



Executive summary

The EURATEX ReHubs initiative brings together key European and World players to solve the textile waste problem by transforming “waste” into a resource, and boosting textile circularity.

The initiative has already enabled a new form of cross value-chain cooperation with an uncommon critical mass and diversity. It has delivered a feasibility plan (2020), started a key enabling Techno-Economic master Study (TES), launched public communication, and engaged stakeholders at 3 levels: a Stakeholder Forum (SF) informing different businesses (SF), a Task Force (TF) representing national industry interests, and a Business Council (BC) with pioneers.

The SF gathers 140+ businesses and academia from over 20 countries worldwide to learn on ReHubs developments and discuss common interests for circular textiles and recycling. The TF is made up of the sector associations from 13 countries which to monitor the ReHubs progress, advise based on the interest of the whole national sector and align with key national policies on waste and recycling. The BC is made up of EURATEX and 19 pioneering companies which take concrete action to acquire key data, study options and accelerate the launch of the ReHubs system. Companies engaged in the ReHubs Business Council and supporting the TES include: Alsico, Boer Group, Concordia, Decathlon, Gherzi, Inditex, Indorama, Lenzing, Marchi & Fildi, Noyfil/Radici Group, Ratti, Recover, SAATI, Soex, Texaide, Wolkat.

Mr. Robert van de Kerkhof, CCO of Lenzing, is the Chairman of the ReHubs Business Council (BC); Mr. Mauro Scalia, Director Sustainable Business in EURATEX, is the Secretary of the BC.

The two authors of this application (van de Kerkhof and Scalia) have successfully engaged to invite and build up a critical mass of pioneering corporations, including worldwide leaders, and SMEs along all key parts of the textile value chain to collaborate, finance and drive the ReHubs goal of transform textile waste into value.

Next to the collaboration, the main result is the ReHubs Techno-Economic master Study (TES) which by summer 2022 will deliver state of the art information necessary to remove bottlenecks and pool together public-private resources, technologies and business operators. The TES delivery is entrusted to a world leading strategy consultancy which brings in top knowledge, challenges assumptions and facilitate the cooperation.

Further information including key figures and prioritized business areas are expected to be available two months after this application is submitted to ITMF. Overall, the objectives of the next phases shall include: boosting a new capacity to treat large textile waste volumes with coordination, digital platforms, scale economies and investments which ultimately replace landfill/ incineration and generate new raw materials and sustainable jobs in Europe.



A short biography of the participants

Robert van de Kerkhof is Chief Commercial Officer of Lenzing AG. As distinguished authority in the fiber industry with over 25 years of experience, he is also President of CIRFS, the European Man-made Fiber Association, the President of the Austrian Fiber Institute and the Chairman of the Business Council of the EURATEX ReHubs initiative.

Van de Kerkhof's comprehensive expertise in the international textile industry came from his many years of experience at various international companies and business functions. Van de Kerkhof began his career as an Aeronautical Engineer at Fokker Aircraft, and since then, he has taken up roles in Ten Cate, DuPont de Nemours and INVISTA. In addition to building expertise in various manufacturing components, fibers and raw material, over the years, van de Kerkhof also held multiple leadership roles across different business functions. He has successfully lead the growth if various business units, including marketing and sales, manufacturing, financial controlling, product development and strategic business development. He also has extensive experience in transforming organizations to become sustainability leaders through technology innovation and value chain optimization.

Mauro Scalia is Director of Sustainable Businesses in EURATEX, the European Confederation of Textile and Apparel industry, based in Brussels. He is responsible for all the Confederation activities promoting sustainability and advising the EU Policy Makers on a wide range of topics including chemical policy, circular economy, climate change, market surveillance, due diligence, products footprint, microplastics and others. Engaged in the broader EURATEX mission, he coordinates with the EURATEX member associations and partner companies across the textile value chain to work with the EU, the OECD, the UN and other international organisation. Graduated cum laude in Political Sciences with specialization in Politics and Economics at the University of Catania, Italy, he joined EURATEX in 2004 after professional experiences in business consulting, industrial research and in the European Commission. Italian mother tongue, he also speaks English, French and German.



A description of the exceptional achievements

By the end of 2024, all EU Member States will be bound to separately collect textiles waste and this would generate up to 7.5 millions of tons textile waste. However, there is no large-scale plan to avoid landfill or incineration for such huge volumes, or to make new raw materials. Additionally, there is no large-scale recycling capacity for textile materials to change the traditional linear textile business model (from virgin materials to products and then waste), which leads to high consumption of raw materials and generations of waste, to the circular model.

In line with the EU ambitions of the Green Deal and the transition into Circular Economy, collaboration can turn a societal waste problem into a business opportunity. Therefore, the ReHubs initiative was launched to promote collaboration across the textile value chain. The initiative considers all the steps and perspectives from chemicals, fibers making, textiles making, garment production, retail and distribution, textiles waste collection, sorting and recycling.

The ReHubs initiative aims at establishing an integrated system within Europe based on a number of facilities (recycling hubs) which are able to transform and give value to millions of tons textile waste, currently estimated in up to 7.5 mn tons and projected to become up to 9 Millions by 2030 of which at least 2.0-2.5mn will be suitable for recycling. Post-consumer household waste is the main waste sources (85% of total volumes) and it is also the most complex textile waste type due to fiber complexity and fragmentation in collection/ sorting.

The ReHubs is set to enable new cross-industries partnerships, cooperation with public authorities. Partnership are needed to mobilise private and public funds' investments for circular textiles from over large and small businesses from across Europe and allows economies of scale. Once set up, the ReHubs would provide services and solutions to manage and recycle different textiles waste streams. They would serve a cross-border European market through many existing or newly built installations. Coordination of data would be ensured by digital tools, which would connect demand and offer, provide information and may connect installations. The platform and would also be available to users either to dispose of textile waste or to purchase new materials.

The applicants' efforts have enabled first the creation of the Business Council and then the funding and start of Techno-Economic master Study (TES) currently due by summer 2022.



The TES study provides the critical information on technological, organization and financial needs to launch the ReHubs. This is happening thanks to 19 pioneering companies either global players world-wide present or specialized Europe SMEs from different value chains which have funded and actively contribute with their large expertise, and a world leader strategy consultancy assists in the progress.

To ensure inclusivity and mobilize resources, EURATEX has launched three stakeholder groups, the afore mentioned pioneering companies (the Business Council), a wider pool of business, research and academia players (the stakeholder Forum) and 13 national associations (the EURATEX Task Force).

In the ReHubs Business Council (one of the three pillars of the initiative), the pioneering corporations and companies work together under the umbrella of EURATEX with one Chairman to bridge interests and vision

In the ReHubs Stakeholder Forum hundreds of companies are convened on regular basis by the EURATEX Director General and receive updates on the ReHubs progress to assess their own potential role based on their interests. A social media digital space also enables interaction.

In the the ReHubs Task Forces, by monthly meetings are held to discuss ReHubs progress with national/ sectorial industry association, to align with the broader interests of the industry and with national policy.

The TES study will be presented to EU authorities and other stakeholders to launch the ReHubs. Discussions have already started in Member States to maximize the impact of EU recovery funds and of national measures as Extended Producer Responsibility schemes.