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## 'Global Organic Textile Standard' agreed

The International Working Group on the Global Organic Textile Standard, met at the textile trade fair, Innatex, held in Wallau, Germany at the end of July 2004. Working towards the harmonisation of organic textile standards, the group agreed on the first version of the Global Organic Textile Standard. The initiative was launched by IVN (see box below) and its certification body, IMO, at the Intercot Conference of 2002 (see below). Since then the working group has developed several drafts, culminating with the production of this first final version of the

standards.

The public release of the first Global Organic Textile Standard is still subject to the signing of a contractual multilateral agreement between the organisations involved, which is likely to occur in the near future. The pending agreement will decide the details on how to implement the standards and how to proceed.

The standard setting organisations participating in this organic textile working group are IVN, the Soil Association from the UK, The Organic Trade Association (OTA) from USA, Japan Organic Cotton Association

### What is...?

*IVN:* The International Association Natural Textile Industry, based in Germany, was founded in January 1999. Its purpose is to represent the interests of the natural textile industry, from the production of the fibres to the sale of the final products. It deals with legal issues, the public authorities and the general public. Currently it has more than ninety members from the organic and natural textile industry worldwide.

*Intercot:* International Conference on Organic Textiles. Previous Intercot conferences have been held in Cairo (1993), Bingen (1996), and Dusseldorf (2002). The most recent meeting, where the international working group on global organic textile standards started to work, was organised by IFOAM, IVN and IMO. The next one will be organised by The Organic Trade Association (OTA). It will be held concurrently with 'All Things Organic', on 1–3 May, 2005 in Chicago, USA, and will focus on 'Global Approaches to Organic Textiles'.

*Innatex:* An international natural textile trade fair in Germany. At the last fair, which took place on the 24 – 26 July 2004, the international working group agreed on the first Global Organic Textile Standards. Last year it put together about 220 exhibitors and had more than 1500 visitors.