

# The Green Button: Applicable to Textile Footwear

*The Green Button is the first German government-supervised quality mark for sustainable textiles. Whoever wishes to buy apparel or textile footwear produced under ecologically and socially sustainable conditions can look to the Green Button mark for guidance. It was officially unveiled on 9 September by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, BMZ). The mark imposes mandatory requirements for protection of humans and the environment: 46 demanding social and environmental standards must be adhered to – ranging from a ban on forced labour to wastewater concentration limits. PFI is one of the accredited test centres.*

## Purchasing Guide

Three quarters of consumers consider sustainable fashion to be important. They have no wish to wear a T-shirt produced for a starvation wage in 16-hour shifts or dyed with toxic chemicals. The Green Button mark shows that sustainable fashion is feasible.



As the first government-supervised quality mark, the Green Button combines stringent requirements placed on individual textiles with the requirement that the entire enterprise has demonstrably exercised its duty of care along the entire supply chain.

In the introductory phase, which is expected to last until 2021, the Green Button will cover the production steps assembly (cutting and stitching) as wet processes (bleaching and dyeing). Thereafter the coverage of the Green Button will be extended to the production steps “weaving and spinning” and finally the production step “fibre production / cotton growing”.

## PFI as an Independent Test Centre

As a so-called certification mark, the Green Button has been registered and examined by the German Patent and Trademark Office. The requirements of the certification mark are obligatory and can also

be enforced internationally through trademark law. The regulations covering use of the certification mark stipulate that only independent test centres such as PFI are permitted to confirm conformity to the manufacturer or the person responsible for the product.

### Scope

The scope of the Green Button covers all textiles, especially apparel, textile fashion accessories, textile toys, rucksacks, fabrics, home textiles, and bedding. The Green Button can also be awarded to textiles made of polyester or other man-made fibres. Moreover, it has recently been extended to cover textile footwear.



### Demanding Standards

In total, [46 demanding social and environmental standards](#) have to be observed. A product has to adhere to 26 social and ecological minimum standards – ranging from a ban on forced labour to wastewater concentration limits. In addition, the enterprise has to show that its duty of care matches up to 20 criteria. Independent examiners such as PFI monitor whether the criteria are met.

The certification programme has been adapted to meet the special needs of the textile industry. Double certifications are avoided for manufacturers thanks to recognition of equivalently certified products bearing a recognised seal satisfying the criteria of the Green Button. Furthermore, it is possible to extend the use of the Green Button to new collections and products within the examined supply chain during the period of validity of certification.

**Please address any additional questions to:**

Johanna Höger  
Umweltreferentin | Environmental Consultant  
Zertifizierungsstelle des PFI | PFI Certification body  
Email: [johanna.hoeger@pfi-germany.de](mailto:johanna.hoeger@pfi-germany.de)  
Tel: +49 6331 2490 810 | Mobile: +49 151 5664 4515

