Company performance analysis

OVERALL

H&M Group scores 77.4 out of 100 points in this ranking (up from 54.8 in 2017), and is the third best performer and leading the way towards cotton sustainability.

POLICY

H&M acknowledges that conventional cotton cultivation is “linked to negative impacts on people and the environment”. H&M has a target of using 100% of its cotton from more sustainable sources by 2020. The company intends to reduce water use throughout the supply chain and in 2018 launched a supporting water stewardship roadmap. Several recycling initiatives are in place and the company invests in new technological solutions to reuse and recycle all textile fibres. H&M policy forbids suppliers from using cotton originating from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan or Syria. It is unclear whether H&M group has a policy in place that explicitly addresses forced and/or human labour violations for cotton. H&M is a member of several standards and initiatives including the Better Cotton Initiative, the Organic Cotton Accelerator and Textile Exchange.

UPTAKE

In 2018, H&M used 94.8% sustainable cotton including 79.9% Better Cotton, 14.6% organic cotton and 0.3% recycled cotton. Their score is based on their 2018 sourcing due to the timing of the research. In 2019, H&M used 97% sustainable cotton.

TRACEABILITY

H&M is a front runner in the area of supply chain transparency, publishing information on its suppliers beyond finished goods manufacturers (tier 1). The company publishes a supplier map including 100% of its finished goods manufacturers and some of its fabric and yarn manufacturers. The company has however room for improvement, as it does not report on countries of origin or total volume of cotton used.