile Exchange hosted a workshop in Izmir, Turkey, in collaboration with İzfaş (Ekoloji Trade Fair). This became the precursor to what has since formed into the [Regional-OCRT](#). The official inauguration of the Regional-OCRT was held in Izmir, Turkey, on April 28, 2017, once again with generous support from İzfaş. In the same year, an Africa Sourcing Hubs working group was formed, with the aim of supporting and facilitating the sourcing of organic cotton from Africa.

With the growing need to tailor strategy and designate resources and networks of supporters at the regional level, the OCRT 2017 will continue to dive deeper into customizing regional strategies. In the afternoon of the OCRT, participants will divide into breakouts that cover the key organic cotton producing regions, including a meeting specifically for Turkey and the Central Asian Region.

OCRT Regional Strategy Meeting – Turkey and Central Asia

Earlier this year Textile Exchange and [Change Agency](#) released the findings from a [Market Opportunity Scoping Project \(MOSP\)](#) for Turkey, Egypt, Central Asia and the wider region. The MOSP involved a series of interviews with companies and organizations representing each section of the region's value network to explore the market opportunities and identify any blockages or mis-perceptions that need to be dealt with. The MOSP findings were used as a base for breakouts along four themes:

- **BUILDING THE RIGHT CONTEXT: WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS & NGOS DO?** Governments and NGOs are vital partners in a strategic organic cotton strategy. "Integration" and support will be a prerequisite for our aims and any action to be successful.
- **ECOLOGICAL ZONES: HOW CAN THEY BE DEVELOPED?** In the MOSP study, it was found that a number of interviewees wanted to see the creation of organic – agro-ecological zones, building on the existing projects in the GAP Region of SE Anatolia, Turkey. How could these regions be developed?
- **INTEGRITY, GEOGRAPHY & TRANSPARENCY: WHAT CAN THE VALUE CHAIN DO?** We all know the huge benefits of this region's proximity to Europe, superior textile manufacturing abilities, high quality cotton and Turkey's NGO free status. Yet the question remains on how to best unlock these benefits for growth.
- **PRICING FOR SUCCESS: WHAT CAN THE MARKET DO?** Where can brands and retailers work pre-competitively to accelerate a baseline of responsible practices that will help grow the region? It is time to find common ground for an action plan.

By taking the [Izmir outcomes](#) into a Regional RT at the annual TE conference we would like continue our focused multi-stakeholder discussions, to reach a wider, global audience and to engage further actors to work collaboratively in the months towards the next event in Turkey at the Ekoloji Trade Fair sponsored and supported by İzfaş, to take place in Izmir on 9-12th May 2018.

Objectives for Washington

- Gain common understanding on what key barriers and opportunities are.
- Collect aims and deliverables for a pre-competitive action plan
- Learn about possible Sourcing "hub" and "cluster" models that can accelerate the regions organic cotton industry
- Create country specific scenarios how an uptake and growth plan for the Region could look like
- Call for action to commit to get engaged in a pre-competitive working group

Invitation to Attend

Is this region part of your organic or preferred cotton strategy or manufacturing supply chain? Turkey, and the wider region, has huge potential to accelerate growth in organic textiles. Geographically and technically the region has much in its favor.

JOIN US TO ENGAGE IN NEW BUSINESS MODELS AND IN ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION INCLUDING SUPPLY NETWORKS AND TRANSPARENCY!

To find out more, please contact OCRT@TextileExchange.org

Preliminary Agenda

Timing	Activity
2:00-2:15 p.m.	Welcome and introduction.
2:15-2:45 p.m.	Summary of R-OCRT held in Izmir in April 2017 including MOSP findings and outcome of 4 working groups <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Essential role of Governments and NGOs- Ecological zones as a robust strategy for an organic future- Think global - Act local: Structures that can enable unique opportunities- Unlock demand by having brands and retailers help grow the region Confirmed thought starters include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change Agency• Egedeniz• Aytug&Aytug- International Business Consultants
2:45-3:45 p.m.	A workshop that aims to join forces and build a shared understanding on how to further work on an action plan and on business models to grow the organic cotton industry in Turkey and the wider Region responsibly and sustainably.
3:45-4:00 p.m.	Summarize action points and wrap up. The summary and action points will then be reported back to the main room for all OCRT participants to hear.



Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that works closely with our members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibers, integrity and standards and responsible supply networks. We identify and share best practices regarding farming, materials, processing, traceability and product end-of-life in order to reduce the textile industry's impact on the world's water, soil and air, and the human population. <http://textileexchange.org>