

wash!

Dibella's magazine | Special edition 2021

Enterprises have a clear responsibility

Dibella offers custom-fit solutions for the procurement of textiles

Supply chain securitised from start to finish

Dibella's strict certification concept

It's all in the mix

Dibella fabric qualities meet diverse requirements of the textile service industry



DIBELLA
LONGLIFE TEXTILES

Foreword

Dear Reader,

When we launched our magazine “wash!”, we set out to compile up-to-date information and news from our company and your industry for you every six months. We have kept our promise for many years now. As recently as February 2020, we sat together in the editorial conference for our Texcare issue. The magazine was never published, however. The reasons for this are well known to you.

The pandemic has led to drastic changes in all areas and walks of life. From the very beginning, textile supply chains were stalled by global lockdowns and a massive drop in ocean freight volumes. These difficulties still persist to this day. However, the long-standing collaboration with our producers in a spirit of mutual trust and confidence has proved to be a crisis-proof foundation in this regard.

„The industry faces immense challenges.“

Nevertheless, our industry is faced with major challenges. Due to the massive decline in tourism, the closure of hotels and restaurants for months on end, and hospitals forced into short-time work, the volume of work in the textile service industry has seen a dramatic decline. Another adverse factor has been the new [German] Supply Chain Act, which is currently raising a great deal of dust. After all, although the regulation only affects companies with over 3,000 employees for the time being, there are concerns that the responsibilities for “clean, ecologically and ethically correct textiles” could be delegated to the textile rental service sector. We receive daily enquiries from our clients seeking guidance in dealing with the new legislation. Another factor is the recycling of textile products adopted in the wake of the European “Green Deal”. Not only does it provide for washing, mending and subsequent use of textiles, but also for their final (end-of-life) recycling. Owing to the numerous changes on the market, businesses are in need of support – and we actually offer and provide it.

For this reason, we have decided to produce a special edition of “wash!”. On 16 pages, we want to give you an overview of current developments for the textile sector and responsible supply chains. We want to give you arguments for the certifications and textile seals we have selected. And we want to show you solutions for complying with forthcoming statutory regulations.

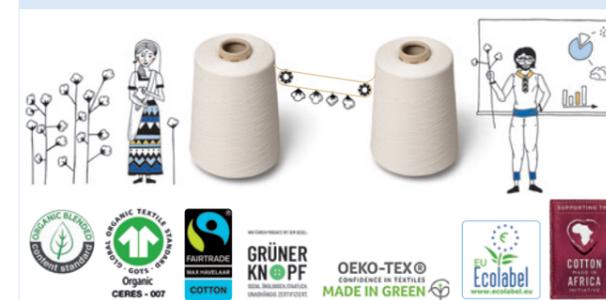
Our industry as a whole is faced with far-reaching changes. As manufacturers of sustainable contract textiles and a partner in textile rental services, we perceive it as our task to master these challenges together with you. This edition of “wash!” is a milestone on our path to the future.



Yours sincerely,
Klaus Baur



4 Via the Chetna co-operative, Indian micro-farmers receive GMO-free seeds as well as training, e.g., on cultivation and natural fertilisation.



8 A strict certification concept gives Dibella the security of sustainable value chains.



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Statutory details

wash! is Dibella's magazine covering a wide range of different matters of interest to textile service companies relating to flat linen for contract business.

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Enterprises have a clear responsibility

The procurement of textiles is subject to more and more new regulations. Dibella offers custom-fit solutions for this.



Via the Chetna co-operative, Indian micro-farmers receive GMO-free seeds as well as training, e.g., on cultivation and natural fertilisation.

The buzzword “corporate responsibility” has recently received a great deal of media attention. However, the term no longer refers to the task of generating profits and caring for employees and their families as understood by previous generations of entrepreneurs. In the meantime, it refers to a company’s social responsibility, also known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). That sounds good for the time being. But what is behind this euphonious expression? One definition is provided by the European Commission’s Green Paper¹: “Corporate social responsibility is essentially a voluntary commitment to work towards a better society

and a cleaner environment. (...) They practise this responsibility towards employees and, in general, towards all stakeholders influenced by their business activities, who in turn can influence the narrative of the company’s success story.”

Uncertainties abound

This official jargon does not only leave newcomers perplexed. “Increasing uncertainty is also discernible in the ranks of entrepreneurs and companies alike. They are quite often confronted with demands that have nothing to do with their core business – namely re-

¹Commission of the European Communities, Brussels 2002: Green Paper on a framework for corporate social responsibility

sponsible, cost-effective provision of goods and services,” the Roman Herzog Institute² noted as early as 2011. This has not changed in any way to this day. On the contrary. New regulations such as the German Supply Chain Act and the “Circular Economy Action Plan” issued by the EU as part of the Green Deal have further exacerbated the level of uncertainty. This was followed by the publication of the “Federal Government Guidelines for Sustainable Textile Procurement by the Federal Administration”, which call for comprehensive environmental and social criteria for bed linen and bedding as well as clothing and other textiles.

Careful action is required

A growing number of new rules and statutory requirements are also leading to growing uncertainty in the textile rental service industry. On the one hand, businesses want to be committed to sustainability. On the other, though, there is a lack of experience and the necessary time window for the implementation of corporate due diligence. An unmanageable plethora of textile seals does not make business any easier: while numerous labels promise a responsible supply chain, they fail to take a holistic

²Roman Herzog Institute, Munich 2011: Item 10 Theoretical foundations for a practical concept – corporate social responsibility.

view of the situation. Whoever wants to take their duties seriously must therefore perform in-depth research into the subject area. And if that alone were not enough, companies will also have to deal with the responsible recycling of resources in the future. This multitude of “non-operational” tasks and duties poses enormous challenges for the industry as a whole. It ties up capacities that are actually needed for the further development of the core business – namely a smooth supply of textiles.



Frank Neumann
Authorised signatory and sales manager

“For many years now, we have observed that expectations for corporate due diligence in supply chains are becoming a great deal higher. We also see, however, that companies feel quite left alone as far as implementation is concerned. For this reason, we have developed concepts and solutions for our customers that enable them to meet the responsibility required of them.”

Sustainable textile solutions for the industry

Dibella already responded to the challenges of sustainably produced textiles at an early stage. The supply chain is transparently traceable all the way to high-performance contract textiles, because production takes place exclusively in companies certified to high ecological and ethical standards. In order to eliminate the risks to humans and the environment that occur in conventional cotton cultivation, Dibella is also planning a complete

conversion to GMO-free natural fibres across all product ranges in the long run. The “Dibella up” concept is the very first array of marketable solutions available for recycling hotel textiles that can no longer be rented. Thanks to its ex-

tensive commitment, Dibella meets the numerous legal requirements for responsible textiles and supply chains. In particular, however, the company is once again proving to be a reliable partner for its customers on unfamiliar terrain.

Supply Chain Act

On March 3rd 2021, Germany’s federal government signed the “Act on Corporate Due Diligence in Supply Chains” into law. It applies from 2023 and obliges companies with a workforce of over 3,000 employees to respect human rights in their supply chains. What this means, for instance, is the prohibition of child labour and slavery, as well as freedom of assembly and association. Moreover, ecological risks must be absolutely ruled out at all stages of production if they could lead to human rights violations. Yet responsible action is not only mandatory for large-scale companies; it must also be implemented by their immediate suppliers.

Federal government guideline for sustainable procurement by the federal administration

The guideline was published early in January 2021 and defines requirements for sustainable bedding and bedding products, clothing and linen as well as mattresses for public authorities and facilities of the direct federal administration (e.g., state hospitals, federal armed forces, police, etc.). Proof of sustainability criteria is provided via selected textile quality labels, which include GOTS or “Made in Green by Oeko-Tex”, for instance. While the guideline is not binding as such, it is intended to significantly increase the proportion of sustainable textiles in the federal administration.

Corporate social responsibility

CSR means and is defined as the assumption of social responsibility by a company. The idea behind this is to add the aspect of social responsibility to the principles of sustainability. Companies are therefore not only concerned with the social, ecological and economic effects in their own operations. They also include in their deliberations the effects of their business activities on groups not indirectly affected – for example, employees in their supply chain.

Circular economy

The circular economy is in the process of abandoning the principle of using or consuming articles and throwing them away. Instead, existing materials and products should be used again and again and for as long as possible, whether by sharing, renting, repairing, refurbishing (e.g., bags made from truck tarpaulins), recycling (e.g., using remains of textiles as insulating material in automotive construction) or upcycling (e.g., fibre recovery from used textiles).

Only with awards!

At Dibella, each and every assortment is certified, from the fibre to the finished textile article.



The conventional production chains of the textile industry are full of social injustices and adverse environmental impacts. In India, children spend hours pollinating hybrid cotton plants. In China, Uyghurs are forced to work in spinning and weaving mills. Decrepit steam boilers blow up multi-storey sewing factories in Bangladesh. Pesticides on the cotton fields ruin the arable soils, and synthetic fertilizers finish them off altogether. The list of human and labour rights violations and environmental degradation in textile and garment producing countries is long – and at the expense of the weakest links in a long supply chain.

Exploitation? No, thanks!

Dibella already decided to leave the exploitative systems in Asia's textile and clothing industry many years ago. The company has since

switched step by step to fibres and textiles from production facilities that are certified according to high sustainability standards. The company even went one step further with its Dibella+ range: the textiles are made exclusively from fairtrade, organically grown cotton whose entire processing chain offers the highest transparency and sustainability.



Michaela Gnass,
CSR Manager
at Dibella.

“We examined all the well-known textile seals for their social and environmental compatibility and decided to use only those certificates that set high standards for sustainable value added.”

A healthy system

Dibella's commitment to demonstrably responsible textiles already begins with the selection of fibres. Its avowed objective is the exclusive use of certified natural fibres, for which the company has defined strict specifications: no genetically modified seeds, cultivation in particular by small farmers who remain financially independent preservation of soil fertility no artificial irrigation, but exclusive use of rainwater compliance with ILO core labour standards in the fields and ginning. “Cotton made in Africa” meets these strict requirements. “We will therefore switch our core range to cotton that has been awarded this seal and keep increasing the proportion,” explains Dibella's purchasing manager Simon Bartholomes. In terms of responsible fibres, however, the end of the line has not yet been reached! “Our OCS, GOTS

and Fairtrade certified cotton has enabled us to raise the sustainability level another notch and to offer a genuine natural textile: Cultivation takes place in controlled organic farming without the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. The farmers receive a fair price for their fibres. And the origin of the cotton is seamlessly traceable.”

Clean processes

Yet Dibella also guarantees responsible processing and manufacturing of the textiles. “We want to make sure that the entire proces-

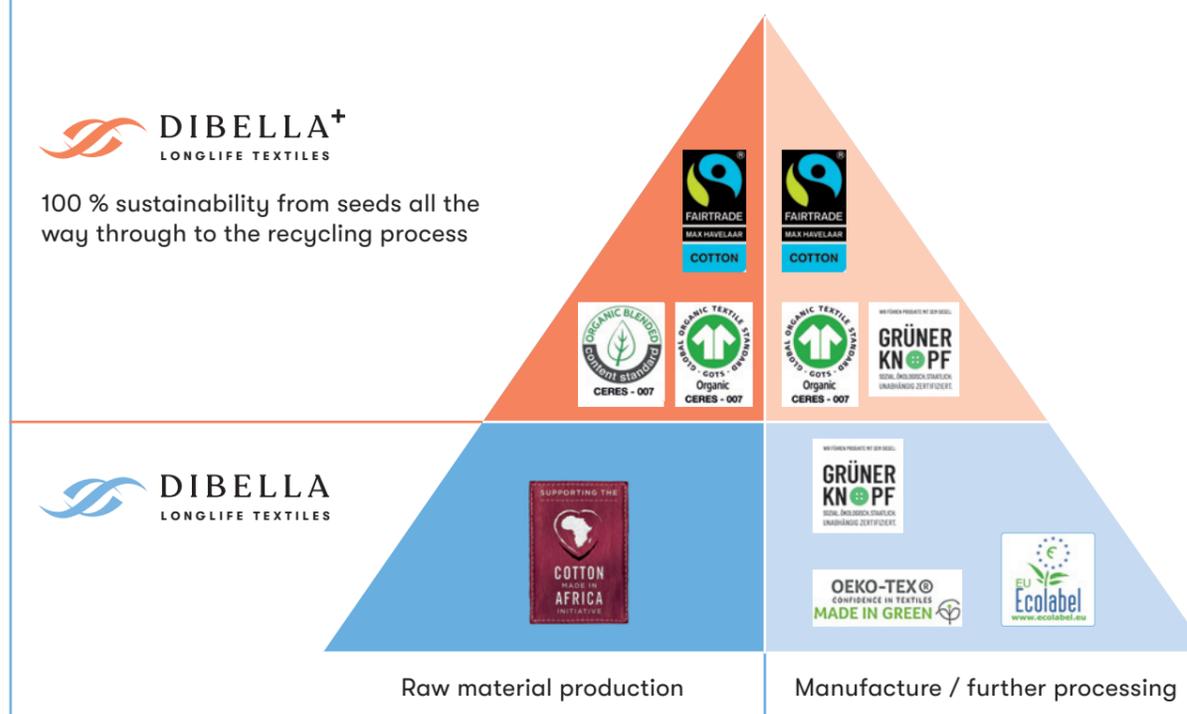
ing chain complies with UN human rights conventions, ILO labour standards, strict environmental guidelines and the exclusion of questionable chemicals. According to our analyses, only very few certificates offer this level of certainty – namely the “EU eco-label”, “Made in Green by Oeko-Tex” and the “Green Button” state seal developed in Germany. Our entire core product range has therefore been awarded one of these three sustainability certificates,” says Simon Bartholomes. “For the natural textiles in our Dibella+ range, we apply

even stricter criteria to environmental protection, social standards and consumer safety. There is only one seal that covers these specifications, namely the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS).” Its far-sighted certification strategy has enabled Dibella to create a two-fold safety net. The value chain is validated and transparently traceable from fibre extraction all the way through to the finished textile. This means that the Supply Chain Act no longer needs to be considered a menace by Dibella's customers!

Certifications at Dibella : Overview of our seals pyramid



100 % sustainability from seeds all the way through to the recycling process



In order to ensure high environmental and social criteria, Dibella works exclusively with certified raw materials and production partners at the fibre and further processing levels. For the core range, the company only takes the following into account:

- For its production of raw materials: Supporting Cotton made in Africa (in terms of the mass balance system)
- During manufacturing/processing: The EU eco-label, Made in Green by Oeko-Tex, Green Button

For sustainable natural textiles from the Dibella+ range, the company accepts the following:

- For its production of raw materials: Organic Cotton Standard (OCS), Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), Fairtrade
- During manufacturing/processing: Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), Fairtrade, Green Button

Supply chain securitised from start to finish

A strict certification concept gives Dibella the security of sustainable value chains.

The textile industry is characterised by a strong division of labour, which is particularly pronounced in the cotton processing industry. Yet the breakdown into innumerable production steps has a considerable disadvantage: it renders supply chain traceability almost impossible and makes it difficult to implement sustainable, safe conditions from farming to sewing. Disasters like the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh have shown where this can lead. Dibella rejects this lack of transparency. For this reason, the company has switched its entire value chain to credible, independent cer-



In order to improve living and working conditions in the textile chain, Dibella is committed to sustainably grown cotton and strict certifications that allow traceability all the way down to the fibre level.

Ralf Hellmann,
Managing Director
of Dibella



“Textile supply chains are full of risks. In order to curb human and labour rights violations as well as disregard for nature, we have opted for a few very strict seals. These allow us to trace the textiles all the way back to the fibre and ensure ethical and ecological production at all stages of production.”

tifications; these facilitate complete traceability of cotton and ensure compliance with human rights, core labour standards and ecological conditions at all stages of production. However, because hardly any seal can cover all the requirements for the complete manufacturing process, Dibella relies on interlocking concepts: the company combines GOTS and Fairtrade for organically grown cotton that enables small farmers to make

a living. For Dibella’s conventional range, the company has decided to make the long-term switch to “Cotton made in Africa”, with the “Made in Green” product and production standards or the EU eco-label already providing the assurance that the further processing manufacturing operations, such as bleaching/dyeing and clothing manufacture, are already acting sustainably today. Moreover, Dibella’s business activities have been audited holistically for social and ecological criteria and awarded the government’s “Green Button” seal. This certification strategy has enabled Dibella to create solid foundations for responsible, safely manufactured contract textiles.

namely a highly reputable, strictly controlled quality standard for labelling natural products derived from organic cultivation. Yet the GOTS is much more than merely a seal for organic farming, as it also includes the entire value chain. Strict environmental, toxicological and social requirements apply from cultivation all the way through to the finished product. The standard therefore achieves an unparalleled level of transparency through regular checks by independent auditing companies and publicly disclosed audits. Yet in terms of environmental and social responsibility, even the GOTS is not absolutely perfect: it remains too vague in calling for living wages; this is why Dibella has tied the standard to Fairtrade.

GOTS

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is to the textile industry what the European organic label is to the food industry:



Fairtrade Cotton

The international standard has made a name for itself especially through its fair pricing policy: Growers receive a minimum price for their



cotton that covers the costs of sustainable production. Furthermore, a premium is also paid that often goes towards projects for the benefit of village communities. Yet Fairtrade also stands for the prohibition of child and forced labour, for demonstrable compliance with ILO core labour standards at all stages of processing and for strong environmental standards to protect humans, nature and drinking water.

The combination of Fairtrade and GOTS is the best possible solution to address all social injustices and negative environmental impacts of the cotton industry.

OCS

The Organic Content Standard confirms the presence of organic fibres in a finished textile product. Their quantity can vary, because the standard allows admixtures of other fibres. In certified blended fabrics with 80 or



50 per cent cotton, these fibres are exclusively sourced from sustainable cultivation. While the polyester content is not covered by the standard, it is gradually being switched to recycled fibres certified in conformity with the Global Recycle Standard. The processing stages in the textile chain are documented under the OCS. Regular audits ensure compliance with qualitative product parameters.

Cotton made in Africa

This label goes back to an initiative that helps people to help themselves: Cotton made in Africa supports small farmers in sub-Saharan Africa in the sustainable cultivation of genetically unmodified cotton and is aimed at the improvement of working conditions in ginning factories. Via a royalty paid by the buyers, farmers receive



training and access to inputs that reduce pesticide use while increasing the quality and yield of their fields.

Cotton made in Africa follows a pragmatic approach using two different models. The Hard Identity Preserved System only allows the use of CmiA licensed cotton with a minimum content of 50 per cent; the processing chain is seamlessly traceable. The Mass Balance System, which Dibella has decided to use, allows CmiA fibres to be used "out in the country". The spinning mill buys the cotton, but has a free hand in processing it. In other words, a yarn does not necessarily contain the high-quality fibres. Still, the volume of CmiA cotton purchased by the spinning mill must be balanced with the volume of yarns labelled as CmiA. This straightforward principle ensures the purchase of sustainably grown fibre and encourages more farms to join the system: in the 2019/2020 harvest year, CmiA cotton covered almost a third of total fibre production in Africa.

Dibella sets its own standards for sourcing cotton



GMO-Free Seeds
Genetically unmodified plants are capable of reproduction. The farmers produce their own seeds, need to purchase "fresh" seeds less often and thus remain financially independent of biotech groups.



Rainwater irrigation
Dibella's Chetna organic cotton is cultivated exclusively with

the water from the monsoon rains. This preserves the vital water reserves in the hot, dry cotton-growing countries for humans and animals alike. This also prevents erosion of usable land areas.

Pesticide free
Pesticides are deadly to pests, but also to many beneficial insects and micro-organisms. As a



result, arable soils lose their fertility. Pesticides also damage the health of farmers because the necessary protective equipment is often lacking. Pesticides are therefore taboo in organic cotton growing. In organic farming, only natural fertilizers are used, which are available on the small farms anyway. Farmers do not incur any additional



costs (and risk financial dependencies) and the soil and drinking water are protected from enrichment by nitrates.
Hand-picked
Hand picking is a guarantee for ripe cotton. Because neither machinery nor defolianters are used, the health of the farmers is protected and the fertility of the soil is preserved.

Green Button

Officially launched in autumn 2019, the government label "Green Button" is the youngest textile seal, but also one of the most demanding: It is not confined merely to calling for strict environmental and social criteria in the textile chain and proof of product compatibility. It also takes a close look at the seriousness with which a company is ostensibly committed to sustainability. The certification therefore consists of a product and a company audit. At the manufacturing level, the seal relies on a few select standards, which include GOTS and Made in Green. In terms of corporate social responsibility, on the other hand, the company must credibly demonstrate and disclose its human



rights, social and environmental responsibility record. We provide an insight into our activities at <https://www.dibella.de/csr/>

Made in Green by Oeko-Tex



This internationally recognised standard is an award for materials that have been tested for harmful substances and have been produced in environmentally friendly factories and at safe and socially acceptable workplaces. As proof, the textiles must comply with Standard 100 by Oeko-Tex and the production sites must be certified in accordance with Sustainable Textile Production (STeP) by Oeko-Tex. The latter stands for a holistic examination and evaluation of the production conditions of textile operations. The label also offers a

high level of transparency, seeing as the production companies and countries can be traced using a product ID.

EU environmental label

The seal referred to as the EU environmental flower is a voluntary seal that extends far beyond the legal regulations stipulated. The label aims to reduce a product's impact on the environment and improve consumer safety and health. A key element in this regard is the longevity and reusability of a product; this must be set out in a product life cycle. Other essential requirements are the replacement of hazardous chemicals with less hazardous ones as well as compliance with human rights and labour standards.



7 STITCHING



8 DIBELLA



9 TEXTILE SERVICE



10 HOTEL/GUEST



All services with close customer proximity

Optimum efficiency, safety and the best service across the entire product range.

At Dibella, we make the problems of the textile service our concern and develop individually tailored solutions for our customers' requirements. In search for the best concepts, we analyse all processes that serve to ensure quality, utility and sustainability of our textiles and lead to ideal handling in laundry operations. In a nutshell: we do our utmost to make our customers' business easier – and have combined all our services in our "Clean & Lean" concept.

Our commitment begins with the selection of the raw materials needed. By integrating "Cotton made in Africa" more closely into our conventional range and working with the Indian organic initiative Chetna Organics, we are making our supply chain sustainable and transparent. In this way, we offer our customers the opportunity to respond to, and comply with, the requirements of the Supply Chain Act.

Safe products, safely produced

We have defined high quality standards in collaboration with our production partners. They guarantee the production of clean, bright white fabrics that reliably meet our technical specifications and ensure smooth processes in textile service operations. All suppliers adhere to strict environmental and social

criteria, are certified in conformity with international seals, guarantee product safety and long-term availability of all articles.

In the priority lane on behalf of our customers

Whenever our customers express the need for special clothing requirements, we implement them accordingly. At our own sewing plant, we produce "linen made to measure" namely not only in special dimensions and designs, but also with special seam colours, individual labels or digital markings, with RFID or UHF transponders. The benefit of this solution is its speed, thanks to which textile service companies can respond to market demands within only a few days. Whenever price and stock availability are important, the "lean logistics" system is a good solution: We have our customers' goods manufactured en bloc and store them in our warehouse until they are called off.

For operations with high demand for special articles, we offer a "direct container" system. The merchandise is manufactured, loaded into a container and delivered to the customer directly, without any detours.

All three systems can be linked together in a modular fashion – giving our customers a high degree of flexibility in the procurement and design of their product ranges.

Serving customers with advice and in practice

Our assortment is geared to different customer requirements. The product range extends from pure organic cotton to cotton-polyester blends and Tencel cotton fabrics. Each of these textiles has special laundering and drying properties that must be taken into account in the process management of a laundry for optimum operational throughput. Our technical textile department is at our customers' disposal for process optimisation and supports them with in-depth expertise also in resolving technical process-related questions.

Customer information and retention

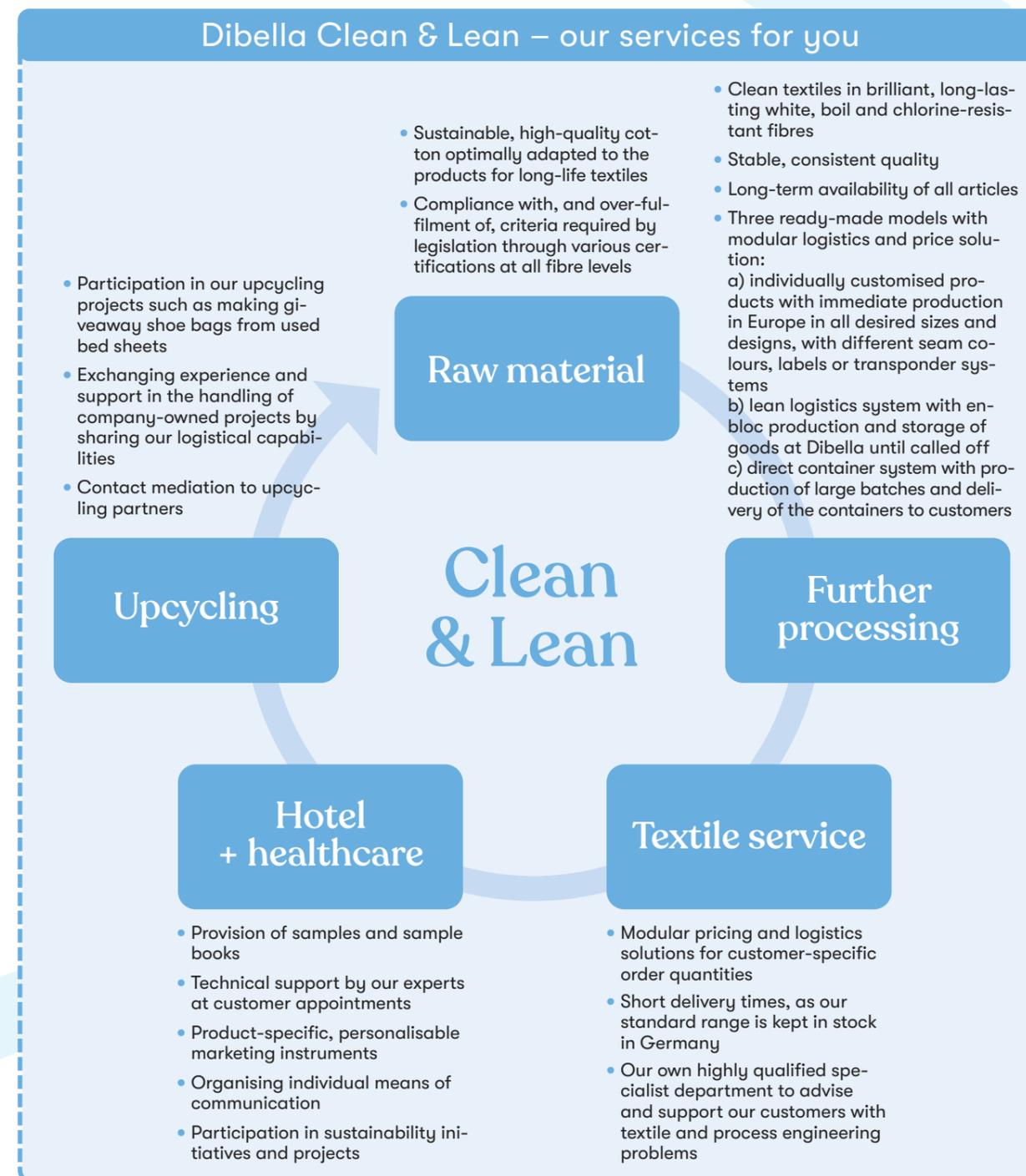
If requested, we offer comprehensive, product-related marketing support. We provide samples and sample books. We offer textile service companies professional support in the course of customer appointments. We have developed product-specific marketing tools capable of personalisation – tools that we make available to our customers as required. On request, we also develop individual measures for communicating product benefits, offer participation in sustainability initiatives or support the design of eye-catching give-aways such as shopping bags made from used bed sheets.

Optimal use of raw materials

We consider fibre materials as a valuable resource, and this is why we make every effort to ensure that our contract textiles are durable, suitable for leasing and user-friendly. Moreover, we seek options to continue using the materials after they have been withdrawn from

the textile service. Within the scope of our "Dibella up" initiative, we have therefore been involved in upcycling projects for some time and have already developed alternatives to the usual disposal methods. If requested, we share the experience gained with our customers, arrange contacts to upcycling and recycling partners and support the

project handling with our logistical options available. The textile rental service industry is constantly confronted with new challenges in terms of the textiles deployed. We at Dibella deal with these tasks and develop clean and simple solutions for our customers that deserve the designation "Clean & Lean".



It's all in the mix

Dibella fabric qualities meet the diverse requirements of the textile service industry in every respect.

As different as each laundry is with regard to its mechanical equipment, logistical organisation and customer structure, so different are the requirements for our bed linen. The spectrum ranges from a pleasant, soft skin feel to a radiant white, from efficient workability to a long useful service life. We have developed the right textile ranges for every need – by precisely balancing technical performance, economy and soft factors such as feel and appearance. The result is four lines of bed

linen with a distinctive profile of properties and involving sustainable production.

The “natural” solution

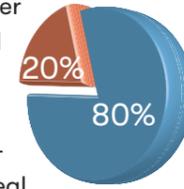
Made from one hundred percent natural fibres, our cotton bedding offers unmatched skin comfort paired with a soft, warm feel. At the same time, the fabric consisting of only one fibre component never fails to impress with its brilliant white, which



makes it so much easier to handle when working from a laundry pool. Thanks to the good moisture management of cotton, a pleasant sleeping climate is created at night, but at the same time the natural fibre also acts as a small water reservoir, buffering over-drying during ironing. We only use certified organic cotton for our Dibella+ product range. It is grown – with GMO-free seeds, of course – by farming families in India and picked by hand, so that only ripe, high-quality fibres are subjected to further processing.

The “ideal” solution

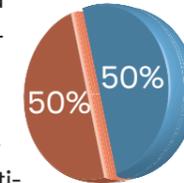
The blend of 80 per cent cotton and 20 per cent polyester brings naturalness and economy into an ideal balance. The high natural fibre content results in pleasantly soft handling and ensures an absolutely brilliant white. The small admixture of polyester gives the bed linen a lasting, neat smoothness, which allows it to be used in hotel rooms for longer periods. It also delivers a compelling performance with good mechanical properties and durability. Yet the biggest advantage of these textiles is their ideal moisture management: while cotton absorbs water, the synthetic fibre content serves to regulate the amount absorbed. This allows the



bed linen to dry more quickly; on the one hand, this shortens the cycle within the laundry. On the other, it produces a good climate in bed and a high level of sleeping comfort.

The “efficient” solution

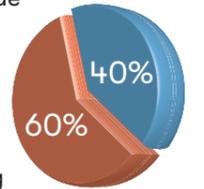
A balanced blend of cotton and polyester combines the positive properties of both fibres to create textiles with high technical performance: The fabric composition is adapted to economically attractive, rational machining processes. The 50:50 mix gives the bed linen good smoothness, makes it particularly resistant and durable to chemical, mechanical and thermal influences and thus leads



to a particularly long useful service life.

The “silken” solution

Our bed linen made of 60 per cent Tencel and 40 per cent cotton stands for the combination of outstanding material comfort and high efficiency. The mix of the two natural fibres results in bed linen with a silky sheen and a long-lasting, velvety-soft feel that is also particularly gentle to the skin. Thanks to the botanical Tencel fibre, the textiles gain optimum moisture management, which is due to the rapid absorption, distribution and drying of water – which in turn leads to efficient handling processes in the laundry.



Numerous factors call for fabric construction and quality that later prove to be the perfect match for our customers' requirements.



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