



Draft, 07Dec2011

Complaint procedure

for issues related to the implementation of the
GOTS quality assurance and labelling system

1. Scope of the document

This document describes the process to ensure a formalised, timely and effective resolution of any complaints raised with regard to

- unauthorised, false or misleading use of the GOTS logo or other claims related to GOTS (certification),
- failures or omissions in the course of the GOTS certification procedure
- any other violations against the GOTS quality assurance or the licensing and labelling system
- the ownership and other rights of/in the Global Organic Textile Standard.

2. Principle

Complaints are accepted from any company, organisation or individual.

3. Lodging a complaint

- 3.1 Any complaint referring to a subject as listed in the scope shall be lodged in writing by e-mail to mail@global-standard.org
- 3.2. Complaints will only be processed if submitted in English, unless another language is expressly agreed to.
- 3.3. Complaints must contain the following minimum information:
- Name and contact details of the complainant
 - Name and contact details of the addressee of the complaint
 - Subject, description and substantiation of the complaint
 - Any further relevant information
- 3.4. For the purpose to formalise and ease the submission and processing of complaints a specific 'complaint form' has been developed. The complainant may be requested to use this form before his complaint is accepted and processed, especially if his initial notification does not contain the minimum information as listed above.

4. Processing

- 4.1 Any complaint shall immediately be brought to the attention of the GOTS Technical Director who is in charge to file the complaint and to coordinate its processing.

INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD



- 4.2 The complainant will, soon after receipt but not later than 30 days thereafter, be informed that the complaint will be processed and if further information are required, requested to submit these within a specified time.
- 4.3 Initially the complaint is investigated by the 'Evaluator'. Evaluator is the Technical Director. Depending on the subject of the complaint the Technical Director may assign the position to a GOTS staff member or a GOTS Regional Representative. If the complaint concerns (directly or indirectly) the (performance of the) work of the Technical Director and/or the Technical Committee, the Director of the Global Standard GmbH serves as Evaluator who may assign this position to a competent person of his choice.
- 4.4 The Evaluator keeps records of the conversations, hardcopies and electronic communication.
- 4.5 All parties involved in the process are requested to refrain from commenting publicly on the complaint until a decision is made.

5. Admissibility

- 5.1 If the complaint turns out to be unsubstantiated the Evaluator rejects it and communicates this including the reason in writing to the parties concerned.
- 5.2 The complainant may appeal against this rejection within 14 days in writing to the Evaluator.

6. Conciliation

- 6.1 If the Evaluator considers the complaint admissible, he contacts the parties concerned (by e-mail or phone) to attempt to informally resolve the issue in direct communication and on basis of the stipulations and requirements of the official and public documents of the GOTS program.
- 6.2 If an informal resolution is possible and appropriate, the Evaluator files the collected correspondence and further documentation, communicates the solution to the parties concerned and closes the case file.

7. Decision

- 7.1 If an informal resolution is not possible or appropriate or if the complainant appealed against the rejection of the complaint the Evaluator reports the case to the Coordinator of the International Working Group on Global Organic Textile Standard (IWG), if applicable with a recommendation on the decision.
- 7.2 In case initial investigation leads to the suspicion of severe failures or omissions of the work of an approved certification body the case is to be referred to the GOTS Technical Committee which, after investigation, makes a recommendation on a decision to the Coordinator.

INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON GLOBAL ORGANIC TEXTILE STANDARD



7.3 The Coordinator shall make a decision on the complaint and inform the parties involved accordingly. The decision shall include reason and may be published.

8. Protection of the GOTS Program

Irrespective of this Complaint Procedure the IWG may impose appropriate sanctions including legal action if deemed necessary in order to safeguard the credibility of the GOTS program.