

International Commission of Ecology

November 2024

From the Missionary Reality of Spain we would like to present you the great task that Caritas (official organism of the Church to coordinate, guide and promote social aid in each diocese) carries out with textile recycling; perhaps the least known type of recycling and the one we pay the least attention to.

Some notions of what is involved

Textile recycling

The process of converting textile waste and clothing remnants into new textile products or materials that can be reused.

The textile industry

It is one of the most environmentally impactful on the planet.

Global textile production **doubled between 2000 and 2015** and consumption of clothing and footwear is expected to increase by **63% by 2030**.

Each year, some **5.8 million tons** of textile products are discarded, **11.3 kg per person**.

The recycling rate of textile waste is only 13%.

Main problems of textile recycling

Sorting of materials is a very complex and costly procedure:

- garments often mix different materials that need to be separated for recycling: cotton, polyester, labels and threads made from other materials and zippers, buttons, rivets, threads and dyes....

Caritas in each diocese

A giant of textile recycling coming out of the parishes

COLLECTION, REUSE, RECYCLING, DONATION, AND SALE USED CLOTHING

HISTORY

Caritas has more than 30 years of experience in the collection and management of clothing in containers for social and charitable purposes, through the traditional closets of the parishes, maintaining its position as a leading agent in the sector.

Under the conviction that work is the best alternative to fight social exclusion, it began to promote social employment based on the management of clothing and textile waste, helping to reduce inequalities and support vulnerable groups.

It began working on this project in 2015 and in 2020 Social Initiative Cooperatives were created, to unite the social-labor insertion companies in the textile sector of Caritas.

Caritas has solidarity economy companies, "Koopera . Moda-Re --- etc.,

They recover about 120,000 tons of clothing per year and

Sold in its stores throughout Spain.

Some **820,000 tons** of textile waste are generated in Spain each year.

Solidarity economy companies Begin their engagement in 2015

Goals

- To favor access to the labor market for people in a situation or at risk of exclusion through the creation of jobs and training courses.
- Manage and dignify the social delivery to families with scarce economic resources.
- Give the collected clothes the best possible treatment, respecting the waste hierarchy.

Procces

CLOTHES COLLECTION

" FIND YOUR NEAREST CONTAINER"

There are more than 8,000 containers distributed throughout the country.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CLOTHES YOU DONATE?

- 1 The linen is collected and transferred to the management plants.
- 2 The textile is sent to the integral treatment plants where it is classified and sorted according to strict quality filters.
- 3 Products that cannot be reused due to their composition or condition are recycled and converted into industrial rags, acoustic and thermal insulation material...
- 4 The garments in perfect condition are taken to the second-hand store chain Moda re- and Koopera, where they are sold to the general public and delivered in a dignified manner to people in vulnerable situations.

DON'T THROW AWAY THE CLOTHES YOU DON'T WEAR ANYMORE !

Through the management of this textile, our project

Your clothing has the opportunity to **Combating social exclusion**,

- Training people at risk of social exclusion in quality jobs.
- Dignify the delivery of clothing to low-income families by offering a dignified social delivery.

Contributing to a more sustainable planet

your delivery also has an environmental power, because together we help

- to lengthen the life cycle of textile products,
- to reduce waste generation,
- to reduce raw material consumption,
- to save millions of cubic meters of water and energy,
- to avoid the emission of thousands of tons of CO2 into the atmosphere

THE BEST WASTE IS THE ONE THAT IS NOT

It is an invitation to prolong as much as possible the useful life of our clothes and textile products in use.

With much affection and wishing that the protection of the planet is always present in our daily lives.

INTERNATIONAL ECOLOGY TEAM