

# ECOCERT

## Sustainable Practices in Agriculture, Cosmetics, and Textiles

ECOCERT, established in France in 1991, certifies organic and sustainable practices in agriculture, cosmetics, textiles, forestry, and hospitality. For over 30 years, the organisation has helped many businesses adopt and promote sustainability. Operating in over 130 countries with 26 offices and 2200 employees, it has played a key role in developing the organic sector. Originally a group of technicians, farmers, and consumers focussed on organic farming, ECOCERT now spans various industries, offers wide range of services with expertise from fair trade to carbon neutrality. Its Asia headquarters is located in Singapore, with a dedicated team of over 250 experts supporting organic and sustainable practices across multiple industries in the region.

### PROMOTING ORGANIC PRODUCTION WITH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ECOCERT plays a pivotal role in supporting and promoting organic production in the agriculture, textile, and cosmetics industries. By working closely with brands and suppliers, the organisation ensures that organic raw materials are sourced responsibly and that supply chains are transparent and traceable. This certification process involves rigorous inspections and adherence to international standards, providing consumers with confidence in the products they purchase. The organisation not only promotes chemical-free production but also advocates for systems that respect local communities and uphold social justice. These efforts are essential for creating a better world, addressing issues like child labour, fair wages, women's empowerment, and corruption, particularly in Asia, where these challenges are still widespread.

### ECOCERT'S ROLE IN ORGANIC TEXTILE AND COSMETIC INDUSTRY

The organic textile market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 40% by 2030, while the organic cosmetics market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 51% over the same period. ECOCERT collaborates closely with brands and suppliers in these industries to support the production and sourcing of organic raw materials and certify the traceability of their supply chains.

#### Organic Textiles

For nearly 30 years, ECOCERT has been a pioneer in the textile sector, promoting the use of raw materials from organic agriculture and ensuring environmentally friendly production processes. Their certifications,

such as the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) and the Organic Content Standard (OCS), guarantee that textiles meet stringent criteria for sustainability and traceability from raw materials to finished products.

#### Organic Cosmetics

ECOCERT's expertise extends to the cosmetics industry with the development of the COSMOS standard, the leading certification for organic and natural cosmetics. This standard ensures that cosmetic products contain a high percentage of organic ingredients and adhere to strict environmental and social criteria throughout the production process. ECOCERT's clients in the cosmetics sector include major international brands seeking to enhance their sustainability credentials and transparency. The organisation supports these companies by providing detailed evaluations and continuous improvement plans to meet the highest standards of sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

#### SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ECOCERT's commitment to social responsibility extends well beyond organic certification. The organisation actively promotes fair trade practices, ensuring that workers receive fair wages and work in safe conditions. Child labour is strictly prohibited, and efforts are made to empower women in the agricultural and production sectors. By fostering ethical practices, the organisation helps create sustainable livelihoods and supports the development of local communities.

In addition, the organisation supports standards that encompass environmental sustainability, promoting biodiversity, reducing deforestation, and minimising waste



as well as water and energy consumption throughout the production process. Brands are encouraged to implement eco-friendly practices and rethink their business models to align with a more circular economy.

ECOCERT's efforts are realised through collaborations with initiatives like the Rainforest Alliance, Fair For Life, Forestry Stewardship Council, Sustainable Rice Program, 4C, and Regenerative Organic Alliance, enhancing sustainable agricultural and manufacturing practices globally. These partnerships underscore the organisation's





commitment to environmental protection, improving working conditions, and supporting fair trade.

### MITIGATING SUSTAINABILITY RISKS FOR GLOBAL BRANDS AND EMPOWERING CONSUMERS

The financial and reputational risks associated with failing to meet sustainable goals are significant for global brands. Managing traceability and reducing risks in supply chains is now a top priority. Consumers will no longer tolerate failures in protecting people and the environment.

Brands that do not meet sustainability standards risk losing consumer trust and facing backlash, leading to financial losses and reputational damage. By partnering with ECOCERT, brands can mitigate these risks by ensuring their products meet the highest standards of quality, safety, and sustainability. This enhances brand credibility and aligns with the growing consumer demand for transparency and ethical practices.

ECOCERT sets high standards and provides transparent certification, empowering consumers to make informed choices that benefit their health and the environment. This approach protects consumers from misleading labelling or fraudulent claims about the organic nature of products. Consumers are willing to pay premiums for organic foods based on their confidence in these attributes. The organic label is a critical factor in their decision-making process, assuring them of the product's authenticity and adherence to rigorous standards.

### ORGANIC REGULATIONS IN THE EU AND IN SINGAPORE

Organic regulations help reduce greenwashing by requiring companies to disclose detailed information about their environmental practices, sourcing, and impacts. Standardised organic regulations facilitate international trade by ensuring that organic products meet consistent criteria across different regions. On 17 January 2024, the European Parliament formally endorsed its provisional agreement with the Council on the Directive Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition through Better Protection against Unfair Practices and Better Information ("Greenwashing Directive"). The Greenwashing Directive aims to contribute to the EU's green transition by empowering consumers to make informed purchases using reliable sustainability information about products and traders. To do so, the Directive introduces specific rules on sustainability and environmental claims. Companies should keep a close eye on the transposition of this Directive, as it will have a significant impact on how they communicate about their sustainability, environmental, and social or ethical efforts.

In Singapore, while there is no national organic certification system, the country recognises organic certifications from other countries. Imported organic products must meet the certification standards of their country of origin. The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) conducts checks and investigations to ensure compliance. According to Singapore's Food Regulations, food can only be labelled as "organic" if it has

passed inspection and attained certification by a recognised certifying body, which follows the minimal measures stated in the Codex Guidelines. These guidelines are developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), a joint body of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

### ADVANCING THE GLOBAL ORGANIC MOVEMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

ECOCERT plays a vital role in the global organic agriculture movement and is closely aligned with the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). IFOAM promotes an economic and social production model based on four main principles: health, ecology, fairness, and care. These principles support sustainable development by promoting practices that respect ecosystems, maintain biodiversity, and responsibly manage natural resources.

Through partnerships with organisations like IFOAM, ECOCERT advances the global organic movement, encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and supporting the transition to a more sustainable and equitable world.

#### ECOCERT Headquarters as a Model of Sustainable Architecture

Located in the region of Toulouse in the south of France, ECOCERT's flagship eco-building exemplifies its commitment to sustainability. Constructed from natural and local materials like wood and straw, the building produces more electricity than it consumes, making it a positive energy structure. This innovative design underscores ECOCERT's dedication to environmental responsibility and serves as a model for sustainable architecture. It has been awarded the International LEED Platinum certification, recognising it as one of the most environmentally-friendly buildings.



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