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The environmental magazine for the global textile supply chain

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Italian study measures jacket's environmental footprint

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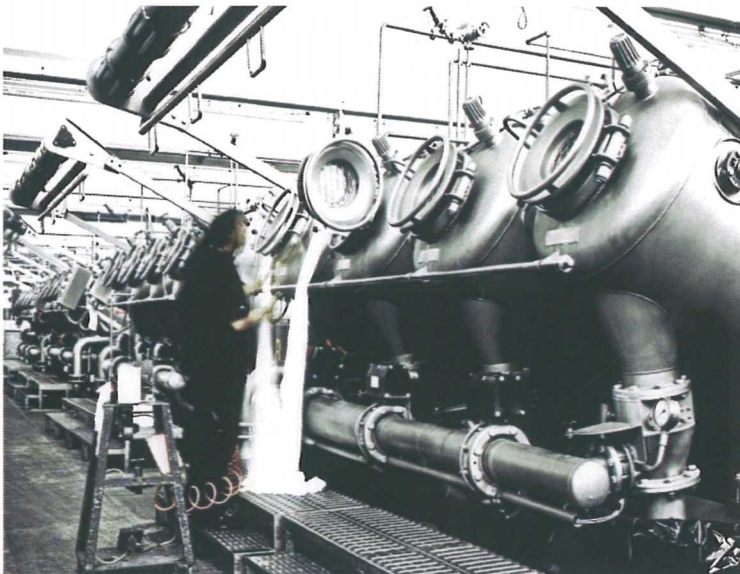


Image: Eurojersey

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MILAN - Europe's only vertically integrated textile mill has announced the results of a pioneering initiative to measure the product environmental footprint (PEF) of a 100 per cent 'Made in Italy' jacket. Warp knitted fabric manufacturer Eurojersey worked in partnership with Italian yarn business Radici Group and Herno design and manufacturing on the research, which was aimed at certifying and tracking the environmental impact of a Herno man's jacket at all stages of its production process.

PEF is a European Union developed methodology for the calculation, assessment, third-party assurance and communication to stakeholders of the environmental footprint of products and services, using a life cycle approach. Given the disparate nature of so much textile production, with different stages of production often carried out in different parts of the globe, gaining a true understanding of the environmental impact of a garment has always represented a huge challenge.

The three businesses were able to work together – all in Italy – in order to fully understand the impact of each and every step of the jacket's production cycle.

Eurojersey's integrated approach evaluated the environmental impact of the jacket in areas such as primary energy consumption, climate changes impact, reducing ozone layer, acidification, carcinogenic effects on humans, ecotoxicity, depletion of soil and water resource depletion among others.

In terms of environmental impact, some headline findings from the study include climate change impact of 11.35 CO2 equivalent per kg; water resource depletion for use or alteration of 309 litres of water; and land use of soil of 10.76 kgC deficit.

This work could – in theory – be rolled out to other European-based apparel brands seeking to offer their end-consumers better environmental information about the apparel they are wearing.

One of the most interesting results of the initiative was the comparison between the environmental cost of producing a jacket in China – the world's largest textile producer – and in Italy. Eurojersey found that, "the environmental cost of the jacket made in China is equivalent to 5.22 Euros against 1.97 Euros of the one made in Italy. This is due to the different energy mix between the two countries which is composed of 40 per cent renewable energy sources in Italy against 65 per cent of coal in China." Since 2008, 100 per cent of Eurojersey's energy has come from renewable sources.

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