



Media release, 20 October 2022

The first Cradle to Cradle Certified® denim collection is here

The first Cradle to Cradle Certified® clothing collection is on the market just one year after the collaboration platform for Swiss textile labels was launched. The Circular Clothing cooperative has succeeded, in close cooperation with European suppliers, in gaining access to circular materials and equipment and using this for the Black Denim Collection by the ethical fashion label “the Blue suit”. Another milestone for the cooperative, which receives funding from the Migros Pioneer Fund, is the development of an online assessment tool which can be used to help check the readiness of textile labels to operate in a circular manner.

The challenging journey to Cradle to Cradle® certification

What changes do you need to make to an item of clothing to meet the stringent requirements of Cradle to Cradle®? This was the central question with which Yvonne Vermeulen, a co-founder with responsibility for design and production at “the Blue suit”, has been grappling. After intensive research and changes to the product design and supply chain, the first significant milestone has been reached with the Black Denim Collection, which is Cradle to Cradle Certified®.

The black denim was developed by a renowned manufacturer in Italy. Since no toxic chemicals are used in the production process, this denim is safe for biological cycles and Cradle to Cradle Certified® Gold. Cradle to Cradle Certified® Gold certified material by the Swiss company OceanSafe was used for the lining of the jacket. Special innovative design elements and production processes, such as the printed lining, also meet the stringent Cradle to Cradle Certified® Gold requirements. Currently, 1% of the material of the Black Denim Collection is Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze. In the next few months, this percent and thus also the whole garments should reach the gold level.

“We have audited all the materials and the entire supply chain, including the production steps, and integrated this into the Cradle to Cradle® certification as part of a complex certification process. It is not only the first fashion use case that will profit from this Cradle to Cradle® certification; rather, future use cases of the Circular Clothing cooperative will also benefit,” notes Albin Kälin from EPEA Switzerland.

The Cradle to Cradle® certification is based on the following five principles: Material Health, Product Circularity, Clean Air & Climate Protection, Water & Soil Stewardship, and Social Fairness. Depending on the extent to which all of these criteria are met by the manufacturing process, there are various levels of certification from bronze to silver, gold and platinum. The Circular Clothing cooperative has achieved gold level.

New online assessment tool helps labels achieve circularity

Where do you start if you want to get involved in circular methods as a textile label? On the basis of the Cradle to Cradle® requirements, Circular Clothing has developed an online assessment tool which provides some initial answers. First, you select the product category, e.g. fashion, activewear, home

textiles or accessories, then a specific product, e.g. a T-shirt. Once you have the entire product life cycle of the T-shirt in front of you, you move on to the actual assessment. This is made up of the five Cradle to Cradle® principles. Depending on your responses, you score points from 1 to 5. The final result provides the user with an initial rough overview of the extent to which their product meets Cradle to Cradle® requirements and where they can start when it comes developing a circular product.

The result provided by the online assessment is an ideal starting point for initial contact with Circular Clothing. The community provides textile labels which want to achieve circularity with solutions which a label would not be able to afford on its own: access to safe and healthy materials, a shared and transparent supply chain integrated in a Cradle to Cradle Certified® certification procedure and, naturally, knowledge of how to break out of the “take, make, waste” cycle of the linear economy to actively accelerate the circular concept and be able to offer products on the market which are made from safe materials and are circular.

About CIRCULAR CLOTHING

The textile industry must become more sustainable. In order for today's products to become tomorrow's raw materials, a circular approach is needed, for which small companies in particular need support. With the support of the Migros Pioneer Fund, the pioneering project CIRCULAR CLOTHING paves the way for small Swiss textile labels to become circular.

Starting from the initiative of textile entrepreneurs Karen Rauschenbach and Yvonne Vermeulen in 2020, the cooperative CIRCULAR CLOTHING was founded in March 2022. Their target is a zero-waste textile industry in which resources are used in a closed loop – for a better planet. They are convinced of the power of the Cradle to Cradle® model and want to make it the industry standard. By establishing the CIRCULAR CLOTHING platform, they aim to empower textile labels to join forces in order to boost the paradigm shift in the textile industry towards more social and ecological responsibility. www.circularclothing.org

About the Migros Pioneer Fund

The Migros Pioneer Fund looks for and supports ideas with social potential. It enables pioneering projects that break new ground and seek out forward-looking solutions. Its impact-oriented funding approach combines financial support with coaching services. The Migros Pioneer Fund is part of the Migros Group's social commitment and is funded by the Migros Group with around CHF 15 million annually. For further information: www.migros-pionierfonds.ch/en

About Cradle to Cradle®

EPEA Switzerland develops and implements Cradle to Cradle® products and services for various companies worldwide and is an accredited assessor for the Cradle to Cradle Certified® certification. www.epeaswitzerland.com

Cradle to Cradle Certified® is a registered trademark of the Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute (C2CPII) www.c2ccertified.org

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Images

Various pictures can be downloaded from www.circularclothing.org/en/press