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Prato in Detox: the Prato textile district for the Greenpeace project

An increasingly higher number of Prato-based companies are deciding to commit to the **Detox Project launched by Greenpeace**, with a greater involvement of the fabric segment. A significant contribution is the recent addition of GIDA, the company that manages the industrial water supply system in Prato, which signed a specific agreement for this purpose. But also the fibre and chemical supply chains are considering joining the plan.

This is the buzz in Prato today, in the premises of Confindustria Toscana Nord, where the conference **"Prato in Detox"** is being held, following last February 11th's official presentation in Milan of the commitment undertaken by a first cluster of Prato companies to join Greenpeace's Detox project. This action in favour of sustainability implies for the joining entities, who are all members of Confindustria Toscana Nord, **the voluntary undertaking of much more restrictive obligations than those defined in the legislation**. Entire categories of chemicals commonly used in textile production, whose use, within preset limits, is permitted by the law, are banned by Detox criteria. **As a matter of fact, Greenpeace's objective is to spread a very ambitious high standard for toxic substance-free production in the fashion industry.**

"Joining Detox will add value to the Prato companies' commitment in favour of the environment and the protection of the health of workers and consumers", explained **Andrea Cavicchi**, President of Confindustria Toscana Nord. "In Prato, sustainability is not just a fashionable claim, but a real work method that has always been part of our culture and has become strategic today. Our customers are asking that our products comply with consistent protocols and Detox is exactly the benchmark they require for visibility and reliability. This corresponds exactly to what we think at Confindustria Toscana Nord, and we are very pleased to see that the companies of our area have fully grasped the opportunities offered by this project and are working hard to address this great challenge. Initiating this process to achieve Detox objectives is helping us convey the message that **Prato is not only the greatest textile district in Europe, but also a champion at embracing the challenge of sustainability.**"

After the first 20 Prato-based companies that committed to Detox, 7 more companies are joining today, thus significantly increasing the volume of products involved: these **27 companies**, in fact, correspond to an overall **15k tons of yarn and raw materials** and **24 million metres of fabric** produced annually. For a complete list of adhering parties, click [here](#).

The agreement between Confindustria Toscana Nord and Greenpeace requires compliance with Detox parameters for:

- 4.5k tons of yarn and 4.5 million metres of fabric produced every year
- 1.8k tons of textile raw materials produced every year
- 3.7k tons of yarn and 8.8 million metres of fabric dyed every year
- 3.2k tons of chemicals produced every year for the textile industry.

The role of Confindustria Toscana Nord is essential in such an industrial district: the association develops and provides the companies with new support tools for the adoption of Detox principles, records the advances made, publishes case studies, and ensures the publication of chemical test results.

"The commitment of these new companies confirms that choosing and adopting excellence standards for the management of chemicals in the textile production chain is already possible, even for the smallest manufacturers, such as those of the Prato district", noted **Giuseppe Ungheresè**, in

charge of the Greenpeace Pollution Campaign. "These entities are the real leaders of the Detox revolution of the Italian fashion industry, with the respect they are showing for the environment and the health and safety of consumers worldwide".

The Prato textile district is **EMAS** certified and has dozens of companies that have obtained **environmental** and social **certifications**; has worked hard and successfully in **limiting emissions into the atmosphere**; focuses seriously on the use of **chemicals** that do not damage consumers; stands out for the **correctness of its labour relations** and for the great attention paid to occupational health and safety; is particularly focused on the use of **water as a resource**, as it treats all its wastewater and has built an industrial water supply system that stands out at European level for its extension and recycled water volume.

The recycled water volume is the subject matter of an agreement Confindustria Toscana Nord has just signed with **GIDA**, the public-private associate entity which manages both the water treatment systems operating at various levels and the supply of a portion of the water needed (**4 million cubic metres**), which is redistributed to the **200 companies that are connected to the 75 km** of network of the industrial aqueduct.

"**GIDA's** commitment within the framework of the Detox project has positioned the company at a further advanced level as regards its environmental performance, which was already excellent", commented **Alessandro Brogi**, President of GIDA. "The agreement signed with Confindustria Toscana Nord is for the conduction of a water quality testing campaign that will monitor the 11 groups of substances identified by Detox in the industrial water supply system/aqueduct concerned. **In practice, we will far exceed the testing requirements defined by the national legislation and test these substances in both the treated water and in the water that enters the industrial water system.** We will monitor the defined parameters for the entire duration of the project, which is until 2020, and then, based on the results obtained, we will schedule specific investigation campaigns. As far as we know, this is a totally new operation in the activity of resupplying companies with recycled water, which is already characterised by particularly high figures compared to the water volumes handled by the Prato industrial water supply system in the European scenario."

Another significant contribution is the involvement in the project of the fibre and chemical procurement chain. Among the participants of the "Prato in Detox" conference we will find players like the **CCMI-Cashmere and Camel Hair Manufacturers Institute** and others, who will take part in the round table "The Detox Project: An Opportunity or a Threat to the Growth of the Textile Production Chain?"

Data regarding the Prato textile district and Greenpeace's Detox project

The Prato district accounts for **3%** of the European textile production and exports **€2.5 billion** (with a turnover of over **€ 4 bln**) products manufactured for some of the main international brands, such as Burberry, Prada, Valentino, Armani, and Gucci. The textile and clothing industry as a whole in Prato includes over **7,000 companies** and **34,000 employees**.

Greenpeace's Detox campaign, launched in 2011, asks the fashion industry to eliminate hazardous chemicals from their production chains **before 2020** and all their suppliers to disclose data regarding the discharge of pollutants from their facilities on an independent public platform. The commitment undertaken by the Prato district adds up to the list of companies that have already undersigned the Detox commitment, which include **39 fashion and clothing groups** representing over **100 international brands**, corresponding to **15%** of the global textile production in terms of turnover. The list of entities that joined the campaign includes the Miroglio and Inditex groups and renowned international brands such as Valentino, Adidas, H&M, and Burberry.

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CONFINDUSTRIA TOSCANA NORD

Sede legale Pistoia, piazza Garibaldi 5 • cap 51100 • tel. 0573 99171
Sedi operative Lucca, piazza Bernardini 41 • cap 55100 • tel. 0583 4441
Prato, via Valentini 14 • cap 59100 • tel. 0574 4551

WWW.CONFINDUSTRIATOSCANANORD.IT
info@confindustriatoscananord.it
confindustriatoscananord@pec.it
C.F. 90058980476