

Sustainable Fibre Strategies



Company: Bobo Choses

Project: ECAP

Sector: Apparel and Textiles

Company size: 35

European Market Share: <0.01%

Highlights:

- We have sourced fabrics made of recycled cotton fibre, that work well for our collection.
- As a result of our work with ECAP, our design and purchasing teams have become more aware of the available sustainable fibre alternatives and have been able to improve their sourcing decisions.

“As a brand, we wanted to understand how our actions contribute to the bigger picture, and wanted to reduce our environmental footprint. ECAP offered us the support and guidance to start understanding the environmental issues that are material to us”.

Marta Poveda, Buyer Manager, Bobo Choses

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Case study **BOBO CHOSSES**

Ambition

What was your motivation to start sourcing more sustainable fibres and, as part of that, join ECAP?

At Bobo Choses, we are very conscious of global environmental problems and how textile production and the clothing sector impacts the planet negatively.

As a brand, we wanted to understand how our actions contribute to this bigger picture, and so wanted to reduce our environmental footprint. ECAP offered us the support and guidance to start understanding the environmental issues that are material to us.

What are your targets and priorities in relation to more sustainable fibres?

- To use more sustainable and natural fibres, such as lyocell, organic cotton and recycled polyester.
- As organic cotton is one of our main fibres, our consumption has to be maintained at a minimum of 80% in our collections, consequently helping to reduce our environment impact.
- Helping the environment to have a lower impact and use resources efficiently.

What impact are you aiming to achieve through your sustainable fibre strategy?

We want to use more sustainable fibres to reduce our environmental footprint as an organisation, and work with better consideration of the environment at all stages in our value chain.

Our aims have evolved as we have been part of the ECAP programme, where we have increased our purchasing of organic fibres and we have also explored more sustainable finishing processes for our outerwear, in particular.



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Project supported by LIFE funding

Achievements and Learnings

Key achievements or breakthroughs celebrated so far on your journey to source fibres more sustainably?

- Sourced fabrics made of recycled cotton fibre, that work well for our collection.
- As a result of our work with ECAP, our design and purchasing teams have become more aware of the available sustainable fibre alternatives and have been able to improve their sourcing decisions.
- Identified durable water repellent coatings for our outerwear, which has a lower environmental impact than traditional finishing techniques. This has been a real breakthrough for us, as it means we have the potential to produce an entire product that has sustainable attributes.

Main challenges faced whilst trying to switch to more sustainable fibres?

The availability of recycled polyester and polyamide that match the quality of virgin synthetic fibres has been a particular challenge for us. We have invested time and resource to source quality recycled synthetics, but at times this challenge has forced us to change the fabric used for the product or we have adjusted our designs to change the final look of the garment.

Now, we are beginning a circular economy project with our unsold garments. We will turn the garments into new recycled fibre to produce new garments, reducing resources, especially water, from planting, dyeing and washing.

Key learnings as a result of being part of the ECAP programme?

- We have really understood our environmental impact, and set a baseline footprint. ECAP has also helped us understand how we can improve our fibres strategy and reduce our impact on the planet.
- We have been able to understand how our actions as a business, but also as a sector, contribute towards climate change.
- Benchmarking ourselves against other brands has helped us to see what is possible in terms of our sustainability strategy, and also allowed us to learn from our peers.

If you were starting your sustainable fibre sourcing journey again, what would you do differently?

The most important thing is to learn as much as you can about sustainable fibres – the general topic and the specifics relating to your priority fibres. As part of the industry, we thought that we were fully informed of what alternatives were available, but the options for brands continue to expand.

We recommend having verifiable evidence of the attributes of the sustainable fibres you are considering, and be sure to continue to grow your use of sustainable fibres in collections season by season.

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BOBO CHOSÉS **ECAP**
european clothing action plan



Impact and Reflections

Were there any surprising outcomes that you were not expecting, for example, in your wider business operations, amongst customers or within your supply chain?

Knitwear was a focus for our customers, as they were asking us about our fibre choices. We now feel much more empowered to talk about this with our customers via our customer services team. For example, that increasing the amount of recycled wool content in our knitwear could help reduce the CO2e footprint by 2.97%; however using recycled fibres for synthetics the reduction was not as high.

For others not yet sourcing more sustainable fibres, have you any advice for them regarding how they can get started on the topic and what steps they can take in the early days of their journey to source more sustainable fibre?

- As a relatively small brand, we would recommend reviewing other similar brands' strategies and progress, to learn from them in terms of what is possible, how they are striving to achieve their aims, and also what the expectations in the market are.
- After that, use your brand mission and values to decide what is most aligned with your organisation and your customers interests, to decide what to prioritise.
- Finally, set a plan for your sustainable fibre journey, and continually keep up to date with new fibres and certifications. It helped us to have a record of the fibres we learnt about and to track their impact on water, waste and CO2e reductions.

What barriers from your perspective exist today in order for the textile sector to move to a more circular fibre system?

- The difficulty is in the availability of data and tools to start looking at how to integrate more circular thinking into our business, using more circular fibres.
- The most important thing is to join forces between, businesses, governments, innovators, and citizens.
- As a big problem is the waste of resources, the evolution of the circular chain is growing and the manufacturers know-how is strengthening, making an impact inside our company.
- It is a cross-functional topic, so we need to involve all departments to come up with a solution.

What's next for you? What are you working on in 2019/20?

- Reducing our footprint, by using recycled fabrics whilst still maintaining quality.
- Further understanding how we can reduce our environmental impact.
- We are running a pilot, where we are exploring using our unsold stock to create new garments.
- Looking to set targets for an increasingly sustainable collection year on year.



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ECAP is €3.6 million EU LIFE funded project which aims to reduce clothing waste across Europe and embed a circular economy approach.

ECAP mission

Cutting the environmental impact of clothing across the supply chain. Generating value for business through collaboration, measuring and sharing best practice

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Case studies were generated as a result of pilots carried out for ECAP by WRAP and the named organisations from 2016 to 2019.