



KIABI
la mode à petits prix

textile industry

Towards more sustainable procurement:

KIABI IS INTEGRATING REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE INTO ITS COTTON SOURCING

Kiabi is a French brand with a strong European dimension and an international profile. For almost 50 years, its mission has been to make the lives of families easier by offering a range of products at affordable prices. With the goal of supporting consumers in their shift towards a new relationship with fashion, the company has gradually developed its business model to integrate sustainable development. It was in 2016 that Kiabi began its transition with Ecowash jeans, whose production requires less water. In 2018, the company drafted its first carbon footprint assessment, before reaching a new strategic milestone in 2023 with the publication of its Vision 2035.

As the creator and designer of its products, Kiabi now wishes to ensure better control over its value chain. Integrating regenerative agriculture into its sourcing of raw materials represents a cornerstone of this transformation.

Kiabi in figures (2023)

22.3

million
customers
and 9,049
employees

195

suppliers
in 22 countries
of production

289

dedicated
to raw material
procurement

“As the leader in our market sector, we have a vital responsibility. Kiabi is fully committed to being the spearhead for a genuine transition that will benefit both our industry and our consumers. The Kiabi Acts For A Better World programme encapsulates our main pillars and translates them into key messages addressed to our external stakeholders, thus influencing consumption patterns and inspiring greater sustainability.”



Camille Caron,
Sustainable Development
Leader at Kiabi

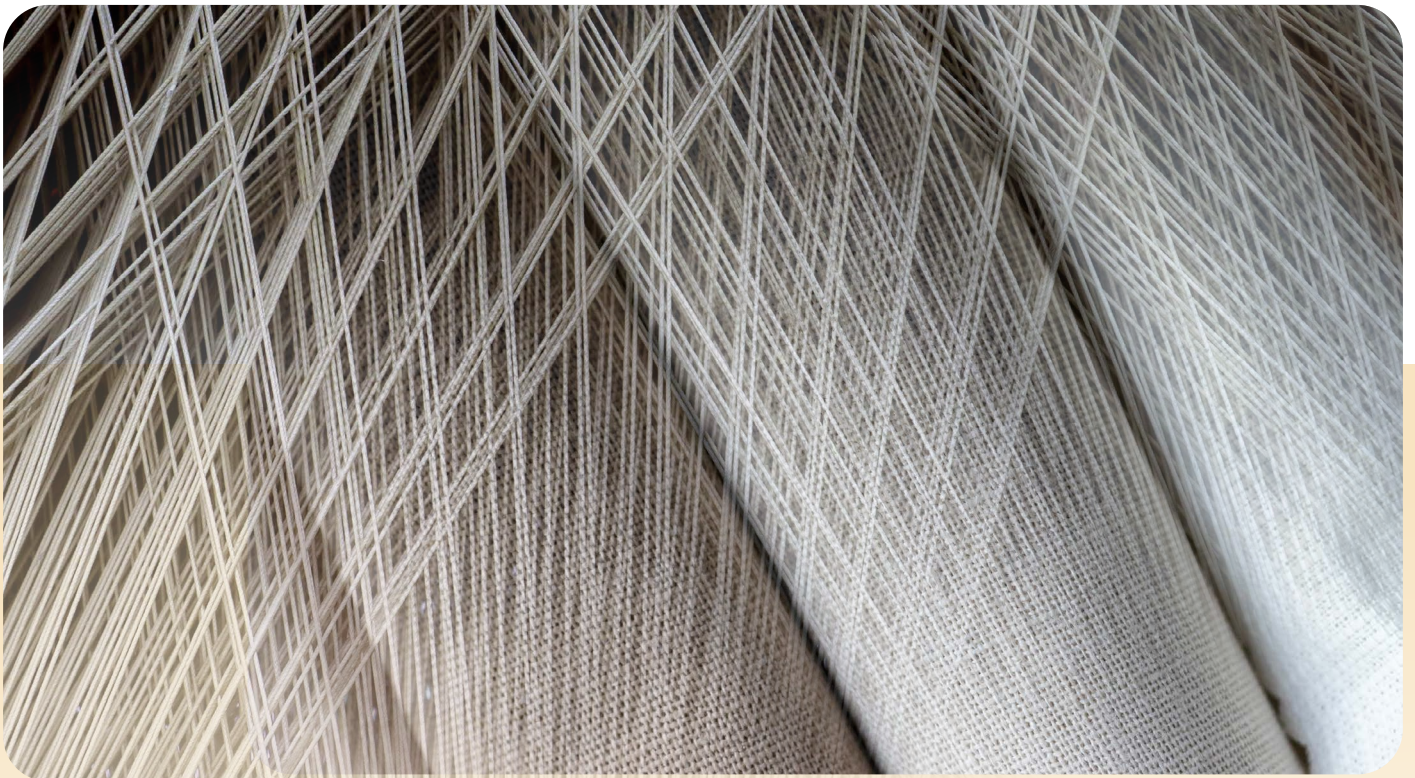

reforestACTION

Vision 2035: a clear move towards sustainability

In 2023, in response to the increasing environmental and societal crises that directly impact its supply chain, Kiabi published an ambitious sustainability programme called Vision 2035. This firmly anchors the fashion brand's CSR strategy in a new promise: "To facilitate the lives of families by making it possible for everyone to adopt a sustainable lifestyle on a daily basis".

“Launched at the start of 2023, Kiabi's Vision 2035 lays the foundations for our sustainability strategy and embodies our ambition to implement a radical overhaul of our model, from both an environmental and social perspective.”

Camille Caron, Sustainable Development Leader at Kiabi



CONCRETE ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY 2035 (USING 2022 AS A BASELINE)

This in-depth work has enabled us, in particular, to structure Kiabi's environmental measures around three pillars of action and to set quantified targets for each.

Kiabi's pillars of action

CARBON FOOTPRINT

25% reduction in CO₂ emissions

WATER FOOTPRINT

40% reduction in water consumption

LAND FOOTPRINT

5% reduction in land use

Transforming textile procurement – a strategic imperative

The textile industry is responsible for 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions, more than air and sea traffic combined, which makes it one of the most polluting industries in the world. The industry is also one of the biggest water consumers, especially in the production of raw materials such as cotton.

At Kiabi

Over **90%** of water consumption comes from the manufacture of new products

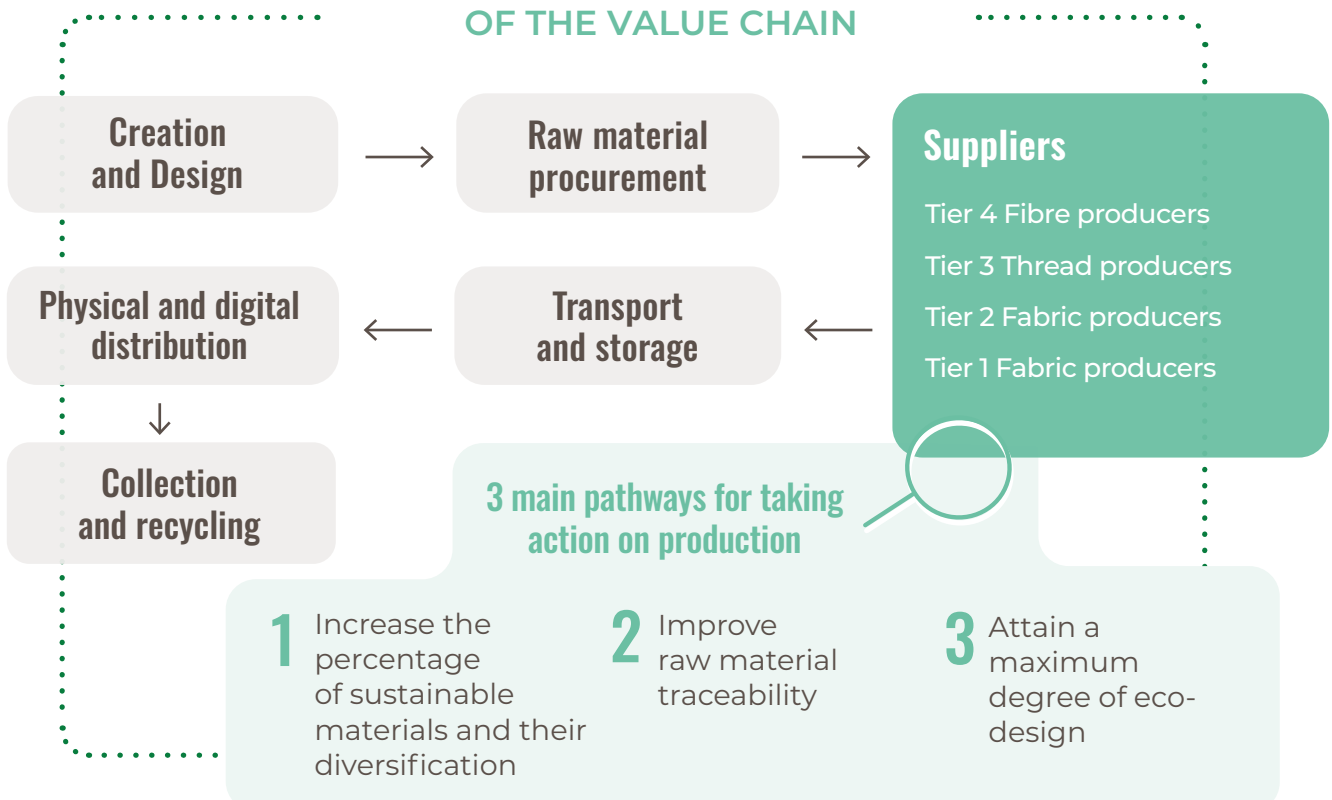
21% of the carbon footprint comes exclusively from the production of raw materials (growing and processing the fibres)

“ Over the last few years, we have become aware that Kiabi’s impact lies in the choice of raw materials and in the design of our products. This is why we have decided to focus most of our efforts in these areas. To bring about improvements, we have adopted an ambitious approach that is field-focused and strengthens close relations with our suppliers.”

Camille Caron,

Sustainable Development Leader at Kiabi

TAKING ACTION AT THE HEART OF THE VALUE CHAIN



THE THREE TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGES FOR KIABI

1

Ensure long-term natural fibre procurement: :

Over the next decade, extreme weather conditions represent a major risk with regard to shortages of natural resources. In response to the many environmental and societal crises, it has become vital for Kiabi to modify its model in order to diversify and ensure its long-term production.

2

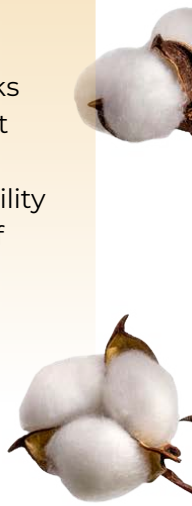
Bring its environmental pathway in line with international frameworks:

In order to remain competitive and anticipate future compliance requirements, Kiabi wishes to bring its sustainability approach in line with major international frameworks, such as the SBTi FLAG and SBTN.

3

Satisfy new societal expectations regarding consumption:

Listening to what families want remains the priority for Kiabi; the brand strives to meet the growing demand from consumers for more traceable and sustainable fashion. However, it also seeks to maintain the right balance between desirability, affordability and the reduction of negative impacts.



CLEARLY IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

Right from the start, Kiabi identified two major challenges linked to the procurement of sustainable raw materials:

- 1 Through working with a wide variety of materials, the brand quickly noticed the lack of harmonised scientific data, making any reliable analysis relatively complex. Ensuring data quality and accuracy is therefore the first challenge it must face.
- 2 Moreover, natural materials are all about farming, and therefore about people. It is not merely a question of KPIs for Kiabi, but rather the global understanding of an ecosystem where every player counts.

“ Our challenge is to structure these two dimensions – scientific rigour and human reality – to ensure the right kind of progress and to stay one step ahead.”

Camille Caron,
Sustainable Development
Leader at Kiabi

Cotton fibre, a high-stakes raw material

A quarter of the global production of textile fibres comes from the 'fruit' of the cotton plant, known as a boll. Cotton farming is an intensive practice, with 31 kg CO₂e emitted, 20 m² of land used and 5 m³ of water consumed per kilo of finished product. It also requires the use of large quantities of chemical fertilisers and plant protection products, which greatly impact biodiversity and the lives of farmers.

Cotton alone represents **59% of the tonnage** of Kiabi's raw materials (based on the weight of the finished products). The company's objective is to gradually remove conventional cotton from its procurement, to be replaced by fibres obtained from organic farming or 'under conversion to organic farming', with a much-reduced impact on ecosystems and humans.

Organic cotton

India, the world's second-largest producer of cotton (after China), is also the largest producer of organic cotton. However, growing cotton sustainably remains a real challenge.

While growing cotton organically in India is now economically viable, supply remains insufficient compared to demand. In order to ensure growth and increase the resilience of organic cotton in the face of environmental and social challenges, it is crucial to bolster its viability more holistically, by fully integrating environmental and social dimensions.

The challenges of cotton growing

Climate change

- Intense droughts
- Extreme temperatures
- Shorter and more intense periods of rainfall

Environment

- Reduction of forest areas
- Loss of biodiversity
- Water erosion
- Plastic pollution

Socio-economic conditions

- Deterioration of the quality of drinking water
- Farmers' dependence on cotton growing due to a lack of economic alternatives
- Difficulty of maintaining yields in organic farming
- Food security

The Odisha Cotton project in India with Reforest'Action – a regenerative solution

Since 2023, Kiabi has been working with Reforest'Action in developing a regenerative agriculture project within its cotton supply chain in the Indian state of Odisha. The implementation of regenerative practices enables the adoption of a systemic approach which sets humans and their environment at the heart of the agricultural model.

“ Our collaboration with Reforest'Action has gone hand in hand with internal discussions and shaped our commitment. Back in 2019, there was a widespread view that we should plant trees wherever that made sense. Since then, our vision of sustainability has evolved dramatically. This is why we have decided to develop a regenerative agriculture project at the heart of our cotton fibre supply chain.”



Camille Caron,
Sustainable Development Leader at Kiabi

“ Kiabi has always been keen to go further. Very quickly, the issue of the resilience of their production zones became a key factor, going beyond a philosophy of restoring ecosystems outside the value chain. We provided proactive support in their strategic thinking, which enabled them to switch from a contribution model to genuine transformational changes in their supply chain.”

Jean-Christophe Renaud, Project Manager at Reforest'Action



Regenerative levers which address the challenges faced by Kiabi

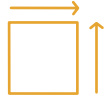
The pilot phase of the Odisha Cotton project is led by Reforest'Action, alongside a cooperative of producers that are indirect suppliers of Kiabi. The project seeks to integrate various regenerative levers, especially agroforestry, within fields of organic cotton or cotton 'under conversion to organic farming'. Creating agroforestry systems consists in planting suitable and multifunctional tree species within and around cotton fields, in this case at an average density of 125 trees per hectare. The regenerative practices supplement those of organic farming, to which they are sometimes linked interdependently.

Odisha Cotton project overview (2023-2025)



LOCATION

India, state of Odisha



AGROFORESTRY

AREA*

550 hectares



NUMBER OF

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES*

1,300



NUMBER OF TREES*

80 000 with 145 trees/hectare

AGROFORESTRY

Planting of 8 species of trees and shrubs:

- *mango*,
- *teak*,
- *guava*,
- *lemon*,
- *moringa*,
- *etc.*

AGROECOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES

- Organic farming
- Intercropping of vegetables (black-eyed peas, chilli plants)
- Production of biochar

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR COTTON PRODUCERS

- Joint definition of the project design
- Training in sustainable farming and agroforestry
- Increasing yields
- Improving food security



TAKING ACTION ALONG THE VALUE CHAIN: THE BENEFITS FOR KIABI

- **Economic viability:** Ensuring a long-term quantity of organic cotton and diversifying the sources of income for producers through agroforestry.
- **Traceability:** Ensuring the traceability of sustainable raw materials.
- **Agronomic expertise:** Centralising scientific and technical skills.
- **Diversified and measurable impacts:** Ensuring measurement and management of project impacts on the climate, biodiversity, land and the socio-economic conditions of producers.
- **Connection to the field:** Maintaining direct ties with the field and people, by helping local producers to implement practices tailored to the market and deploy them on a large scale.

*targets by the end of 2025

Impact indicators aligned with Kiabi's strategic objectives

“The Odisha project is a concrete application of our Vision 2035 and the sustainability pillars for which we have set quantified targets. The transformation of our cotton procurement model will therefore be monitored over time through impact indicators on both water and land, defined jointly with Reforest'Action.”

Camille Caron, Sustainable Development Leader at Kiabi



CARBON FOOTPRINT

Regenerative practices enable:

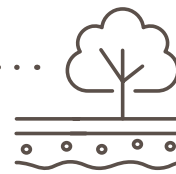
- **Reduction in CO₂ emissions**, achieved through the introduction of sustainable practices such as the use of organic inputs.
- **CO₂ sequestration**, achieved through the development of practices such as agroforestry or increasing soil organic carbon.



WATER FOOTPRINT

This project, launched in the catchment area of the river Tel, will have a range of impacts on water resources:

- **Reduction in the water eutrophication** (concentration of nitrogen and phosphorus) thanks to the use of organic fertilisers.
- **Reduction in water run-off** through the reinforcement of soil cover and its infiltration capacity.



LAND FOOTPRINT

Soil conservation and crop management methods have a direct impact on:

- **Improving soil quality** (structure and fertility) by increasing the organic material it contains.
- **Raising soil infiltration capacity**, facilitated both by surface permeability and water retention.

A PROJECT THAT CONTRIBUTES TOWARDS MEETING KIABI'S SBTI-FLAG TARGETS

The FLAG sectoral guide produced by the SBTi (Science-based Targets Initiative) enables companies with a high impact on the land to take account of their emissions and carbon sequestration linked to land use, and thus to disclose their 'net emissions'.

The Odisha Cotton project will enable Kiabi to act on the two components of its SBTi FLAG inventory:

1

Emissions linked to the management of the land used for cotton production

2

Carbon sequestration within its value chain



“ We are fully aware that the international frameworks (SBTi FLAG, Water Positive, SBTN, etc.) are vital tools for highlighting the value of company actions in the field. This concerns, in particular, the introduction of regenerative farming practices and we are committed to supporting Kiabi in this matter.”


Loïc Stalin, VP Regenerative Agriculture at Reforest'Action



“ The integration of sustainable farming practices offers an opportunity for carbon storage within our value chain. This aspect will be closely monitored, especially as part of our SBTi FLAG pathway, for which we have begun in-depth reflection.”

Camille Caron, Sustainable Development Leader at Kiabi





“ The project we are organising with Reforest’Action in India is much more than merely a sustainability initiative; it is a project of hope, of reconnection with the land and of scientific study. When we look at Kiabi’s total production of raw materials, the project may seem modest. But in fact, it is a major first step, one which is bringing us back to the origin of our clothing and closer to the actual situation on the ground.

This project represents a genuine paradigm shift: it invites us to question ourselves, set mutual challenges and overcome our doubts. Because Kiabi is not just clothing; above all, it's a family.”

Camille Caron,
Sustainable Development Leader at Kiabi

THE VIEW OF



Virginie Cayzeele,

Head of
raw material
procurement for
Kiabi

Is it possible to reconcile transforming the value chain with economic performance?

"Yes, it is entirely possible.

In response to the increasing pressure on agricultural systems, regenerative agriculture is a key lever in making the production of natural raw materials, such as cotton, more sustainable.

Regenerative practices – such as soil conservation techniques – enable improved yields, providing a direct economic benefit to farmers. However, this transition requires significant initial investment – for infrastructure, technology and training needs – which is often unaffordable for many producers.

This is why textile brands have a key role to play: they can commit to the transition to sustainable fibres by joining forces with expert organisations, which are able to provide them with cutting-edge expertise and sound data. This approach of innovation and continuous improvement will enable them to significantly reduce the water consumption, land use and energy necessary for production, while increasing crop yields."

Has the job of Buyer evolved in response to issues of sustainability? And as regards cotton purchasing in particular?

"Absolutely. The environmental dimension can no longer be overlooked and this makes the work of the purchasing teams more complex. They must juggle between two prerequisites: remaining competitive while ensuring sustainable procurement.

European legislation calls for enhanced traceability, which entails comprehensive control over the value chain: from the production of raw materials

to manufacturing. The choice of our suppliers - manufacturers, weavers, dyers, spinners - is thus based on strict environmental criteria: energy and water consumption, the use of chemicals, pollution, etc.

But what may seem like a constraint is actually, in my view, a strategic lever. As a brand, these global dynamics are pushing us to overhaul our purchasing practices and intervene directly on the production fields, whereas in the past, our visibility was often limited to the manufacturing stages. Lastly, since sustainable cotton is more expensive than conventional cotton, there is a high risk of fraud. Working with organisations on the ground – who take action in the cotton fields themselves, alongside the farmers – is the only guarantee of a reliable supply chain in my opinion."

How is the Odisha Cotton project perceived by the Kiabi teams in India?

"The teams feel great pride in Kiabi's contribution to a social and environmental project located in their country. This project also reinforces our partnership with the Dutch NGO Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA), of which Kiabi has been a member since 2021 and which boasts a strong local presence. All farmers who join the OCA will benefit from the expertise of Reforest'Action over the long term, which is an even more exciting prospect for our teams.

The Odisha project gives our approach in India a greater level of consistency and makes it easier to create bonds between stakeholders. Everyone's shared goal is to bring about a deep transformation of the organic cotton sector."

ABOUT REFOREST'ACTION

Reforest'Action is a company dedicated to restoring terrestrial ecosystems on a large scale to address environmental challenges. As a global leader in reforestation and agroforestry, Reforest'Action designs and develops projects that create lasting benefits for both the environment and communities, with impact monitored and measured over time. At the core of its approach is the multifunctionality of agricultural ecosystems, ensuring their long-term resilience and stability.

Convinced that companies can be a driving force in regenerating the natural world, Reforest'Action aims to contribute to their transformation through nature-based solutions, enabling them to act within and beyond their value chains.



**3 MAIN SECTORS OF ACTIVITY:
ARABLE CROPS, COTTON, AND
VINEYARDS**



**1,650 PROJECTS CARRIED
OUT ACROSS 45 COUNTRIES
WORLDWIDE**



**TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT:
A TEAM OF 3 IN-HOUSE
EXPERTS**

“ At Reforest'Action, we support companies in improving their value chain, from strategic thinking to impact optimisation. We provide tailored support. Our strength lies in our impact management tools, developed jointly with recognised scientific institutes. They enable our customers to plan ahead, monitor the health of their projects and measure their long-term benefits through sound indicators. Our added value is to go beyond operational activities. We help companies meet increasingly strategic compliance challenges, by guiding them through the integration of their commitments within essential frames of reference, such as the SBTi FLAG or the CSRD. Thanks to our rigorous methods, they can capitalise fully on the benefits of their actions.”

“ Implementing an environmental transition requires close alignment with the Management Committee and Supervisory Board, because this is a real business model and value sharing issue. From the very start, it is essential to base this approach on a clear mapping of the impacts, risks and opportunities. This allows us to set priorities and develop strong arguments to convince decision makers. It is both a complex and exciting matter. Reforest'Action possesses the technical and agronomic expertise we lack internally, which has enabled us to reconnect with arable land and take on our challenges from a scientific and enlightened perspective. What is more, the dynamism and motivation of their team are a constant source of inspiration, thus reinforcing our conviction that we are on the right track.”



Loïc Stalin,
VP Regenerative Agriculture
at Reforest'Action



Camille Caron,
Sustainable Development
Leader at Kiabi

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