



LIFE ECAP - European Sustainable Clothing  
Action Plan

LIFE14 ENV/UK/000257



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Project description:

Background

The linear production and consumption model of the EU clothing sector leads to high environmental impacts, for example, in terms of carbon emissions and water resources. A report for the EU27 in 2009 revealed that 9.387 billion tonnes of textiles waste is either landfilled or incinerated. In the UK, textiles disposal is the highest by tonnage across the current EU28 countries, and it represents the fifth-biggest environmental footprint of any UK industry. The UK Defra Waste Strategy (2007) showed the importance of carbon savings from textile reuse and recycling compared to incineration. The global carbon footprint of UK clothing consumption alone is 38 million tonnes, or 1.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per household. Extrapolated across the EU, this is around 317 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> eq.

Objectives

The overall objective of the LIFE ECAP project is to adopt a circular approach to divert over 90 000 tonnes/year of clothing waste from landfill and incineration across Europe by March 2018, and to deliver a more resource efficient clothing sector. ECAP will set targets aiming to scale up these savings by 2020 to over 540 000 tonnes/year (€111 million), and by 2030 to over 700 000 tonnes/year (€144 million).

The project will achieve its aim by developing a sectoral approach, based on the

principles of the proven UK Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (SCAP), to provide an EU-wide framework to encourage circular business thinking and economic growth. This will reduce the environmental impacts of clothing production and consumption. The ECAP actions will demonstrate the business case for reducing clothing waste by systematically addressing the key challenges in production, consumption and disposal. The ECAP framework will measurably:

- Reduce the waste, water and carbon footprints of EU clothing;
- Prevent waste in the clothing supply chain, and the use of domestic and work clothing by business, consumers and governments;
- Ensure that less low-grade clothing and textiles goes to incineration and landfill; and
- Encourage innovation in resource-efficient design and service models to stimulate business growth in the clothing sector and its supply chain.

This will deliver against European policy directives on waste and sustainable production, and EU ambitions for developing low-carbon circular approaches to economic growth.

Expected results: From a baseline year of 2012, UK Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (SCAP) signatories have committed to:

- A 15% reduction in carbon footprint;
- A 15% reduction in water footprint;
- A 15% reduction in waste to landfill; and
- A 3.5% reduction in waste arising over the whole product life-cycle.

In the UK alone, meeting SCAP targets are forecast to save, per year, by 2020:

- More than 1.2 billion tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> eq.;
- Some 420 billion m<sup>3</sup> of water; and
- Over 64 000 tonnes of waste.

The reduction is measured per tonne of clothing. The carbon and water impacts are measured as footprints over the whole product life-cycle.

LIFE ECAP will use the same methodology to generate European-wide impacts from the project actions. It will develop appropriate European baselines and targets in conjunction with participants based on available data. Across nine countries (including the UK), the project will target 20% of the European total market in order to generate sufficient momentum beyond the project lifetime. Within the ECAP project lifetime (to March 2018) the following achievements are expected:

- Over 90 000 tonnes of clothing waste diverted from landfill;
- More than 1.6 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> eq., savings; and
- Water savings of 588 million m<sup>3</sup>.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Industry-Production - Textiles - Clothing  
Waste - Waste reduction - Raw material saving

Keywords

waste water reduction, incineration of waste, waste reduction, textile industry

Target EU Legislation

- Waste
- Directive 1999/31 - Landfill of waste (26.04.1999)
- Directive 2008/98 - Waste and repealing certain Directives (Waste Framework Directive) (19.11.200 ...
- COM(2014)398 - "Towards a circular economy: a zero waste programme for Europe" (02.07.2014)

Natura 2000 sites

Not applicable

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	The Waste and Resources Action Programme
Type of organisation	National authority
Description	WRAP was set up in 2000 to help deliver a step change increase in the low recycling rates across the United Kingdom and is now the UK's lead organisation for resource efficiency. WRAP works with businesses, individuals and the public sector on seven key areas, including improved collections of materials for recycling and reuse, and helping SMEs to become more resource efficient.

Partners RWS(Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu Rijkswaterstaat), Netherlands  
MADE-BY(STICHTING MADE-BY LABEL),  
Netherlands DAFI(Den Erhvervsdrivende Fond  
Danish Fashion Institute), Denmark ZWS(Zero  
Waste Scotland), United Kingdom

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE14 ENV/UK/000257
Duration	07-SEP-2015 to 06-MAR -2019
Total budget	3,539,877.00 €
EU contribution	2,123,926.00 €
Project location	Yorkshire and Humberside(United Kingdom) East Anglia(United Kingdom) South East (UK)(United Kingdom) West Midlands(United Kingdom) Gibraltar(United Kingdom)

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