



**Lessons of the Denim Deal  
2020-2023**

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Denim Deal  
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Kings of Indigo  
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PVH  
Wolkat



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In this booklet the term POCR is used.

POCR-Cotton is defined as 'Post Consumer Recycled Cotton'. POCR-Cotton is recycled cotton from textile products that have been used by the end user(s) for an indefinite period of time for the intended purpose and that have been discarded and subsequently recycled, whereby the cotton fibres of at least 98% cotton are reused in new products.

Foreword

# Closing the loop with circular denim

The implementation of the Denim Deal has created movement in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area! The Denim Deal partners have formed a cohesive network. This network of very different partners across the denim textile value chain, have worked together in the Denim Deal. Their common goal was to use more recycled content in new jeans and denim garments.

As a huge amount of clothing is discarded each year, the Denim Deal goals are important. This discarded clothing can still be used, if we treat it properly. By working together in the textile value chain, we utilized everyone's best: from collectors to sorters, to fiberisers, spinners, weavers and of course the brands. The Denim Deal is thereby a perfect example of the: close the loop model.

As regional governments in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area we are proud that so many of the Denim Deal participants are located in our region. They thrive us forward towards a truly circular economy and a circular textile hub. And we are thankful for their, for your, time, efforts and investments.

As we approach the end of the Denim Deal in autumn 2023, it's time to look back and to look forward. To learn from the Denim Deal experiences: what lessons have been learned and what challenges and issues have emerged that need to be addressed in the coming years? You will find these experiences in this book.

I hope and wish that they will be read as inspiration for the future!

**Robbert Berkhout**  
Government lead of the  
Amsterdam Metropolitan  
Area Circular Economy  
Programme







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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Circular Denim

For a long time now, our denim industry has been a 'linear' industry. This means that in order to make a denim garment, raw materials are extracted and, at the end of its lifecycle, that garment is being disposed of in a landfill or incineration facility. This method of production places an immense strain on the environment. The clothing industry is responsible for around 4% of the global greenhouse gas emissions<sup>1</sup>. Besides greenhouse gas emissions, the production process of textiles has a negative environmental footprint when it comes to the chemicals, (during the manufacturing process) and the use of land, water and pesticides (when growing natural fibers).

When it comes to usage and consumption in the Netherlands, 57% of the textiles is disposed of in general waste and consequently incinerated after consumption<sup>2</sup>. An average Dutch consumer buys 50 pieces of clothing each year<sup>1</sup> while only 12% of the disposed textiles are recycled and 17% reused<sup>2</sup>. The average pair of jeans requires around 8000 litres of water to be produced, as well as a high amount of pesticides, which pollute local water sources (WRAP, 2019; WRAP,2017)<sup>3</sup>. Given the immense popularity of jeans, with around 2 billion pairs produced annually around the globe, their demand is expected to continue to increase.

Denim's qualities, which include versatility and durability, make it an irreplaceable fabric within the garment industry. However, we will have to move towards a more sustainable and circular way to produce denim. In order to reduce the impact of the industry on the environment, we have to start creating a circular denim industry. This means denim garments will be designed and produced in a circular manner, while the amount of resources used to produce denim are reduced. Garments will be reused and their cotton material can last multiple lifecycles, off course with the possibility of being recycled.

***“Cotton is a remarkable resource and, given the significant cost of its cultivation, it's imperative that we handle it with greater care. Often referred to as "white gold," cotton offers numerous possibilities and gains strength when wet.”***

Rosmarie Ruigrok, coordinator Denim Deal

<sup>1</sup> Source: Milieu-Centraal

<sup>2</sup> Source: Baseline Monitor Circular Textile Policy NL 2018

<sup>3</sup> WRAP. (2019). Fibre to fibre recycling: An economic & financial sustainability assessment.

<sup>3</sup> WRAP. (2017). Mapping clothing impacts in

## 1.2 The Denim Deal

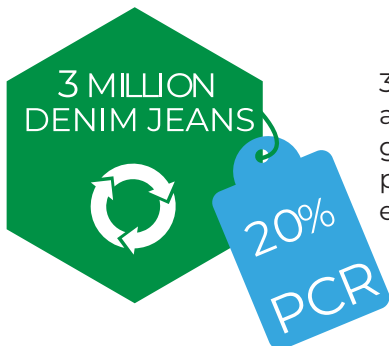
On October 29, 2020, twenty eight parties signed the Dutch C-233 Green Deal on Circular Denim, in short: the Denim Deal. The Denim Deal is a three-year lasting public-private initiative where stakeholders along the value chain have made a voluntary agreement together. The group of signatories consists of parties from the entire value textiles chain; from producers, brands and retailers to collectors, recyclers and public authorities. They have jointly developed an approach to take major steps towards a circular denim industry. The idea is straightforward: move towards a circular denim industry by shifting towards the use of recycled textile in all denim products. The purpose of the Denim Deal is to work with leading parties across the denim value chain to close the loop and thus achieve the necessary sustainable, systemic change in the value chain. All signatories of the Denim Deal have undertaken several measures and actions to achieve and meet the following specific goals by the end of 2023:



1. Brands and retailers will achieve a minimum of 5% PO-CR-cotton in their own denim collections during this period by working closely together with other signatories



2. Brands and retailers will individually work towards higher percentages of PO-CR-cotton in denim garments and will set out their ambitions and approaches in individual roadmaps, based upon the close collaboration with other signatories.



3. Brands and retailers will commit to individual ambitions, designed to achieve the specific joint goal of using 20% PO-CR-cotton fibres in 3 million pairs of jeans produced by these parties until the end of 2023.

The goals that were set are both simple and challenging at the same time. One of the strengths of the Denim Deal is the decision to focus on a singular type of textile. However, challenging an entire industry that is built around a linear system is not easy. It will require technological, social and systematic innovation, as well as perseverance.



***"Circularity is a theme that can only be tackled successfully together and in a chain context. The Denim Deal is a valuable initiative, but we are only at the beginning of a new reality. For the future, we must not only focus on rules and governance, but also on entrepreneurship and cooperation."***

Mariette Hoitink & James Veenhoff Co-founders  
House of Denim Foundation

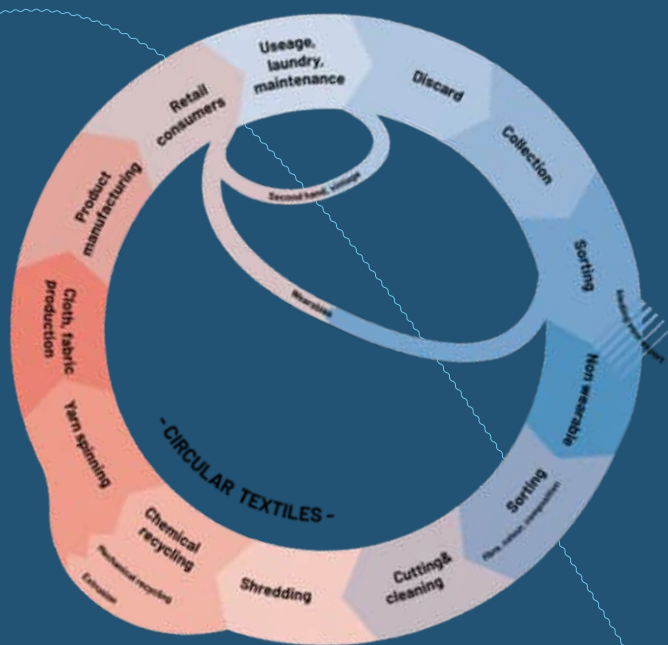
## 1.2.1 The Start of the Denim Deal

It is not surprising that the origin of the Denim Deal can be traced back to Amsterdam, as it is one of the denim capitals of the world, housing brands such as MUD Jeans, Tommy Hilfiger and Kings of Indigo. The denim sector is relatively large in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region, with initiatives like House of Denim and the Kingpins trade show. Within the region, the ambition has been set to be frontrunners in using recycled cotton fibres in new denim clothing. However, while the Denim Deal may have its origin within the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region, it quickly grew to an international endeavour. What began as an idea, has now grown to a Green Deal with 53 public and private party signatories from all over the world, including the Netherlands, Spain, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Bangladesh, Switzerland and the United States.

***“Amsterdam is a frontrunner when it comes to circularity. So, we were eager to join the Denim Deal. It not only brought us valuable insights but also a better connection with the denim parties based in our city. We are very proud of the positive results.”***

Zita Pels, Deputy Mayor of Amsterdam





Textile reverse Supplychain wheel  
[reflowproject.eu](http://reflowproject.eu)

## 1.2.2 The Denim Deal is a Green Deal

The Denim Deal is among the 235+ signed Green Deals, an innovative strategy initiated by the Dutch Government in 2011 to support sustainable initiatives and innovations. Its primary objective being to reduce the obstacles which companies, public organizations and citizens may face whilst pursuing their sustainable initiatives and goals. In a Green Deal, the government can assist in addressing regulatory hurdles, creating new markets, knowledge-sharing or stimulating networking possibilities. Participants collaborate through a mutual agreement to achieve concrete outcomes.

## 1.3 How does the Denim Deal work?

The Denim Deal's successes have been made possible by its structure. Alongside the set goals and coalition partners, the following four components played an important role: the steering committee, the coordinator, the working groups and the monitor.

### 1.3.1 The Steering committee

The steering committee consists of the following parties:



**Miriam van de Kamp**  
Representative of  
Ministry of I&W



**Marten Boels** (Metropolitan Region of  
Amsterdam)  
Representative of local authorities



**Nicolas Prophte** (PVH)  
Representative of the  
brands/retailers



**Besim ÖZEK** (Bossa)  
Representative of the  
spinners /weavers





**Jan Lamme**  
(former CEO of Lamme Textiles  
and CEO Cibutex)  
Representative of waste  
processing companies



**Romain Narcy** (Ereks Garment)  
Representative of manufacturers

## 1.3.2 The coordinator

The coordinator of the Denim Deal, Roosmarie Ruigrok, has truly been a pivotal figure within the Denim Deal framework throughout its duration. Because of her years of experience with and expertise in circular textiles, her strong involvement in the Amsterdam segment of the European Reflow project and her numerous national and international contacts, she was able to establish valuable connections. For new signatories, she embodied the face of the Denim Deal. During various international circular textile events and webinars, she presented the Denim Deal in an inspiring manner.

Especially during the onset and the first year of the Deal, physical gatherings were rendered impossible due to Covid. During this period, the coordinator instigated several well-attended online meetings to facilitate interaction among the signatories. As soon as circumstances allowed for it, she organized annual Denim Deal gatherings at the Circular Textile Days and workshops discussing quality, transparency and challenges for collectors and sorters.

Functioning as a proverbial spider in the web, she adeptly connected the dots, fostering a sense of unity among parties/signatories from distinct segments of the denim textile chain. This ensured that when intriguing initiatives emerged, her connections paved the way for collaboration among Denim Deal entities, facilitating their development.

Since last year, she also provided information on and organised webinars on new national and international regulations in order to improve the understanding of the EPR by all stakeholders.

\* The contribution of Amsterdam municipal authority to the role of the coordinator was supported until June 2022 by the horizon2020 Reflow Project.



**Roosmarie Ruigrok\***  
Coordinator

***“I am very proud of the companies that have made a 180 degree shift towards circular denim.”***

Roosmarie Ruigrok, Coordinator Denim Deal



### 1.3.3 Working groups

The Denim Deal participants collaborated in four working groups to address specific challenges within the textile industry:

#### **Transport**

Focus: improving international non-wearable textiles transportation for circular purposes.

#### **Quality**

Focus: achieving the production of 3 million pairs of jeans with reused textile fibres 20% POOCR without compromising the original brand quality.

#### **Transparency**

Focus: transparent communication on circular practices without "green washing".

#### **Guidelines for Fibers**

Focus: creating guidelines for effective textile sorting, collecting and recycling, ensuring high-quality fibres.



### 1.3.4 Monitor

The signatories of the Denim Deal annually monitor the activities they have undertaken, the achieved results and their effects, as well as the challenges that present themselves towards achieving the goals of the Denim Deal.

The monitoring system consists of both quantitative monitoring, measured as progress by the brands towards the set goals, as well as qualitative monitoring by looking at all of the activities and results of the participants. The monitor is coordinated by a committee in charge of executing and overseeing the annual monitoring process. The results are presented by a third party: FFACT.

The final monitor rapport<sup>3</sup>, the one on 2023, will be published in 2024.



<sup>3</sup>The follow up of the monitoring is published at [www.denim-deal.nl](http://www.denim-deal.nl)



## 2. The takeaways

### 2.1 Questionnaire and interviews

The lessons that have been learned from the Denim Deal were evaluated after gathering insight from the participating parties within the Denim Deal. We conducted a questionnaire and held follow-up interviews, inquiring about their experiences. Additionally, workshops and the annual monitor gave us valuable insights on the lessons learned. Overall, the responses showcased the positive impact and potential of the Denim Deal. These takeaways have resulted in the following lessons:

#### **The lessons learned:**

1. The possibility of working with POOCR-cotton: one of the most important lessons learned from the Denim Deal is that it is possible to produce new denim garments with POOCR-cotton and scale this.
2. The value of interconnectedness and cooperation: within the Denim Deal it is important to recognize the interconnected nature of the value chain. This is one of the main reasons why collaboration among stakeholders is key. "We are working together towards a common goal" is seen as crucial in order to achieve the set goals.
3. Building a movement: the Denim Deal demonstrates the importance of creating a movement to achieve the necessary steps and inspire and involve more players within the industry.
4. The value of communication and knowledge sharing: the atmosphere during the on- and offline meetings was full of trust and participants were open minded. A safe space was created for brands to share knowledge, which they are usually not accustomed to.
5. Challenges in POOCR: the Denim Deal has come with certain challenges. These include the cost issues associated with production and the expectations that brands hold regarding price and aesthetics. It takes time to implement and phase out styles without POOCR. Switching current denim qualities to POOCR cotton versions has been a massive undertaking.

6. Transparency and traceability: these two factors are crucial in the movement towards circular denim. A transparent system can help ensure the quality and standard of products made with higher levels of post-consumer waste.

7. The need for investments: it has to become easier for stakeholders to participate in post-consumer textile waste recycling.

### **The possibility of working with POCR-cotton**

Initially, there was no certainty that 20% post-consumer recycled (POCR) material would be feasible on an industrial scale, but fortunately it is. We have learned that the preference for mono-blend indicates that having a single material type in a product is preferable. This ensures that even after the pants are discarded, they remain recyclable.

***“Understanding each stakeholder’s business model is crucial for finding common ground and working towards our shared goals.”***

Nicolas Prophte, PvH

With setting the target of 20% mechanically recycled cotton, it's crucial to determine what can realistically be achieved and how we can drive substantial impact. Alongside the 20% mechanical recycling, there's also the potential for integrating chemically recycled materials. While 20% mechanical recycling indicates what the maximum is that can be attained, the feasibility itself is a positive result. This 20% objective is certainly very achievable.

## Interconnectedness and cooperation

Overall, the respondents had a generally positive experience participating in the Denim Deal and acknowledged its positive impact on the denim industry's sustainability efforts. They appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with like-minded stakeholders and work towards a more sustainable circular denim value chain. The mentioned highlights of the Denim Deal include coordination, knowledge sharing and creating a network of stakeholders; from collectors to brands. The collaborative nature of the Denim Deal was frequently mentioned as a highlight within the Denim Deal, especially the in-person meetings were valued for fostering connections and dialogue.

***“If you want to create circular denim, everybody has to be included. A circular supply chain means everybody has to work together.”***

Remi Veldhoven, Wolkat

The value of interconnectedness and cooperation among the entire value chain was seen as one of the most important features of the Denim Deal. The Denim Deal was successful in bringing together a group of stakeholders from the entire value chain that had never connected to one another before.

***“We are speaking the same language now; this was not the case at the start of the process.”***

Marten Boels, MRA

Especially during the in person meetings, the parties started having productive dialogues, leading to new perspectives on certain topics. While this at times would lead to friction, it resolved misunderstandings and misconceptions, which ultimately contributed to driving the group towards a shared objective, while achieving a holistic view on the matter.







***“The Denim Deal puts the finger on the sore spot.”***

Julien Baart, Garcia

The Denim Deal has brought together the stakeholders, who by definition are each other's competition. The informal setting of the physical meetings has contributed to this and has overall been valued as a positive aspect by all the parties.

***“The highlight of the Denim Deal has been the contact with international parties and brands.”***

Peter Rijken, Retail Experts





## Communication and Knowledge-sharing

One of the benefits of the joint effort has been the opportunity for knowledge exchange and learning among the parties involved. For instance, post-consumer textile recyclers, who are already experienced in dealing with recycled materials on a daily basis, were able to share their insights with brands that may be entirely new to working with post-consumer recycled textiles in their denim garments. Regardless of the level of knowledge and experience, it is an enriching experience to be part of a group of likeminded players and work together within a movement.

**Veel aandacht voor Denim Deal**  
 > Internationale LinkedIn groep groeit

**Denim recyclen: Dit is hoe Nederlandse jeansmerken het aanpakken**

**In interviews met jeansmerken**

**Ons motto is: Alles duurzaam. Zo niet, leg uit!**

**Endgame hebben jullie de 'Denim Deal' ondertekend. Wat houdt dat in?**  
 "De Nederlandse sector heeft dit gedaan. Het is dat de aangesloten kledingfabrikanten samen drie miljoen jeans voor de Nederlandse markt maken dat is drie miljoen per jaar. Die zijn nu allemaal gemaakt van gerecyclede denim. Dit betekent dat we nu 100% gerecyclede denim hebben in alle denim kledingstukken. Dit hele lieten doet mee, dus naast bekende merken ook instamers, sokkeroesters en weesjes. Het is nu de meest duurzame kledingstukken die je kunt krijgen. Het is geweldig om de Denim Deal!"

**Friesland die erin zit om de markt te veroveren**  
 "Friesland is nu het grootste producent van gerecyclede denim in Nederland. Dit is een grote stap voor de Nederlandse denim industrie. Het is nu 100% gerecyclede denim. Dit betekent dat we nu 100% gerecyclede denim hebben in alle denim kledingstukken. Dit hele lieten doet mee, dus naast bekende merken ook instamers, sokkeroesters en weesjes. Het is nu de meest duurzame kledingstukken die je kunt krijgen. Het is geweldig om de Denim Deal!"

**The strength of the Denim Deal:** one of the lessons learned is the importance of physical meetings opposed to digital meetings.

***“The Denim Deal has shown us that when you want to scale and get more players involved, you need a movement. At some point you create a feeling in the industry that 'you need to be there.’”***

Helene Smits, Recover Fiber



## **Focus on Sustainability and a Shared Circular Vision**

The opportunity of focussing on sustainability, recycling and environmental preservation resonated with the respondents. The lessons learned from the Denim Deal included recognizing the interconnectedness of the value chain and the necessity of cooperation, as well as the importance of shared responsibility and the potential for achieving improvements in the world through circularity.

***“The Denim Deal movement can help inspire. In an ideal situation it would be great if there could be a directive about different topics and recycled fabric types.”***

Holly Berger, Haelixa.

As mentioned by Holly Berger, the Denim Deal can inspire and serve as a proof-of-concept and as an example and way forward for the entire textiles sector.

***“It is a good start, but there is a long way to go.”***

Maarten van Renssen, Boer Groep Recycling Solutions

## Opportunities and Challenges

***“We should not forget to speak about the remaining challenges. Some questions still need to be answered. Like how can the Denim Deal also address the post-consumer waste issue of materials that are not 98-100% cotton? Also, how can the cost issue be overcome? Post-industrial recycled denim can be cost-neutral but this is not yet the case for post-consumer.”***

Helene Smits, Recover Fiber

The identified opportunities included broader international participation and producing a clear understanding of the next steps towards a circular denim industry. The mentioned challenges are addressing the additional costs of post-consumer materials, scaling up the use of feedstock and meeting brand expectations regarding price and aesthetics. Building a better network, working in small groups and investing in a sustainable collection and the processing of used denim were also highlighted. The circular denim value chain is still filled with challenges and in order to ensure the continued movement, we have to continue investing in the industry.



***“Things move very slowly and the downturn of the economy still affects the progress significantly. We cannot speak about 'circular chains'; the real world is linear with a classic attitude. We try to intrude in a classic way on a spinners level with post-consumer.”***

Peter Rijken, Retail Experts

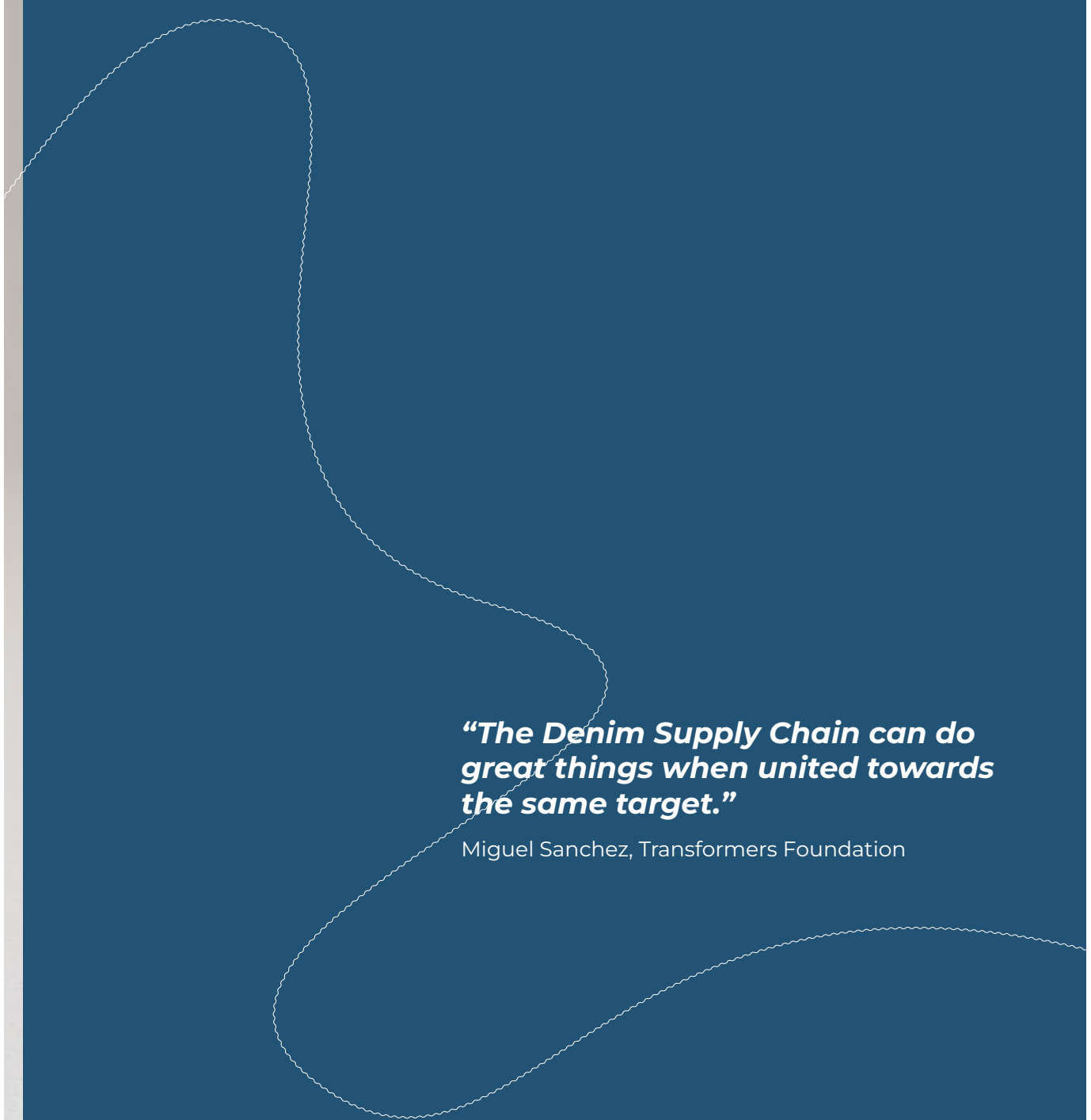
***“We care greatly about sustainability and preserving the environment and we always strive for development. Therefore, the denim deal was a great support for us, in line with one of our most important principles, which is sustainability.”***

Mr. Msaad, DNM Denim









***“The Denim Supply Chain can do great things when united towards the same target.”***

Miguel Sanchez, Transformers Foundation

## 2.2 Key Takeaways from the Monitor

### **Quantitative results monitor**

Through the years, there has been a clear positive development in the increase in application of POOCR-cotton in denim garments and jeans by the participating brands and retailers. In general most participating brands and retailers are aiming for higher targets than the 5%-POOCR-content in the coming years.

The results of measurement show for 2022 that 39% of the volume of denim put on the Dutch market by participants contained at least 5% POOCR-cotton. In comparison to 2021 (8%), this is a substantial increase. In addition, the volume of denim garments produced by the participants worldwide, containing at least 5% POOCR-cotton, has increased from 12% in 2020 to 53% in 2022. Most participating brands and retailers expect to achieve 5% POOCR in their own denim garments in 2023, by working closely with other signatories.

Most brands and retailers (5 of 8) have set their own, more ambitious goals for POOCR content in denim garments than the aimed new industry standard of 5%. Their individual goals vary up from 10% up to 40% by the end of 2024. However, the individual targets given in 2023 are much lower and more realistic than in the previous monitoring years.

The participating brands and retailers have put, in total, 1.4 million jeans on the Dutch market in 2022. From the volume put on the Dutch market by participants, 593,688 jeans (41%) contained at least 20% POOCR-cotton. This is a relatively small part of the amount of jeans put on the Dutch market annually. However, the volume of jeans put on the Dutch market with 20% POOCR increased from 8% in 2020 to 41% in 2022.

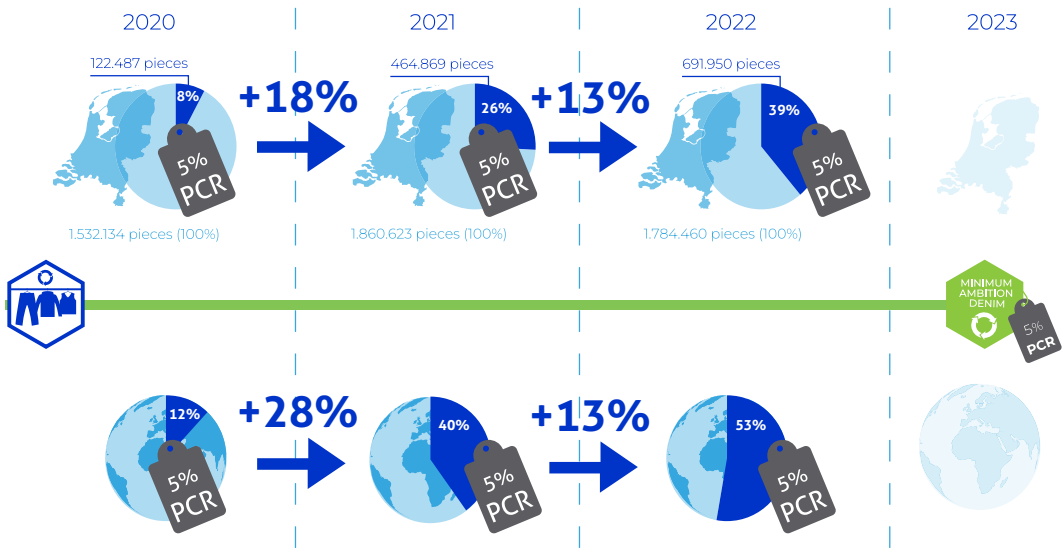
The results of the survey show that 53% of the volume of jeans produced worldwide by participants in 2022 contains at least 20% POCR-cotton. This is a substantial increase compared to 2020. In 2020, 13% of the volume produced by participants contained 20% POCR.

The target number of 3 million pairs of 20% POCR jeans had already been globally reached in 2021; in 2022, the number had been more than doubled. However, it will be still a challenge to reach 3 million pairs of 20% POCR jeans on the Dutch market solely. To achieve such amount during 2021 - 2023 would imply that nearly all pairs of jeans produced by the participating brands would have to contain 20% POCR-cotton.

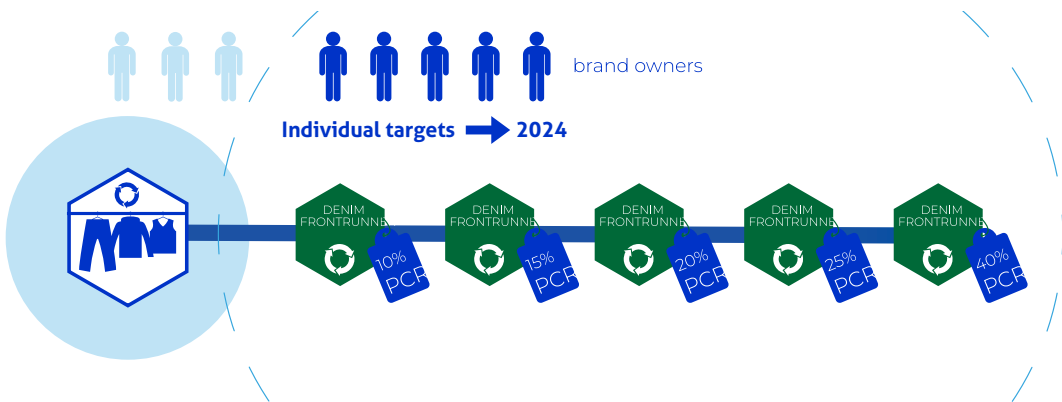


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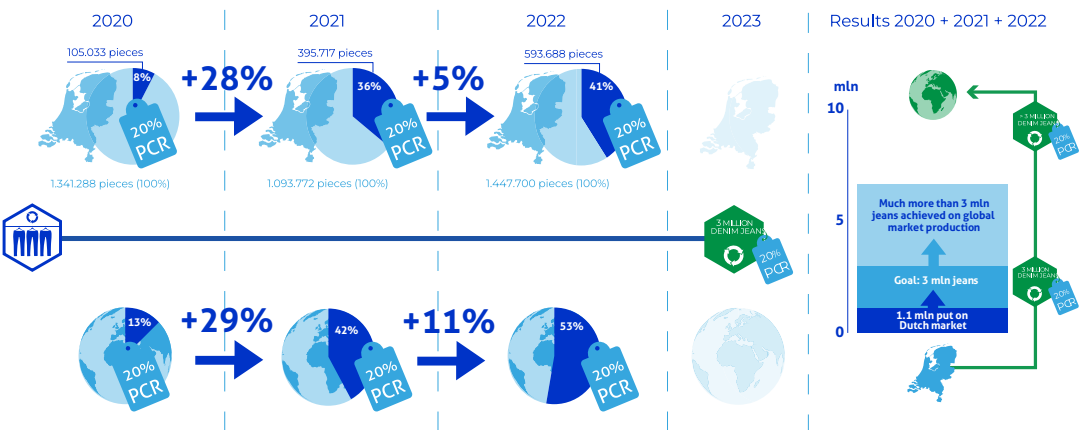
Results monitoring 2022 denim garments<sup>1</sup>



Additional individual goals denim garments<sup>2</sup>



Results monitoring 2022 Jeans<sup>3</sup>



### **Qualitative results monitor**

From the monitor 2022, we've identified five key challenges in scaling up the post-consumer cotton recycling industry. Our monitoring highlights two main issues:

- Increased demand for recycled fabrics from brands
- More available feedstock for recyclers to produce post-consumer recycled cotton (POCR-cotton)

In addition to these main challenges, participants have pointed out three related issues:

- Designing for easier recycling
- Sharing knowledge about POCR feedstock specifications and recycling technology innovations
- Raising consumer awareness

Participants emphasize that these challenges are interconnected. Consumer awareness drives brand demand for POCR-cotton, spurring innovation and capacity investment in recycling technology. This, in turn, enhances the value of sorting feedstock, strengthening the business case for sorted materials. These challenges and their interdependence were also highlighted in a study by Utrecht University, describing them as a 'waiting game' or 'chicken-and-egg' dilemma. The industry hesitates to design clothes with recycled fibres until there's favourable volume, quality and pricing. Simultaneously, insufficient POCR feedstock is available. Our hypothesis is that a breakthrough can occur by:

- Generating higher demand for recycled fabrics
- Increasing the supply of POCR-cotton feedstock

**Monitoring 2023;** Forseen April/June 2024<sup>4</sup>.

### <sup>1</sup> *Results monitoring 2022*

**denim garments:** The numbers refer to the questions in the 2020, 2021 and 2022 monitoring forms. The figures refer to the share of denim garments including jeans with post-consumer recycled cotton (PCR-cotton).

### <sup>2</sup> *Additional individual goals*

**denim garments:** To look ahead to the coming years, the brands were asked about their individual goals for 2024. Therefore, brands and retailers have reported their own, individual targets for post-consumer recycled cotton (PCR-cotton) in denim garments including jeans. The individual targets given this year are more realistic than in the previous monitoring. Brands (5) indicated that the transition takes time. Most brands have adjusted their targets. Last year targets of 35% to 100% PCR-cotton were indicated. Now, the highest values are 25% and 40%. Most brands indicated that targets like 20% and 25% PCR-cotton are already an ambitious challenge.

### <sup>3</sup> *Results monitoring 2022*

**jeans** The numbers refer to the questions in the 2020, 2021 and 2022 monitoring forms. The figures refer to the share of jeans with post-consumer recycled cotton (PCR-cotton).

<sup>4</sup> Monitoring 2023; Forseen April/June 2024; [www.denim-deal.nl](http://www.denim-deal.nl)

## 3. Saxion Research

As we approach the end of the Denim Deal, sorting parties in the Netherlands would like to have a better understanding of what they need to sort out in order to arrive at a high-quality fibre to ultimately produce a pair of jeans that will last. A study proposal has therefore been launched in June 2023 by Maud Kuppen from Saxion during the Circular Textiles Days in the Netherlands, in which all parties within the value chain are participating.

The study will result in a technical report focusing on the use of post-consumer recycled materials in denim. This report is designed to aid the entire industry in adopting more recycled textiles. It builds on the FFact report, delving deeper into the technical challenges and possibilities of using recycled materials in denim. By visiting and learning from Denim Deal companies, the study will gather practical insights. It not only explores technical complexities, but also showcases innovative solutions.

## 4. The Future

What will the world of jeans look like if all denim garments feature post-consumer textiles? Will that solve the global environmental problem in the textile chain? Will it reduce CO2 and will consumers see it as the New Normal? What will it take to achieve this? We would like to find out. Multiple stakeholders within the Denim Deal, who have gone before you, are ready and currently working on a market-based led follow-up of the Denim Deal.

***“The application of a percentage-POCR in new denim garments and the turnaround of the POCR-problem: no longer is POCR-cotton looking for an application, but is the industry asking for more POCR-cotton.”***

Marten Boels, MRA



# 5. List of Parties

## Public Party



Ministry of Infrastructure  
and Water Management



Ministry of Economic Affairs  
and Climate Policy

✘ Gemeente  
✘ Amsterdam  
✘

gemeente Zaanstad  
**ZNSTD**

metropool  
regio **amsterdam**

## Textile Waste Processors

**ANDRITZ**

**Boer Group**   
Recycling  
Solutions

**CIBUTEX**  
CIRCULAR BUSINESS TEXTILES

  
circulus

  
**Midwaste**

*Rd4*

 **RESHARE**  
TEXTIELHERGEBUIK

  
smart fiber  
sorting

**SYMPANY**  
Stof tot grondstof

  
**WIELAND TEXTILES**  
FIRST IN SECOND HAND CLOTHING

 **Wolkat**

Dyers, Spinners, Weavers and Production Companies



CIRCULAR  
FASHION  
FOR ALL



Brand Owners and Retailers



Other parties



## Epilogue

# Much can be achieved when parties join forces

The Denim Deal is approaching its three-year anniversary! In 2020, for the first time, several national and international parties in the denim textile value chain jointly signed up to take major steps towards using post-consumer recycled (POCR) textiles in all denim products. Since then, the number of signatories has grown from 28 to 53 and has become an international community of pioneers sharing experiences and working together on the challenges of circular textiles. I am very impressed by their courage, perseverance and achievements.

The Denim Deal has brought together people from across the value chain who had never connected before. It is inspiring to see that a brand that signed the Deal at a time when they had no recycled material in their jeans, now has POCR material in more than three quarters of their collection. So too is the increasing number of jeans and denim garments from all brands that contain at least 5% POCR. And, of course, the goal of producing 3 million jeans with 20% POCR worldwide by 2021.

Alongside these great achievements, there are many challenges ahead. The Denim Deal is a unique, collaborative initiative that takes time and commitment. Most companies go through a similar development process that takes about five to six years. It starts with a product from their premium segment and ends with the entire collection. The value of networking and collaboration across the value chain is one of the most important features of the Denim Deal. Participants from different parts of the value chain are challenged to get out of their comfort zone and learn from each other, which ultimately ensures that everyone is working towards the same goal. Their pioneering role will hopefully not only motivate others, but also push them in the right direction.

The Denim Deal has taught us that working towards a common goal and vision around circularity requires not only shared knowledge, but also transparency and quality standards. I hope that these lessons are an encouragement to everyone in the denim and apparel industry and that we will see great examples in the coming years. Especially as the EPR for textiles will really start to take shape and the Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation is on the horizon.

Even if the work is not yet finished, the Denim Deal shows that a lot can be achieved when parties join forces. And that's great, because who doesn't want to feel good in their jeans?

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