

While only 20 "green" labels took part in the Premium fair in the summer of 2007, this number has already risen to around 50, with as many as eleven coming from Germany alone. The big and successful eco brands, however, come from other countries: the Dutch brand *Kuyichi* produces ethically fair and stylish denim wear, while the ecologically correct *Veja* trainers with their old school look come from France. Live-8 activist Bono and his wife founded the *Edun* label, while *American Apparel* advertises the fact that it manufactures exclusively in Los Angeles. Danish designer Peter Ingwersen operates his own organic cotton production facility in Africa for his *Noir* label.



## Germany plays catch-up

These are international brands, whose consumers – dubbed Lohas (from Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability) – are more likely to be found in California, London or Singapore than in Hamburg or Cologne. "It is not yet generally known here that there is now such a thing as trendy eco fashion", says Cecilia Palmér of the *Fair Fashion Affair* – she, by the way, is Swedish, while her partner Frans Prins is Dutch. "Germany does not have as much affinity with fashion as other countries do", suspects Ralf Strotmeier of the *Premium* fashion fair, "which is why eco fashion will take a bit more time to become established here".

One small label that has been eco-focused since 2006 is *Slowmo*. In Berlin's Friedrichshain district, Felicia and Melchior Moss make "Organic Street Wear" – they use 100 percent certified organic raw cotton, and regularly check that fair working conditions are maintained in the small Berlin sewing shop where their sweatshirts and trousers are produced. The brother and sister team never had any sort of ecological eureka experience. "We want to be able to stand up in front of ourselves and in front of others and take responsibility for what we do", says Melchior Moss. As things currently stand, Germany has quite a bit of catching up to do in the area of sustainable fashion. "But German designers are well on the way to developing an awareness for this issue", believes Moss.

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