

# **B&C Sustainability Action Report**

**2023**

**A year of transformation**





**High quality  
modern  
apparel  
crafted with  
consideration  
for people  
and planet.  
Every day.**

**B&C, sustainability for all**



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Centexbel



# Welcome to our Sustainability Action Report

It is an illustration of our ongoing commitment to sustainability through tangible actions. Documenting our key 2023 initiatives and building upon our established strategy, it sets out our vision for a more sustainable future for all our stakeholders.

You'll discover the concrete steps we've taken to minimize our environmental impact, develop our social initiatives and promote prosperity across our value chain.

This action report reflects our dedication to transparency and our belief that collaborative action is essential for a better future.

## Contents

1. **8** things to know about our **2023 achievements**.
2. The **materials** we source make a difference.
3. Without **people**, our products wouldn't exist. B&C is **Fair Wear Leader!**
4. B&C, **Sustainability for all**.
5. Building a **sustainable value chain**.
6. European **Sustainability legislation?** We welcome it!
7. Long term Sustainability **strategy**.

# 8 things to know about our 2023 achievements

## 1. Phasing out Conventional Cotton

We successfully eliminated conventional cotton from our T-shirt, Polo shirt and Sweatshirt collections, switching to preferred cotton alternatives like Better Cotton, In Conversion Cotton and Organic Cotton.

## 2. Phasing out Virgin Polyester

We successfully eliminated virgin polyester from our T-shirt, Polo shirt and Sweatshirt collections, with a 100% switch to RCS Certified Recycled Polyester.

## 3. Ethically made, Every day

We are Fair Wear Leader, a challenging category reserved for member companies who are doing exceptionally well and are operating at an advanced level.

## 4. Improving Livelihoods

We expanded our initiatives to enhance workers' purchasing power through collaborations with our strategic manufacturing partners, opening a Fair Price Shop and distributing free grocery baskets.

## 5. Social Commitments

In partnership with strategic suppliers, we launched workers' social rights awareness programmes through interactive theatre and trainings such as Women's Empowerment Programme (WEP) sessions.

## 6. Transparency in Our Supply Chain

By sharing details of our supply chain audits with our customers we demonstrate the traceability and transparency of our supply chain.

## 7. We are HREDD Ready

By actively supporting the implementation of the Corporate Due Diligence Directive, we demonstrated our commitment to ethical sourcing. To support customers in navigating this legislation we launched The B&C HREDD Toolkit, making all compliance information available to customers and helping to educate our market in the process.

## 8. We finalised our Strategic Plan For Sustainability, our roadmap for the future.

Our Sustainability Strategy 2023-2030 is already in action: strengthening our commitments, working on traceability and getting ready for CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive).





**The materials  
we source  
make a  
difference.**

## 2. Making a difference, every day



We're committed to responsible sourcing, which is **why we chose Better Cotton.**

By absorbing the extra cost without impacting our prices, we are investing in a brighter future for global cotton production.

Why have we done this?

Because Better Cotton means better farming practices, less environmental impact and a better life for farmers.

This is in line with our commitment to sustainability and social responsibility.

We believe in a better future for cotton production, for everyone.

Every day.



**In July 2023 we switched to sourcing ONLY more sustainable fibres for all our cotton-based styles**



**Less water.  
Less chemicals.  
Less waste.**



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**1. Organic Fibres.**

Certified organic materials eliminate chemicals and reduce water usage. We use certified organic cotton and certified organic in conversion cotton.

**2. Better Cotton.**

As a Better Cotton member, we empower farmers to be more efficient with water, care for soil health, and respect biodiversity. Creating opportunities for farmers to work with freedom, equity, security and dignity, ultimately leading to increased yields and profits for them. Better Cotton is sourced via a system of Mass Balance and not physically traceable to end products ([www.bettercotton.org](http://www.bettercotton.org)).

**3. Recycled Polyester.**

We use only certified Recycled Polyester in all our T-shirts, Polo shirts and Sweatshirts, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. By repurposing post-consumer plastic waste, recycled polyester also contributes to circular fashion principles.

**4. Oeko-Tex®.**

All our garments have the OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 certification, guaranteeing that they're free from harmful chemicals and substances. Thanks to this, we ensure the safety and comfort of both consumers and the people who make our clothes, and we minimize environmental impact. This also guarantees that we are compliant with REACH regulations.

# B&C is Fair Wear LEADER

“B&C has shown advanced results on performance indicators and has made exceptional progress”

FWF Brand Performance Check - Report 2023

## 3. Ethically Made



### Committed to improving working conditions and safety

Being a member of Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) expresses our long-standing commitment to social sustainability. As a member **since 2017**, we've been continuously working towards the high bar social standards they set and this is an ongoing journey.

#### Brand Performance Checks

Through the yearly Brand Performance Checks, FWF challenges us to improve in all areas of social responsibility, from our purchasing practices, **our Due Diligence, risk assessment**, to monitoring our production facilities and pushing our social compliance guidelines.

#### In 2023 - we are Fair Wear Leader for the second year

This year, FWF raised the bar by adapting their brand performance check to align with the new HRDD (Human Rights Due Diligence) protocol. In light of these heightened criteria, this recognition as Fair Wear Leader 2023 strongly reaffirms our unwavering dedication to ethical production practices, social compliance and responsible business conduct.





# Made by people for people. Every day.

## 1. We are Fair Wear Leader (since 2022).

This category is for member companies who are doing exceptionally well and are operating at an advanced level. (Source: Official definition, Fair Wear Foundation website).

## 2. UN SDGs.

As signatory of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we demonstrate our commitment to the UN's approach to social and environmental sustainability.

## 3. Our Code of Conduct

is rooted in the principles of the United Nations Global Compact, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also includes all the applicable conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and follows the FWF Code of Conduct.

## 4. Our Supplier Relationships

are long-lasting and rooted in mutual trust. We work with our suppliers every day to make sure that our rigorous standards are met, and we provide the support they need through our local office (DLO). By implementing a responsible purchasing policy we help ensure their stability, so they have no need to sub-contract (which is forbidden in our Code of Conduct), overtime is limited and wages are paid on time.

## 5. Our Corporate Policies

Our Responsible Business Conduct, Due Diligence and Forced Labour Policies are designed to identify, prevent, mitigate, and remediate any possible adverse impacts on human rights by our suppliers. They are enforced through our audits and regular factory visits by our local team in Bangladesh.

**WE'RE HERE  
TO CREATE AN IMPACT,  
TO LEAD, NOT RESPOND.  
TO SOURCE  
RESPONSIBLY,  
TO PRODUCE ETHICALLY  
AND TO USE LESS,  
MORE SUSTAINABLY.  
INVESTING IN A BETTER  
FUTURE FOR PEOPLE  
AND OUR PLANET.  
EVERY DAY.**

## 4. **B&C, sustainability for all**



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### **UPSTREAM**

**For farmers, workers, partners, suppliers,** contemporary apparel, responsibly sourced and ethically made.



### **DOWNSTREAM**

**For customers,** complete more sustainable solutions to meet all needs and all budgets.



FIBRES & TEXTILES



YARNS, FABRICS AND GARMENT PRODUCTION



BRAND AND DISTRIBUTION



## 5. Building a sustainable value chain.

**A core focus of our 2023 sustainability strategy has been the mapping of our detailed and robust value chain, encompassing every step in our production process from sourcing materials to manufacturing, distribution, and ultimately the product end of life. Linking the value chain with I.R.O. (Impact, Risk and Opportunities as requested by the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive) and stakeholders.**

Our journey to a sustainable value chain is challenging but rewarding.

By collaborating with ethical suppliers, optimising processes, and prioritising more sustainable materials we're reducing our environmental impact, enhancing social responsibility and strengthening our reputation.

# 6. European sustainability legislation? We welcome it!

**As far as sustainable practices go,  
we don't wait for the legislation,  
we actively support it and even lobby for it.**

We are members of civil society organisations that have the experience and plans to advocate for a more sustainable world.

Most recently we joined forces with Fair Wear Foundation and other brands to submit a letter to the EU, in support of the recently passed CSDDD legislation.

## **Human Rights & Environmental Dues Diligence? We're ready!**

HREDD, CSDDD, Green Deal - sustainability legislation is on its way, from the EU and national Member State governments. Together, these initiatives aim to foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour throughout global value chains. Their scope includes all sectors and therefore have a direct impact on the textiles and imprint market.

## **The B&C HREDD Toolkit**

As a brand, we have the duty to ensure and the capacity to demonstrate due diligence throughout our production process, thanks to a clear understanding and monitoring of our value chain.

This has allowed us to develop the policies, obtain the certifications, consolidate risk assessments and build prevention, mitigation and remediation processes to ensure and demonstrate our compliance with the legislation.

All these have been documented in the B&C HREDD Toolkit.

## **Compliance Guarantee**

Anyone purchasing a B&C garment can be confident that all necessary supply chain due diligence has been undertaken, and have easy access to all the documentation to prove it.

**It's a first in our industry!**





## 7. Long-term sustainability strategy

**Sustainability is now at the heart of many buying decisions, it is key for protecting the next generation and many new EU laws are making sustainable business practices mandatory.**

**That's why our long-term strategy will focus on 3 core pillars.**

### **ENVIRONMENT**

Most of our carbon emissions come from the type of raw materials we source. Investing in more sustainable fibres can improve issues related to our cotton usage, our fossil fuel-based fibres (polyester, nylon and plastic) usage, water consumption, circularity concerns, but also improve due diligence (better understanding of our entire value chain), and livelihood for farmers under certified schemes.

### **SOCIAL**

Producing in Bangladesh delivers many benefits, but as a responsible brand we are aware of the challenges. This is why we carefully select and work closely with our supplier partners. Further, by collaborating with FWF to improve human and labour rights we are working towards a better future for all.

### **GOVERNANCE**

We will continue to challenge all our policies and processes, improve our HR Governance, ensure a continuous sensitivity to sustainability topics and ensure compliance with upcoming legislation, internally and externally.

# Our sustainable actions at a glance

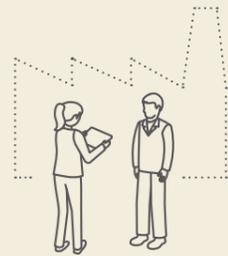
## Achieved in 2023



B&C now sourcing **100% more sustainable fibres** for cotton-based styles.



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### We have our own office in Bangladesh.

Our 24 employees based in Bangladesh follow up purchases and production on a daily basis, 14 of them also regularly visit our factories and 1 is uniquely focused on sustainability related issues (social and environmental).



Monitoring **100%**

of Tier 1 (manufacturing) and 95% (in volume) of Tier 2 (fabric maker) supplier factories.



More than **80%** of our volume

is produced in partner factories with which we have been working for 15+ years.

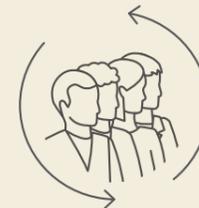


**X 10**



**30.973 WORKERS**

We work with **10 factories**, employing and providing wages to **30,973 workers** and employees in 3 countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan, China), and among those, 5,618 workers and employees work directly for B&C product development and production.



Since 2021 B&C has a dedicated **Sustainability department** with 4 people, making it one of the most staffed within our industry.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

B&C is a signatory of the **17 SDGs** and focuses on 7 priority SDGs.



amfori   
Trade with purpose

Member of amfori, the leading global business association for open and sustainable trade. For more information visit [www.amfori.org](http://www.amfori.org)

# 100%

of our factories are audited by Fair Wear Foundation and/or BSCI.



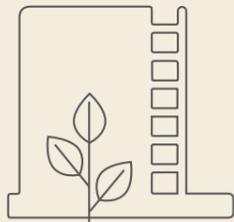
# 360°

### Sustainability, a holistic approach

Sustainability is not only a department, it's a mindset.



**We built and implemented a comprehensive Supply Chain Due Diligence process**  
(we are ready for upcoming European legislation).



100% of our partner factories (CMT) **are equipped with an efficient ETP** (Effluent Treatment Plant).



Our European car fleet is **exclusively made-up of hybrid vehicles.**



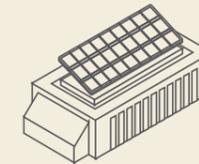
together **we inspire** the market



We are a member of **Textile Exchange**, a non-profit entity that promotes sustainability in the textile industry.

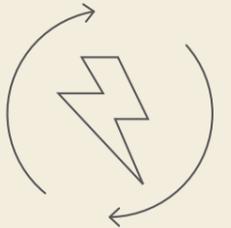


Our warehouse produced over **10.000 MWh/year of renewable energy.**



Electricity at our partner warehouse is

**100%**  
**renewable and produced on site**  
by solar panels and windturbines.



Our HQ uses **100% green electricity.**



Member of amfori, the leading global business association for open and sustainable trade. For more information visit [www.amfori.org](http://www.amfori.org)

**We are a member of amfori-BSCI since its creation.**



We are a **Fair Wear Foundation Leader** for the second consecutive year.



We're proud to be an **MSF Corporate Partner**, supporting medical and humanitarian aid efforts around the world.



In partnership with strategic suppliers, we launched the **B&C Basket Full of Thanks!** initiative, handing out free grocery baskets to workers, in thanks for their dedication.



**B&C is HREDD ready**  
We don't wait for the legislation, we actively support it and even lobby for it.



**We recognise that this  
is an ongoing journey.  
We are committed to  
continuous improvement,  
collaboration and  
transparency in our pursuit  
of a more sustainable future  
for our business  
and our industry.**



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