

## Textile reuse and recycling hits a ‘turning point’

While textile consumption in the UK continues to grow, the reuse and recycling market for used textiles has experienced a “turning point” following four years of substantial growth in exports and large price rises, according to recycling consultancy WRAP.

Prices have fallen and this has reduced the incentive for recyclers and exporters to collect used textiles, which risks increasing the proportion sent to landfill and incineration.

UK households spend an estimated £52.7 billion a year on clothing, which equates to 1.1 million tonnes.

WRAP said: “The sharp changes in the market and the uncertainty around some key export markets have highlighted the need for a wide range of sustainable end markets, including greater reuse in domestic and overseas markets as well as market development for recycling grades, including closed loop fibre-to-fibre recycling.”

It says there are some areas of growth, for instance in the Sub-Saharan region, but there are also “areas of uncertainty”, for instance around the prospective ban on imports of used textiles in some African countries or around changes in import tariffs in Ukraine.

*The subject will be discussed during a ‘Closing the Loop’ panel session at the Performance Days textile show in Munich, Germany (April 20 and 21).*