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OEKO-TEX® strengthens its governance and prepares for the future

From 27 September 2026, stricter rules against greenwashing and higher requirements for sustainability labels will take effect in the European Union. OEKO-TEX® has taken the new provisions as an occasion to further develop its governance structure. In doing so, OEKO-TEX® not only meets the requirements of the EU Directive on Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition (EmpCo, EU 2024/825) but also prepares itself for future regulatory developments. The OEKO-TEX® labels of the certification scheme concerned therefore remain legally compliant beyond the entry into force of the national implementing legislation.

The EmpCo Directive strengthens the protection of consumers against misleading environmental claims. It requires sustainability labels to be based on certification schemes, whereas the schemes requirements are verified by independent third parties. OEKO-TEX® addressed these requirements at an early stage and prepared the necessary adjustments carefully, drawing on several independent legal opinions.

At the heart of the reorganisation is a clear separation of standard setting and conformity assessment, through which OEKO-TEX® anchors the independence of its system institutionally. Key measures include the conversion of the existing GmbH into a public limited company (AG), a new Statute of Independence with an Independence Council and an anonymous whistleblowing system, an accreditation agreement aligned with international standards (ISO/IEC 17065), ISO/IEC 17025 accredited certification bodies, and a new decision-making structure with a Board of Directors as the highest governing body.

For customers and partners, nothing will change in day-to-day business: testing, auditing and certification continue unchanged. What is strengthened is the demonstrable independence of the system. Companies using OEKO-TEX® labels can continue to substantiate their product claims credibly and with legal certainty.

The global OEKO-TEX® system with its accredited certification bodies remains in place and emerges strengthened from the reorganisation. Standard setting continues to involve independent external experts in a multi-stakeholder process with public consultation.



“Consumer protection begins with trust, and trust only arises when what is claimed is independently verified. With the new structure, we anchor this independence even more firmly and make it transparently verifiable for everyone. This gives our customers, and the people who see our labels in the shop, the certainty that they can rely on OEKO-TEX®,” says Dr Alfred J. Beerli, CEO of OEKO-TEX®.

About OEKO-TEX®

For more than 30 years, OEKO-TEX® has offered standardized solutions that companies in the textile and leather industry can use to transparently and sustainably optimize their manufacturing processes. Based on scientific principles, OEKO-TEX® contributes to bringing high-quality, safe and sustainable products to the market. 40,000 manufacturers, brands and trading companies, in more than 100 countries are currently working with OEKO-TEX®. At the same time, millions of consumers around the world use the OEKO-TEX® labels as a guide for their responsible purchasing decisions. Products and suppliers certified by OEKO-TEX® can be found in the online OEKO-TEX® buying guide at <https://www.oeko-tex.com/en/buying-guide>.

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