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► SORTING OF TEXTILE WASTE – GOING UP A GEAR

TEXTILES FOR TEXTILES – T4T

THE SITUATION AS IT STANDS

Textiles that have been thrown away can be sorted by systems able to identify their chemical composition, colour and other parameters such as finish and coating. The basis of this technology, Identitex, was developed in 1999–2001 but there was, at that time, no commercial rationale and it was never put into large scale practise.

But the perception of textile waste has changed with the increase in prices for raw materials, and the notion of sustainability is becoming increasingly important. The identification technology and software need to be updated and elaborated to deal with more industrial usage, which could result in the spinning and weaving of recycled fibres. Shorter fibres can also be reused to provide material for insulation and automotive applications.

WHAT THE PROJECT AIMS TO ACHIEVE

A full scale industrial sorting process, using the Identitex system, will prove that textile recycling has a lot to offer. The project will assess the ecological and economic benefits of developing a range of example products from recovered fibres, with a hope that a economically viable recycling chain can be established over two years.

The technology and equipment will be commercialised and the plan to set up at least ten sorting lines throughout Europe assessed. Project leaders believe ten new lines will help realise the economies of scale and make fibre recovery and reuse a welcome practice within the textile industry.



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