

EU Ecolabel

NETWORK TOOLKIT

FEBRUARY 2019

Footwear



Network Toolkit Footwear – February 2019

Dear all,

Welcome to the 2019 Network Toolkit which has a new format! In this toolkit, you will find product-group specific communication content for **footwear**. Please find below instructions on how to best use this content:

WHY use this toolkit?

This content has been developed to provide you with **ready-to-use material** to facilitate communication on your own social media or website pages in order to **collectively optimise outreach** to our B2B and B2C target audiences. The Helpdesk posts all of the content listed within each toolkit on the official EU Ecolabel social media and website pages, however in order to have increased visibility of this content, we encourage you to **publish this same material on your national social media and website pages**.

HOW to use this toolkit?

This material can be **used as-is (copy/paste)**, however depending on your country it may have the most impact if the content is **translated into your national language** and/or edited for your target audience. The articles should be **shared with your partners and multipliers** (NGOs, journalists or sustainability and lifestyle bloggers). Make sure to **follow and tag the EU Ecolabel social media pages** when publishing on social media, so that we retweet and share your posts on our pages.

WHAT material is in this toolkit?

The following content is available within this toolkit for you to disseminate:

***Social media posts for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn**

- Relevant hashtags and social media accounts to use and tag within the posts

***Articles**

- Ambassador Success Story
- Product-group specific articles

Feel free to **send the Helpdesk feedback and suggestions** concerning the toolkits—your comments will help improve their content.

Best wishes,




The EU Ecolabel Helpdesk Team




Contents



I.	SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS.....	4
II.	SOCIAL MEDIA TAGS, LINKS AND INFLUENCERS	6
III.	ARTICLES	7
1)	ECO-FRIENDLY MATERIAL FOR MORE SUSTAINABLE SHOES WITH THE EU ECOLABEL	7
2)	SHOES WITH A LOWER WATER FOOTPRINT THANKS TO THE EU ECOLABEL	8
3)	EU ECOLABEL AMBASSADOR: KAVAT AN INNOVATOR IN ‘ECO-PERFORMANCE LEATHER’	9



I. Social media posts

Type of post & tags	Facebook / LinkedIn	Twitter	Visual
<p>Ambassador focus: Kavat</p> <p>Tags: #SustainableFashion #CircularEconomy #ResponsibleChoices #footwear</p>	<p>"Since 2008, our business and demand for our product has grown significantly, creating new jobs both in marketing and in production. The #EUEcolabel has been an important key factor to our success." Magnus Ericson, CEO of Kavat.</p> <p>More about Kavat : https://kavat.com/</p>	<p>"Since 2008, our business and demand for our product has grown significantly, creating new jobs both in marketing and in production. The #EUEcolabel has been an important key factor to our success." Magnus Ericson, CEO of Kavat.</p>	
<p>Current issue focus: eco-friendly material</p> <p>Tags: #SustainableFashion #CircularEconomy #RecycleAndReuse</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: A sneaker contains up to twenty different materials, such as leather, textiles and polymers, which makes it difficult to recycle. The #EUEcolabel criteria go beyond the regulation on #footwear to ensure that materials used are eco-friendly, durable, and easily recyclable.</p> <p>More about our products: http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: A sneaker contains up to twenty different materials, such as #leather, #textiles and polymers, which makes it difficult to #recycle. The EU Ecolabel criteria ensure that its #footwear products are eco-friendly, durable and easy to recycle!</p>	
<p>Current issue focus: water footprint</p> <p>Tags: #SustainableFashion #WaterFootprint #ResponsibleChoices</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: It takes 8,000 liters of water to make a pair of shoes! Most water usage arises when raw hides and skins are converted into leather through tanning, a water-intensive process. The #EUEcolabel criteria on footwear guarantee eco-friendly products with a low water #footprint!</p> <p>More about our products: http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: It takes 8,000 liters of #water to make a pair of #shoes! The EU Ecolabel criteria on #footwear guarantee eco-friendly products with a low water #footprint!</p>	

<p>Licence holder focus: Avarcas Trotamillas</p> <p>Tags: #SustainableLeather #SustainableFashion #CircularEconomy</p>	<p>The #Footwear manufacturer Avarcas Tortamillas is committed to significantly reducing water consumption, and toxic chemical use by meeting the #EUEcolabel #environmental objectives when manufacturing its eco-friendly and durable leather.</p> <p>More information: https://www.avarcastrotamillas.com</p>	<p>Avarcas Tortamillas chose the EU Ecolabel to meet its #environmental objectives when manufacturing its shoes: the #leather used is eco-friendly and #durable.</p> <p>More information: https://www.avarcastrotamillas.com</p>	 <p>©Avarcas</p>
<p>Current issue focus: toxic chemicals</p> <p>Tags: #ChemicalFree #EcoFashion #ResponsibleChoices</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: toxic #chemicals used in traditional #footwear manufacturing often leak into water sources through factory discharge, damaging neighbouring #ecosystems. The #EUEcolabel criteria limits hazardous substances present in its final products!</p> <p>More about our products: http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: toxic #chemicals used in traditional #footwear manufacturing often leak into water sources through factory discharge, damaging neighbouring #ecosystems. The #EUEcolabel criteria limits hazardous substances present in its final products!</p>	 <p>© Getty Images/PAU</p>
<p>Licence holder focus: Ejendals AB</p> <p>Tags: #SustainableFashion #ResponsibleChoices #SlowFashion</p>	<p>.@EjendalsAB chose the #EUEcolabel to accompany its commitment to producing #footwear with a low impact on the #environment. The “Jalas Green Line” is an eco-friendly shoe collection which uses metal-free materials.</p> <p>More about Ejendals AB -> https://www.ejendals.com</p>	<p>.@EjendalsAB chose the #EUEcolabel to accompany its commitment to producing #footwear with a low impact on the #environment. The “Jalas Green Line” is an eco-friendly which uses metal-free materials!</p>	 <p>© Ejendals AB</p>

<p>Current issue: circular economy</p> <p>Tags:</p> <p>#EcoFashion #ResponsibleChoices #RecycleAndReuse</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: the choice of materials can improve the #life-cycle of shoes and promote #CircularEconomy. The #EUEcolabel criteria for #footwear encourages eco-friendly materials that are easily #recycled such as organic cotton fibre.</p> <p>More about our products: http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: the choice of materials can improve the #life-cycle of shoes and promote #CircularEconomy. The #EUEcolabel criteria for #footwear encourages eco-friendly materials that are easily #recycled such as organic cotton fibre.</p>	
<p>Current issue focus: toxic decomposition</p> <p>Tags:</p> <p>#SustainableFashion #CircularEconomy #RecycleAndReuse</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: it has been estimated that a pair of shoes takes over 50 years to fully decompose. The disposal of shoes in landfills can end up contaminating the soil and even drinking water, as toxic chemicals slowly leak into soil and water during decomposition. #EUEcolabel footwear products are safer for the environment and easily recyclable!</p> <p>More about our products: http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/</p>	<p>#DidYouKnow: it has been estimated that a pair of shoes takes over 50 years to fully decompose. #EUEcolabel footwear products are safer for the environment and easily recyclable!</p>	

II. Social media tags, links and influencers

Feel free to use the following hashtags and accounts in your social media posts in order to heighten the visibility of your posts.

<p>Facebook influencers</p>	<p>@ZeroWasteFrance ; @EuropeanEnvironmentalBureau ; @EjendalsAB ; @kavatfabriksbutik (Kavat) ; AFNOR ; EU Ecolabel</p>
<p>Twitter influencers</p>	<p>@bmoralesbailon (Blanca Morales) ; @KarmenuVella (Karmenu Vella) ; @Green_Europe (EEB) ; @EU_ECHA (European Chemical Agency) ; @beuc (BEUC) ; @EMAS_EUEcolabel (EU Ecolabel) ; @AFNOR ; @ademe ; @ZeroWasteFR ; @EUfootwear (The European confederation of the Footwear Industry) ; @EjendalsAB</p>

III. Articles

1) Eco-friendly material for more sustainable shoes with the EU Ecolabel

Footwear is a thriving and highly diversified industry in Europe, with 2.6 billion pairs of new shoes sold every year. The environmental impact of this industry is in turn quite high, due to the toxicity of non-recyclable materials and substances used during production. The EU Ecolabel encourages footwear companies to take conscious steps in improving the sustainability of their materials and production processes.

Footwear products are usually assembled with many different materials. For example, a sneaker can contain up to twenty distinct materials (such as leather, fabric and plastic), making it difficult to recycle and instead causing it to be sent to landfills. Unfortunately, it has been estimated that a standard pair of shoes takes over 50 years to fully decompose.

The disposal of traditional shoes in landfills often contaminate soil and drinking water, as toxic chemicals slowly leak into the neighbouring environment during the decomposition of the shoes. For example, microplastics originating from the abrasion of shoe soles may pass through wastewater treatment into our rivers and estuaries. The complex assembly of shoes also makes it challenging for customers to identify and avoid purchasing certain materials.

The EU Ecolabel criteria ensure that material used is eco-friendly and that shoes created have long life-spans. The EU Ecolabel criteria for footwear encourages eco-friendly materials that are easily recycled such as organic cotton fibre. In fact, non-recycled cotton fibre must be grown according to strict requirements put forward by the European Commission, the US National Organic Program or any equivalent legal obligations set by trading partners of the EU.

Several durability tests are also required when a footwear company applies for the EU Ecolabel. For example, the resistance and adhesiveness of outer soles are carefully tested, as well as the level and the time it takes for discoloration inside the shoes. The wide scope of the EU Ecolabel which not only looks at the amount of toxic chemicals used, but also the durability and recyclability of footwear products makes it a unique and trustworthy certification.

Sources:

- <https://theshoeindustry.weebly.com/environmental-impact.html>
- http://ec.europa.eu/environment/aarhus/pdf/35/Annex_11_report_from_Lowell_Center.pdf
- <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/footwear/buyer-requirements/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/sustainable-fashion-blog/2014/oct/09/footwear-industry-shoes-trainers-japan-shinto-temples>

2) Shoes with a lower water footprint thanks to the EU Ecolabel

The production of shoes requires an enormous amount of water, since it takes around 8,000 liters of water to make a pair of shoes. It also negatively impacts the environment through toxic chemical discharge. This is especially true when leather is used, one of the most popular materials for footwear. The EU Ecolabel criteria focus on guaranteeing footwear with a lower water footprint (calculated by adding up the water required for each step of the production process).

Leather is one of the most widely used materials for footwear and demands huge quantities of water when it is transformed into a final product. The characteristics of leather make it particularly suitable for footwear, since it can be cut and shaped with ease, is light, strong and supple.

Unfortunately, raw hides and skins when converted into finished leather through tanning require a series of water-intensive processes. Tanning also produces wastewater, contaminated with toxic and polluting substances such as organic matter, salts, tanning agents, dyestuffs and preservatives. In fact, in 2011, a study from the Danish Environmental Protection Agency found that almost half of imported leather goods contained chromium VI. The EU Ecolabel footwear criteria aim to limit water consumption and toxic chemical use through close controls and the banning of substances such as chlorinated paraffins, solvents, and chromium VI.

These widely used toxic chemicals in traditional footwear manufacturing easily leak into the surrounding environment and water through factory discharge and can affect flora, fauna and human populations who rely on those water sources. Other harmful chemicals such as phthalates often found within glues, rubbers and leather are also released into the environment during production, endangering natural ecosystems.

Furthermore, chronic inhalation by workers in tanning sites of toxic chemicals, such as chromium VI compounds, is also correlated with an increased risk of lung, nasal and sinus cancer. Through the EU Ecolabel, footwear manufacturers can limit the negative impact of their production, and consumers can buy products that are less toxic for themselves and the environment.

Sources:

- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317381731_Leather_Industry_and_Environment_Pakistan_Scenario [accessed Aug 09 2018].
- <https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/publikation/long/4289.pdf>
- https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/wtr10_forum_e/wtr10_6july10_e.htm
- https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/wtr10_forum_e/wtr10_6july10_e.htm

3) EU Ecolabel ambassador: Kavat an innovator in ‘eco-performance leather’

The Swedish company Kavat is one of the first footwear companies to have acquired the EU Ecolabel in 2008. Kavat produces durable and high-quality shoes made of sustainable materials, with more environmentally friendly manufacturing processes. By obtaining the EU Ecolabel for around 50 of its models, Kavat has become one of the most eco-friendly footwear manufacturers in Europe.

Traceability is fundamental for Kavat, who is strongly committed to “telling the truth” to its customers. This transparency has pushed the company to improve its controls on every step of the value chain, which produces around 400.000 pairs of shoes every year.

“Since the EU Ecolabel in 2008, we have created new jobs both in marketing and in production, due to increased demand for our products.

The EU Ecolabel has been an important key factor to this success.”

Magnus Ericson - CEO

In an industry where supply chain complexity makes it difficult for companies to be fully transparent, the EU Ecolabel has helped Kavat differentiate itself from competition by giving credibility to its brand image and increasing customer loyalty. In fact, the company has experienced significant growth since 2008 thanks in part to an increase in consumer consciousness of health and environmental concerns.

Kavat is widely recognised for its “Eco Performance leather” innovation: a waterproof, chrome-free leather with great breathability. Today, most leather products are treated with chrome, heavy metals and coloring dyes, which bleed into rivers and ecosystems, degrading them along the way. Kavat, similarly to the EU Ecolabel footwear criteria, wants to limit chemical use during the manufacturing process by banning most chrome and dye substances.

Circular economy is also at the heart of Kavat’s philosophy, and the company follows

“We wanted an international recognition since we promote our shoes on many markets. The EU Ecolabel is a third-party confirmation of our integrity and trust.”

Magnus Ericson - CEO

the EU Ecolabel recommendation of offering a “Repair Service” for worn-out shoes. This service is popular with customers who see it as an efficient eco-friendly alternative to throwing-out their shoes.

Finally, Kavat turns to the EU Ecolabel criteria for guidance on eco-friendly best practices when developing any of its product lines. This engagement, combined with strong partnerships, has helped Kavat in its continuous development of new sustainable products. In fact, two new models of rainboots and leather boots made from renewable materials are in Kavat’s pipeline, with the objective of becoming awarded with the EU Ecolabel in 2019. Overall, the EU Ecolabel has cemented Kavat’s image as a trustworthy promoter of eco-innovation, quality the circular economy in the footwear industry.