

# ORGANIC COTTONSUMMIT

HOSTED BY OCA



ORGANIC COTTON SUMMIT 2021 AGENDA



# Organic Cotton Summit 2021

## Pushing Past the 1%

As the global organic cotton platform, OCA is on a mission to unleash organic cotton's potential for positive impact – from field to fashion. We're creating a transparent, responsible, and resilient organic cotton supply chain that prioritises delivering farmer prosperity and meeting the sector's shared sustainability goals. As an accelerator, we want to get to this future, faster.

Evolving how things are done requires collective action and the Organic Cotton Summit is an opportunity for the sector to discuss how we can challenge 'business as usual', increase global organic cotton supply, empower farmers, and provide a roadmap for systemic change. This is a fantastic opportunity for change agents to meet and be inspired by like-minded peers who are committed to reinventing the cotton industry for good.

This year's two-day Summit will be hosted virtually and will tackle the urgent theme of 'Pushing Past the 1%'.

Less than 1% of the cotton currently grown worldwide is certified organic, a disheartening statistic when you believe as we do that organic cotton is the key to transforming the sustainable textiles sector. Organic cotton should be at the helm of driving change in the textile industry due to its potential to address the critical social and environmental crises of our time.

But what decisive actions are required to meet the ambition of pushing past 1%? How can we ensure farmers receive the equity they deserve as the sector accelerates supply? What role does each actor in the value chain play? What investments are required and what systems should we support? And most importantly, what can we learn from others?

We can only achieve meaningful change by taking collective action, so join us and share your insights in the sessions as we address these key questions in the Summit.

## DAY ONE

Monday November 8

**Planet, People, Prosperity: The Organic Cotton Effect****12:00 CET | 16:30 IST: Welcome Address | Keith Tyrell (10mins)**

Keith Tyrell is the Chair of OCA's Board of Trustees. He is also the Director of PAN UK - an international NGO operating in the UK and more than a dozen LMIC countries. PAN UK conducts research into the health and environmental impacts of pesticides and develops policy options to reduce reliance on chemical pest control. Their field programmes provide direct support to thousands of smallholder farmers in Africa and conduct cutting edge R&D into appropriate technologies to manage pests and increase productivity and engage with actors in global commodity value chains to drive demand for sustainably produced crops and to promote best practice.

Keith has over 20 years' environmental experience. Prior to PAN UK, he was the Director of Programmes and Research at the Koru Foundation – a charity that supports community scale renewable energy projects in the developing world. He holds a Doctorate in Development Studies, and MA in Environment Development and Policy from the University of Sussex – both of which involved research into pesticide use.

[Register here](#)**12:10 CET | 16:40 IST: Keynote Speaker | Paul Holmbeck (40mins)**

Join Paul Holmbeck, organic policy and market consultant in conversation with Bart Vollaard, Executive Director, OCA as they discuss the growing importance and relevance of organic farming in addressing the world's most pressing issues of our time. Paul will share lessons from Denmark on how organic policy and NGO mobilisation can drive farm conversion to organic and develop the organic market. They will also explore what the ambitions for organic food production in the EU mean for organic cotton.

Paul Holmbeck stepped down from his role as director in Organic Denmark last year after 25 years at the organization where he played a leading role in creating Denmark's ambitious organic policies, and the market strategies that have made Denmark a world leader in organic sales. Paul is now director of Holmbeck EcoConsult, where he advises leaders in government, business and NGOs on climate and organic policy and organic market development around the world. In September, Paul was elected to the IFOAM – Organics International World Board.

[Register here](#)

12:50 CET | 17:20 IST: Break (10mins)

**13:00 CET | 17:30 IST: 2030 Strategy Plan | Accelerating the Organic Cotton Effect (30mins)**

Discover OCA's 2030 Strategy and our roadmap to unleash the powerful and positive impact of organic cotton from field to fashion, for people and planet. Bart Vollaard, Executive Director, OCA will share our vision for the future, and the importance of the 'Organic Cotton Effect'. He will also discuss how we can leverage this Effect to deliver a transparent, responsible, and resilient organic cotton supply chain that priorities farmer prosperity.

Bart Vollaard leads the strategic development of the Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA), serving as its Executive Director since 2019. Bart brings over a decade of experience in international sustainability programmes both in agriculture and commodity trade to this role. Bart joined OCA as Programme Director (and hire number one) five years ago, from the strategic consultancy firm that developed OCA as an incubator project.

[Register here](#)

13:30 CET | 18:00 IST: Break (10mins)

**13:40 CET | 18:10 IST: From the Ground Up | Vivek Rawal**

Join Vivek Rawal, CEO, bioRe India in conversation with Ruud Schute, Programme Director, OCA as they discuss the critical role that Implementing Partners and farm groups play in helping cotton farmers to adopt organic practices and adapt to agricultural challenges as they arise. This conversation will share on-the-ground insights that illustrate why we need to make the organic sector more equitable for farming communities if we wish to push past that 1% production statistic.

Vivek Rawal is CEO and Director of bioRe India Ltd, a pioneering company focused on organic cotton established in 1991 by Swiss trading Company Remei AG. Vivek initially served as CEO for bioRe's social wing bioRe Association for seven years before taking over as CEO and Director of bioRe India Ltd in 2013 where he is responsible for managing the world's longest standing organic farm project with over 3,000 farmers, a ginning factory and a research component.

[Register here](#)

14:50 CET | 19:20 IST: Break (10min)

**15:00 CET | 19:30 IST: Panel | How does Organic relate to Regenerative Organic Agriculture (1hr 10min)**

Regenerative organic agriculture is a concept that has been gaining momentum in the apparel industry as a solution to climate change and way to improve soil health, but what is the reality of implementing this system? How does organic relate to regenerative agriculture? How are farmers responding to regenerative practices? Join our speakers as we dive deep into these topics:

Rachel Kanter Kepnes is the Manager of Supply Chain Social Responsibility, Farms & Special Programmes at Patagonia, where she manages their FairTrade USA certification programme at the factory level and Regenerative Organic Certification programme at the farm level.

Avinash Karmarkar is Vice President of Vasudha Swaraj Pvt Ltd (a subsidiary of Pratibha Syntex) where he heads Pratibha's organic cotton development farm programmes in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Emily Gantz is Programme Manager, Organic Consulting at Rodale Institute where she helps farmers navigate organic compliance as they transition to certified organic and certified regenerative organic. She serves as a board member for the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI).

[Register here](#)

**16:10 CET | 20:40 IST: Day One ends**

## DAY TWO

Tuesday November 9

**Scaling Up Organic Cotton Supply****12:00 CET | 16:30 IST: The South & Southeast Asia Regional Organic Cotton Round Table Summit (2hr 30min)**

The South & Southeast Asia Regional Organic Cotton Round Table Summit will be co-hosted by the Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA) and Textile Exchange with a focus on in-conversion farming to address the surge of interest in organic cotton, looking at the path to progress in Pakistan and taking inspiration from India.

We will be joined on this virtual event by expert panellists working across the sector, including Asad Imran, Director Sustainable Agriculture & Food Programme at WWF Pakistan; Dr. Babar E. Bajwa, Senior Regional Director, Asia at CABI Agriculture and Bioscience; Faiza Jamil, Sustainability and Communications Manager at Artistic Milliners, Kavya Jain, Programme Officer at OCA and Amish Gosai, Supply Network and South Asia, Senior Manager at Textile Exchange.

[Register here](#)**15:00 CET | 19:30 IST: Panel | Investing to Futureproof the Supply of Organic Cotton (1hr 15mins)**

Join Juergen Janssen, Head of Secretariat for the German Partnership for Sustainable Textiles (Textilbündnis) and Gagan Bansal, Global Material Innovation and Strategy Manager, H&M Group as they discuss the importance of investing in in-conversion projects now to directly influence how much organic cotton supply is available in the future. The conversation will encompass new opportunities for funding organic projects and distil why brands need to show leadership by investing in the future of organic cotton.

Juergen Janssen is programme director at GIZ and has been head of the office of the German Partnership for Sustainable Textiles since 2016. The Textile Partnership is a multi-stakeholder initiative aiming to improve the social, ecological and economic conditions along the entire textile value chain.

Gagan Bansal is Global Material Innovation and Strategy Manager at H&M Group and has been with the organisation for over a decade where she has honed a vast experience of strategic sourcing in leadership roles in various countries (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and Hong Kong).

[Register here](#)

**16:15 CET | 20:45 IST: Closing Comments | Bart Vollaard**

Summit signoff from Bart Vollaard, Executive Director, OCA

Bart Vollaard leads the strategic development of the Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA), serving as its Executive Director since 2019.

**Register here**

[access via the same link as the last panel of the day]

**16:10 CET | 20:40 IST: Day One ends**