



**Textile
Exchange**

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**MATERIALS MATTER
STANDARD PILOT V1.0**



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STANDARD PILOT V1.0**

CRITERIA FOR RECYCLED & MMCF MATERIALS

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Criteria for Recycled and MMCF

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Note on the name of the standard and language used: The Materials Matter Standard was known as “the unified standard” during its development. With the release of the Pilot V1.0, Textile Exchange is pleased to release its official name to stakeholders. For practical reasons, it may also be referred to as “the Standard” in this document.

In the Materials Matter Standard, the word “materials” is used to collectively refer to fibers, raw materials, and feedstocks that are part of the scope of the Standard.

Note on use of this standard: This document represents the Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 – Criteria for Recycled and MMCF. This is a material-specific excerpt of the complete Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 which is the normative standard version, including its preface, the Standard effective and mandatory dates, references, terms and definitions, and appendices, unless otherwise stated.

For any questions related to the accuracy of the information presented in this material-specific edition, please refer to the Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 inclusive of all materials. Any discrepancies or differences created in this edition are not binding and have no effect for auditing or certification purposes.

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A. About us

A1. About Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange is a global non-profit helping to drive beneficial outcomes for climate and nature across the fashion, textile, and apparel industry, right from the start of the supply system.

Our goal is to help the industry achieve a 45% reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions that come from producing fibers and raw materials by 2030 (from a 2019 baseline). To get there, we are keeping our focus holistic and interconnected, accelerating the adoption of practices that improve soil health, water, and biodiversity while respecting human livelihoods and animal welfare.

Over the last 20 years, our internationally recognized standards for the production of different fibers and raw materials have helped build integrity in the industry. As a member of ISEAL, we comply with three credibility Codes of Good Practice which underpin our policies and procedures for organizational functions like standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning. These practices ensure we provide value, rigor, accessibility, and transparency in our standards.

All of our standards are anchored by an independent, third-party assurance model that supports organizations in consistently demonstrating and maintaining conformity while handling and trading their certified products, through an independently verifiable and impartial process.

A2. About the Materials Matter Standard

The Materials Matter Standard (formerly known as “the unified standard”) is a voluntary sustainability standard for the production and initial processing of raw materials used in the fashion, textile, and apparel industry.

The Standard sets out to incentivize a system in which the materials in our clothing and textiles support the climate, respect human rights and animal welfare, and drive beneficial outcomes for soil health, water, and biodiversity. It aligns the industry on a shared trajectory towards this vision by establishing what best practice looks like for different materials in various settings, from farms to recycling facilities.

By focusing specifically on the start of the supply chain, the Materials Matter Standard provides a global certification model that is connected to the unique contexts of producers and processors, as well as their local communities and landscapes. A blend of practice-based criteria and outcome-based indicators helps participating organizations get acknowledged for meeting core requirements and builds their capacity to measure results. At the same time, it gives brands and retailers that choose certified materials a way to speak confidently to customers about them.

In the long term, the Materials Matter Standard provides a foundation for producers and processors to understand how their activities impact the people and ecosystems around them, track their progress based on different practices, and learn where to improve over time to drive beneficial outcomes on the ground. Beyond getting certified, optional leadership criteria invite participating organizations to raise the bar through areas like regeneration, renewable energy, and textile-to-textile recycling.

Over time, the Materials Matter Standard will be improved and adapted using insights from the auditing process and outcome measurements. This will help make sure it brings more meaningful benefits to those producing materials for the industry, as well as those directly impacted by the practices they use.

Please note that the Materials Matter Standard was known as “the unified standard” during its development. With the release of the Pilot V1.0, Textile Exchange is pleased to share its official name with stakeholders.

B. References

The following documents are relevant to the Materials Matter Standard and its implementation. The latest edition of referenced documents (including any amendments) applies for those without a version number. Please note that Textile Exchange will be releasing updated versions of these documents to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

Content Claim Standard (CCS)

The Content Claim Standard (CCS) is a chain of custody standard that provides organizations with a tool to verify a specific input material, track this material during individual site processing and handling on its journey to a final product, and provide volume reconciliation. It requires that each organization along the supply chain takes sufficient steps to ensure the integrity and identity of the input and output materials are preserved.

Logo Use and Claims Policy

This document provides organizations with clear guidelines for making claims, as well as communicating about the Standard. It also outlines requirements for the use of the Materials Matter trademarks, which include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.

Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards

This document contains the requirements for accreditation bodies and certification bodies conducting different forms of evaluation in the Materials Matter standards system, including requirements for issuing and managing non-conformities by the accredited certification bodies.

Materials Matter Standard User Manual

This document accompanies the Standard and should be used by users of the Standard for general interpretation and guidance, including more details as those provided in the “Intent and Clarification” element of the Standard.

C. Introduction

C1. Transitioning Towards the Materials Matter Standard System

In 2021, Textile Exchange began a comprehensive revision of its existing standards framework to develop a more harmonized system across all of our material-specific standards. Our goal was to meaningfully embed our organizational climate and nature goals into the production of all raw materials included in the scope of our certification, as well as to facilitate a simplified communication at the consumer level through more integrated and aligned claims and labelling.

After review and approval of the public project plan from an International Working Group (IWG), the first draft of the Materials Matter Standard (then referred to as “the unified standard”) was made available for public consultation from May to July 2023, with the second draft open for public consultation from October to November 2023. Following invaluable feedback from stakeholders, the Materials Matter Standard Pilot Version V1.0 was released publicly on June 4, 2024.

C1.1 Pilot testing and planning period

The Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 was approved to be released and used for pilot testing on March 11, 2024, following the necessary number of positive votes by the International Working Group. It was released in a limited and controlled way to pilot participants starting in March 2024.

This version is for use in remote and field pilot testing and implementation planning. Over the course of 2024, Textile Exchange will conduct a full internal system update to align with the new Standard and provide information to support implementation planning for all stakeholders in the system.

These activities include taking adequate time to align across our assurance system, providing updates for the accreditation and certification bodies’ systems, and mapping changes that can help organizations to prepare their protocols and operations for the new Standard. Textile Exchange will also update pre-existing documents to reflect the harmonized standards system.

The Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 represents the overall structure that Textile Exchange intends to include in the official version of the Materials Matter Standard. The pilot version may be used to begin planning and understanding areas for system updates by relevant standards users to ensure stakeholders are prepared for implementation once the official Standard becomes effective then mandatory, scheduled for 2026. See section C2 Scope below to understand which types of organizations are relevant for future certification to the Materials Matter Standard.

If, during the review and familiarization process, you find anything that may need to be amended, please send your comments to standards@textileexchange.org and Textile Exchange will take them into consideration when compiling the final and effective version of the Materials Matter Standard V1.0.

C1.2 Final published Standard phases

After incorporating the learnings from pilots, system updates, and other feedback received, the final Materials Matter Standard and related policies are scheduled to be published in mid-2025.

The final published Standard will state an effective date and a mandatory date. The effective date is planned for the first quarter of 2026 and means that auditing and certification may begin on a voluntary basis whereby organizations may request an audit to the Materials Matter Standard from licensed certification bodies. This will remain optional during a transitional period for organizations already certified to current standards superseded by the Materials Matter Standard, including the Global Recycled Standard (GRS), Recycled Claim Standard (RCS), Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS), Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS), and Responsible Down Standard (RDS).

The mandatory date is planned for the second quarter of 2026, 12 months after the final Standard publication date. This means that all applicable audits (for both organizations that are already certified and new applicants) will be required under the new Materials Matter Standard from that date onwards.

Please refer to TE-MM-STN-102-V1.0 Materials Matter Transition Policy (to be released) for specific details on different scopes and areas of certification concerning transition planning to the new Materials Matter standards system.

Timeline

March 2024: Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 is approved by IWG.	Finalize core content to release for 2024 implementation planning and pilot testing.
June 2024: Public release of the Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0	Unified standard released publicly with the Materials Matter name, as well as supporting documentation to guide the Standards users.
April–October 2024: Pilot test criteria and hold workshops for stakeholders.	Pilot testing remotely and in the field; full standards system updates; promotion and education of new/revised content; progress on approach to recognition partnerships for external standards/tools.
2025: Final Materials Matter Standard publication	Criteria and related policies are planned to be released on the publication date in mid-2025; a transitional period will follow publication to allow certification bodies and certified organizations to fully prepare for auditing.
2026: Published standard will have an effective date followed by a mandatory date that begins during 2026	The Standard becomes effective in the first quarter of 2026: organizations may request audits by approved certification bodies; the Standard becomes mandatory mid-2026: auditing and certification required for prior standards scopes superseded by the Materials Matter Standard.

C2. Scope of the Standard

The Materials Matter Standard criteria cover practices and outcomes for the production and initial processing of raw materials, including primary/recycled feedstocks, and apply to farms, producers, and first processing facilities.

The main impact areas of the Materials Matter Standard focus on virgin raw material production (including land use practices in the raising of animals, as well as animal welfare, and treatment of workers), and the first processing stage of extracted raw materials and feedstocks (including processes such as wool scouring, dissolving pulp, chemical/mechanical recycling, down processing, and ginning).

The materials included in the scope of the pilot version of the Materials Matter Standard include:

- **Animal fibers and materials:** Sheep wool, Mohair, Alpaca, Down, and Skins
- **Recycled:** Synthetics, Natural materials, Recycled MMCF

Some of the materials proposed for inclusion within the scope of the Standard will be added through a framework for recognition partnerships with organizations that own sustainability systems in an effort to focus on collaboration first and avoid duplication of standards systems. Partnerships for full recognition mean Textile Exchange would accept related certified raw material inputs into its standards system rather than

through direct Textile Exchange raw material certification. Proposed materials that may be added over time are:

- **Animal fibers and materials:** Cashmere
- **Fiber crops:** Cotton
- **Forest/plant-derived:** MMCF, Biosynthetics

The Standard is globally applicable, with no explicit geographic limitations except those that may occur due to legal restrictions.

C2.1 Applicability of criteria

The Materials Matter Standard Pilot V1.0 contains some criteria that apply to all types of organizations (such as most of the Organizational Management and the Human Rights and Livelihoods principles). It also contains some criteria that apply to specific contexts and/or certification scopes.

Certification audits will be conducted against criteria relevant to the audited organization, and each criterion lists the material(s) to which it applies. The notes in the “Intent and Clarification” element of each criterion may include specific circumstances in which it is or is not applicable, or where partial conformity may be acceptable.

The applicability of specific criteria is also determined based on the desired certificate scope and optional activities of the certified organization, such as conformity with the “Logo Use and Claims” criteria for organizations that wish to use/make claims when selling certified products.

C2.2 Slaughterhouse

Slaughterhouse criteria are included in Principle 4: Animal Welfare. These are mandatory for organizations wishing to sell down or skins with the Materials Matter Standard certification claims, coming from ducks and geese or sheep, goats, and/or alpacas raised on certified farms.

In a case where the producing animal farm also owns the slaughterhouse, and this organization wants to sell certified materials (down or skins), it will have to be in conformance with all the applicable criteria of the Standard and not only with the “slaughterhouse” theme.

C2.3 Chain of custody

Principle 6 of the Materials Matter Standard contains fundamental chain of custody criteria to be met at the raw material production level. This section contains criteria for:

- **Material handling:** The physical segregation of certified materials from non-certified materials, maintaining an adequate identification system.
- **Volume reconciliation:** Maintaining records of volumes collected, produced, stored, and sold as certified.
- **Sale of certified materials:** The conditions to fulfill for making a certified transaction, including the application for a transaction certificate to be issued by the certification body for each shipment.
- **Logo use and claims:** The conditions for using the Materials Matter trademarks, including the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label. Textile Exchange will be releasing an updated version of the Claims & Labeling Policy to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

Under the following circumstances, organizations are required to implement the full Content Claim Standard¹ instead of Principle 6 of the Materials Matter Standard:

C2.3.1 Raw material producers conducting any of the following activities:

- a. Purchasing material (certified or non-certified), from other organizations which are not part of the same Materials Matter Standard scope certificate;
- b. Any type of processing of the eligible material (excluding typical tasks such as sheep shearing); and/or
- c. Outsourcing, defined as the process of sending eligible (e.g. certified) material to a subcontractor for services to be provided, other than storage.

C2.3.2 Organizations doing the first processing stage after the harvest or collection of the raw material.

For example:

- a. For down: The waterfowl's slaughter site.
- b. For animal fibers: The earliest processing stage of the animal fiber after the farm (typically the scour).
- c. For skins: The slaughterhouse.
- d. For recycled material: The recycling sites processing reclaimed feedstocks, e.g., mechanical and chemical recyclers.
- e. For cotton: The gin.

C2.3.3 Organizations purchasing eligible materials certified under a recognized standard. The “recognition framework” refers to a subset of criteria that are required to evaluate other sustainability systems to define the feasibility for accepting certified material under the other scheme into the Materials Matter system, including through the CCS.

Recognition partnerships with organizations owning/managing sustainability systems that result in eligible inputs for the Materials Matter standards system will be published on the Textile Exchange website as these recognition activities progress.

C2.3.4 Organizations in the rest of the supply chain (including Tiers 3-0, from the main processing of raw materials until the final product, including brands) must get certified to the CCS to sell certified products and make claims about them.

C2.4 Group certification

Principle 7 includes the criteria for Group Certification, which is an alternative approach to gaining certification that can help producers demonstrate conformity with the Standard more efficiently (for example, appointing a group manager who can help group members — individual farms — by providing guidance and by managing the certification process through a Group Management System). Although some criteria may be met at the group level, there are applicable standard criteria that each group member must be in conformance with, in order to be considered a member of the certified group.

¹ Textile Exchange will be releasing an updated version of the Content Claim Standard to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

C3. How to Understand the Materials Matter Standard

The Materials Matter Standard criteria are divided into principles and themes as in the following table. Each theme applies to one or two sub-tiers of Tier 4 (raw material production and/or first processing).

Principle	Theme	Tier 4 Applicability	Tier 4 Applicability
1. Organizational Management	1.1. General Requirements	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
	1.2. Shared Responsibilities	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
2. Human Rights and Livelihoods	2.1. Policies, Management Systems and Records	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
	2.2. Labor Rights	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
	2.3. Social Justice	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
	2.4. Livelihoods	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
	2.5. Management of Waste Collection for Recycled Inputs	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
3. Land Use	3.1. Management Plan	Raw Material Production	
	3.2. Soil Health	Raw Material Production	
	3.3. Soil Nutrients	Raw Material Production	
	3.4. Pest Management	Raw Material Production	
	3.5. Water Management	Raw Material Production	
	3.6. Biodiversity Management	Raw Material Production	
4. Animal Welfare	4.1. Health and Welfare Plan	Raw Material Production	
	4.2. Animal Nutrition	Raw Material Production	
	4.3. Living Environment	Raw Material Production	
	4.4. Husbandry Procedures	Raw Material Production	
	4.5. Animal Shearing	Raw Material Production	
	4.6. Herd Management	Raw Material Production	
	4.7. Breeding, Birthing, and Caring for Young Animals	Raw Material Production	
	4.8. Handling and Transport	Raw Material Production	
	4.9. Handling and Transport Managed by the Organization	Raw Material Production	
	4.10. Euthanasia and On-Farm Slaughter	Raw Material Production	
	4.11. Slaughterhouse		First Processing Stage
5. Processing Facility	5.1. Environmental Management System		First Processing Stage
	5.2. Chemical Management and Restrictions		First Processing Stage
	5.3. Waste Management		First Processing Stage
	5.4. Water Use and Discharge		First Processing Stage
	5.5. Air Emissions		First Processing Stage
	5.6. Energy Use		First Processing Stage
6. Chain of Custody	6.1. Material Handling	Raw Material Production	
	6.2. Volume Reconciliation	Raw Material Production	
	6.3. Sale of Certified Materials	Raw Material Production	
	6.4. Logo Use and Claims	Raw Material Production	First Processing Stage
7. Group Certification	7.1. Group Configuration	Raw Material Production	
	7.2. Group Management System	Raw Material Production	
	7.3. Group Member Requirements	Raw Material Production	
	7.4. Inspection of Members	Raw Material Production	
	7.5. Adding and Removing Members	Raw Material Production	


The Standard layout is as follows:

- Principle:**
Fundamental practice
- Theme:**
Element of a principle
- Level of conformity:**
Expected conformance per criterion
- Criterion:**
Requirements to meet
- Intent and clarification:**
Key guidance for how to interpret or audit a specific criterion
- Materials:**
Materials that the criterion applies to

Principle 1 – Organizational Management

The organization demonstrates systems are in place that meet applicable assigning clear internal responsibilities; defining the scope for certification tools; and training all its workers according to their specific responsibilities.


1.1. General Requirements

1.1.1  A management representative has been designated as having overall responsibility for achieving the organization's conformity to all applicable certification requirements.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to avoid any potential confusion by the certification body to implement any necessary actions within the organization.
- 2) A person with sufficient authority and understanding of the Standard shall be appointed to the role of management representative.
- 3) The management representative shall be able to effectively communicate with the organization's operations, know where to locate relevant documentation, and know where to go during the audit.



1. **Principle:** This states the fundamental elements for performing better practices, subject to certification.
2. **Theme:** An element of a Principle, to judge whether or not a Principle has been fulfilled.
3. **Criterion and criterion number:** Wording for the standard requirement or recommendation that the certification applicant or certified organization (collectively referred to as “the organization”) needs to fulfill and demonstrate conformity to the certification body. Each criterion has a unique criterion number, which consists of three digits separated by periods; the first digit represents the Principle number to which the criterion belongs, the second digit represents the Theme to which the criterion belongs, and the third digit is a consecutive number assigned to the set of Criteria within each Theme.
4. **Intent and Clarification:** The objective of this element is to provide key guidance, when needed, for how to interpret or evaluate the criterion, depending on the specific contextual circumstances. The text may offer clarification regarding the intention of the criterion, provide interpretation guidance (e.g. applicability), and/or suggest means of verification for how to show/verify conformity.
5. **Level of conformity:** The level of expected conformance to each criterion depends on the criterion’s type (i.e. conformance requirement or leadership criterion). Conformance requirements (a, b, and c below) are audited for certification decisions and result in non-conformities being issued if conformance is not demonstrated. Leadership criteria (d below) are aspirational and therefore optional to implement; when met the organization is demonstrating leadership in the related area.

The level of conformity can be:



Critical

a. **Critical:**

A critical criterion must be met to achieve and/or maintain certification. If the certification body finds the applicant organization is not in full conformance with a critical criterion during the initial audit, the applicant will not receive a scope certificate until the critical non-conformity has been closed. If the certification body finds an already certified organization is not in full conformance with a critical criterion, the certification body will issue a non-conformity and the scope certificate will be immediately suspended, or the facility removed from the scope certificate. A new evaluation is needed if the organization does not close the critical non-conformity within 180 days.



Major

b. **Major:**

A major criterion must be met to achieve certification and/or maintain certification. Scope certificates may not be issued or reissued if there is an open major non-conformity. Major non-conformities must be closed within 30 days. If a major non-conformity is not closed within 30 days after the audit, the certificate will be suspended.



Minor

c. **Minor:**

A minor criterion may result in a non-conformity being issued and the organization can still achieve certification and/or maintain certification. Minor non-conformities need to be closed within 60 days, though the organization remains certified through that time. If a minor non-conformity is not closed within 60 days after the audit, the minor non-conformity is upgraded to a major non-conformity with a timeline of 30 days from the original deadline.

Certification bodies may issue major non-conformities for minor criteria if, either alone or in combination with other non-conformities, the certification body judges they result in, or are likely to result in, a fundamental failure to achieve the objectives of the Standard. Such fundamental failure may be indicated by non-conformities that continue over a long period of time, are repeated or systemic, affect a wide area, or are not corrected or adequately responded to by the organization once they have been identified.




Recomm


d. **Recommendation:**

The certification body issues a recommendation when a leadership criterion is not met. Recommendations do not affect the certification decision. Leadership criteria are an indication of areas that may be integrated as conformance requirements in future versions of the Standard.


6. **Material:** This element describes the material for which each criterion is applicable. Most criteria apply to more than one material. The materials included in this version of the Standard are the following:

- 


a. **Sheep wool:** For sheep farmers who want to sell certified wool.

SHEEP
WOOL
- 


b. **Mohair:** For farmers raising angora goats, who want to sell certified mohair.

MOHAIR
- 


c. **Alpaca:** For farmers raising alpacas, who want to sell certified alpaca fleece.

ALPACA
- 


d. **Skins:** For farmers raising sheep, goats, and alpacas, who want to sell certified skins to be used in the textile industry.

SKINS
- 


e. **Down:** For farmers raising ducks and/or geese, who want to sell certified feathers and down.

DOWN
- 


f. **Recycled:** For organizations handling reclaimed feedstocks for use in recycled materials (either natural or synthetic) wishing to sell their products as certified. This material designation includes recycled MMCF.

RECYCLED
- 


g. **MMCF:** It may include reclaimed cellulose feedstock, and/or forest-derived feedstock at which time recognition for this material is included. The Standard does not contain requirements at the forest management level; however, Textile Exchange intends in the future to recognize forest-derived raw materials coming from other standard-setting organizations through a recognition partnership model. Eligible materials would enter the Standard certified supply chain to produce manmade cellulosic fibers from virgin feedstocks. For this reason, the Standard contains requirements for the first stages of processing MMCF from virgin feedstocks, in addition to recycled MMCF.

MMCF
- 

h. **Cotton:** The Standard does not contain requirements at the farm production level for cotton; however, Textile Exchange is exploring future options to recognize cotton (as a raw material) coming from other programs/standards through a recognition partnership model. This cotton will then be eligible to enter the Standard certified supply chain at the point of first processing. For this reason, the Standard includes requirements for the first stages of processing cotton at the facility level.

COTTON
- 

i. **Biomaterials:** The Standard does not contain requirements at the raw material management level for biomaterials; however, Textile Exchange is exploring future options to recognize biomaterials coming from other standard-setting organizations through a recognition partnership model. Eligible materials would enter the Standard certified supply chain at the point of first processing. For this reason, the Standard includes requirements for the first stages of processing biomaterials at the facility level.

BIO-
MATERIALS
- 

j. **Cashmere:** The Standard does not contain requirements at the farm level for cashmere goats; however, Textile Exchange is exploring future options to recognize cashmere coming from other programs/standards through a recognition partnership model. Eligible materials may enter the Standard certified supply chain at the point of first processing. For this reason, the Standard includes requirements for the first stages of processing cashmere at the facility level.

CASHMERE

C4. Responsibility for Conformance

The responsibility for demonstrating conformance with the Materials Matter Standard lies with the entities that are the registered applicant or certificate holder, herein referred to as “the organization.” The organization is responsible for all decisions, policies, and management activities related to the farm or site. This includes demonstrating that other persons or entities permitted or contracted by the organization to operate in (or for the benefit of) the farm or site demonstrate conformance with the applicable Materials Matter Standard criteria. Accordingly, the organization is ultimately responsible for taking corrective actions if such persons/entities are found to have not met the Standard criteria.

C5. Basis for Certification

Textile Exchange does not expect 100% conformance in satisfying the Materials Matter Standard criteria. Specific situations and/or unforeseen changes in cultural, ecological, economic, and social environments may cause occasional shortcomings that result in non-conformities. Certification bodies are instructed to guide their certification decisions by the following:

- The extent to which current actions satisfy each criterion; and
- The overall importance and/or consequences of failing to satisfy each criterion.

Failures in performance detected by certification bodies during periodic audits may result in minor or major non-conformities, depending on the type of criterion and on the severity of the non-conformity. The Accreditation and Certification Procedures detail the requirements related to Textile Exchange licensed certification bodies, including auditor qualifications, auditing procedures, and the certification decision-making process. Textile Exchange will be releasing an updated version of the Accreditation and Certification Procedures to align with the Materials Matter Standard in 2024/2025.

C6. Interpretations

Any uncertainty regarding the correct interpretation of a criterion should be resolved by the “Intent and Clarification” content, where possible. During this planning period of the Materials Matter Standard, if you find anything that may need to be amended or clarified, please send your comments and suggestions to standards@textileexchange.org so that they can be taken into consideration when compiling the effective version of the Materials Matter Standard. You may submit feedback to Textile Exchange’s standards system at any time via this [form](#).

Principle 1 – Organizational Management

The *organization*² demonstrates systems are in place that meet applicable criteria for certification, including assigning clear internal responsibilities; defining the *scope* for certification; maintaining up-to-date planning tools; and training all its *workers* according to their specific responsibilities.

1.1 General Requirements

1.1.1



Major

A management representative has been designated as having overall responsibility and authority for achieving the organization’s conformity to all applicable certification requirements.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to avoid any potential confusion by the certification body as to who has the authority to implement any necessary actions within the organization.
- 2) A person with sufficient authority and understanding of the Standard shall be officially designated by the organization.
- 3) The management representative shall be able to effectively communicate with the certification body regarding the organization’s operations, know where to locate relevant documentation, and know from whom to seek support (e.g. other staff) during the audit.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



DOWN



RECYCLED



MMCF



COTTON



BIO-
MATERIALS



CASHMERE

1.1.2



Minor

The organization’s description of its *site(s)* for production, collection, and/or processing, disclosed to its certification body and to Textile Exchange, is current and accurate, and includes the following:

- a. The organization’s name;
- b. The organization’s street address;
- c. The organization’s tax identification number in the country the business is registered to; and
- d. The type of activities within the *scope certificate* performed at each site.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall disclose a complete written description of its operations within the scope certificate, to its certification body and to Textile Exchange, and update this description as necessary to remain current and accurate.
- 2) For *group certification*: The group manager shall be responsible for collecting data from all its *group members*.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



DOWN



RECYCLED



MMCF



COTTON



BIO-
MATERIALS



CASHMERE

1.1.3



Critical

For auditing purposes, the organization allows access to:

- a. All the locations (including farmland, buildings, etc.), and processes/practices included within the scope certificate;
- b. All the animals within the scope certificate;
- c. All the documents and records related to the Standard requirements, which may include permits, contracts, pay slips, etc.; and
- d. All the workers (i.e. employed family members, employed staff, contract/agency workers, and *subcontractors*) involved in activities related to the scope certificate, for interviewing without any

² Words or phrases in *italics* are included in “Appendix B: Terms and Definitions” to explain their meaning. Those words or phrases are in *italics* only in their first usage for reference purposes.

restrictions, and in the absence of management as deemed necessary by the audit team and/or to protect the workers’ privacy.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is for the certification body to have a clear picture of the full operation and be able to determine a reasonable sample to audit, in line with the given risk ratings or other criteria as defined by the relevant certification procedures.
- 2) Even if/when the certification body is sampling (e.g. sites to visit, documents to review, or people to interview), the organization shall permit the certification body access to all locations, animals, documents, records, and workers as requested by the *auditor* to cross-check any needed information.



1.1.4 The organization has a written, up-to-date management plan in place, which includes the following:

Major

- a. The management objectives; and
- b. A description of the resources to be managed.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The management plan shall reflect the current operating circumstances of the organization.
- 2) The management plan shall be reviewed at least annually and updated whenever necessary, including to incorporate any improvements made to the overall management system based on gained experience or audit findings.
- 3) The management plan shall be appropriate to the *scale* and *intensity* of the operation, i.e. the larger and/or more complex the operation, the more detailed the management plan is expected to be.
- 4) The management plan does not need to be a single document. This could be a series of technical documents (i.e. specific plans required under different criteria, given the intended scope) which serve the purpose of guiding the activities within the certified operations.



1.1.5 The organization’s written management plan includes the following additional details:

Recomm

- a. A description of the resources to be managed, including the environmental conditions and limitations, the local socioeconomic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands; and
- b. Strategies for *waste* management, including reduction, reuse, recycling, and/or composting of *organic waste*.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Although this is a leadership criterion, all organizations are encouraged to align their management plan with these additional criteria.



1.1.6 If contractors are used, the organization ensures that all relevant requirements related to contracting in the Standard are met. The organization clearly communicates the expectations of the Standard to its contractors.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This is a general requirement with the objective of raising awareness that there are additional requirements, in other sections of the standard, for whenever contracting activities specific to the scope certificate happen.


1.1.7
The organization maintains complete and up-to-date records of relevant documents to demonstrate its conformity with all applicable certification requirements.

 Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Records shall be updated as necessary to maintain conformity with the Standard.
- 2) The methodology for record keeping shall be well established and known by the relevant workers, including how and where records are kept and who is responsible for them.


1.1.8
All records required by the Standard are retained by the organization for a minimum of five (5) years.

 Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) New candidate organizations for certification can show conformance by retaining relevant records from the date of application or certification. There is no need for the certification body to request records prior to the time the organization was certified.


1.1.10
The organization complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization must be able to present information that demonstrates compliance with applicable laws and regulations relevant to the activities included in the scope certificate, whenever the certification body deems this necessary for audit evaluation.
- 2) While the auditor conducts a systematic review of how the organization is addressing the relevant standard requirements, if the auditor identifies any noncompliance with laws and regulations, then a corrective action shall be issued.
- 3) Any current noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations by the organization shall be addressed with the relevant agency. The essential element is that the organization shows awareness and willingness to rectify the situation, adopting measures to avoid the same case from occurring in the future.


1.1.11
The organization completes, on a yearly basis, the farm or *facility* questionnaire, including geospatial data using a system developed by Textile Exchange, which requests self-reported data and information that is used for monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

 Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The applicable questionnaire (farm or facility — depending on the type of site being evaluated) shall be provided by the certification body to the organization, with additional instructions for completing the information.



1.2 Shared Responsibilities

1.2.1 For each procedure, plan, and policy, the organization has assigned a *competent employee* as responsible for its implementation.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Each procedure shall have a responsible person assigned to it who has sufficient and appropriate resources to fulfill the procedure, even for outsourced services.
- 2) Depending on the organization's size, one person could become responsible for multiple functions as long as it is clear whose responsibility is the implementation of a specific procedure.



1.2.2 All procedures, plans and policies are reviewed at least annually by the responsible person and updated as necessary.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The objective is that the organization's procedures are maintained up-to-date for all current activities. Hence, the requirement is that the responsible person reads/reviews the documents at least annually and, if anything needs to be updated, modify the documents accordingly.
- 2) A means of verification by the certification body is to check if the documents contain up-to-date information, based on current conditions verified on site.



1.2.3 Workers have access to the Standard and are aware of the requirements relevant to their assigned responsibilities.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviewed workers demonstrate general knowledge of the Standard criteria relevant to their role and are able to describe what to do during situations when undertaking their specific duties.



1.2.4 Relevant procedures are available in written and/or visual form to workers in a language they understand.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Relevant procedures (e.g. handbooks, pictograms, or posters), must be made available to workers according to their local context and academic capacities. As applicable, procedures may include *euthanasia*, shearing, castration, *tail docking*, transportation, handling live animals, *stunning* and slaughtering processes for the slaughtered species, among others. The organization shall develop its procedures according to the type of organization and its specific needs for offering training to its workers.



1.2.5 Workers receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the Standard, including the organization’s management plan, procedures, and policies.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Training for all workers shall happen at least annually, as a reminder of key procedures and policies. Additional or specific training should be conducted as necessary to ensure that workers are knowledgeable and competent to perform their duties. Specific cases when training would be necessary include new hired workers, new procedures, nonconformity/issue identified, etc.).
- 2) The certification body shall verify conformance through observation of workers’ and supervisors’ performance on site, the review of training records (e.g. list of attendees, material used for trainings, pictures, etc.), and by interviewing workers and supervisors to verify their level of knowledge on key issues.



1.2.6 The organization maintains detailed records of completed training events.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Training records should include the training dates, names and qualifications of the people providing training, title/description of the training event, and names of attendees.
- 2) According to criterion 1.1.8, records shall be retained for at least five years.



Principle 2 – Human Rights and Livelihoods

The organization respects human rights and livelihoods across its scope of activities, including labor rights. The organization follows due diligence standards, conducting *risk assessments* to identify critical risks based on its sector, location, and product. By prioritizing management systems to mitigate these risks and respond to threats to human rights, the organization demonstrates progress over time.

Notes about this Principle:

The level of conformity for some criteria in this principle varies depending on the type and size of the organization. The definitions for small, medium, and large producers and facilities are as follows:

Tier 4	Small	Medium	Large
Raw material production (sheep wool, mohair, alpaca, down)	A farm that is not structurally dependent on hired workers*. May be operated mostly by the farmer's family members.	N/A	A farm that is structurally dependent on hired workers*.
First processing stage (all materials)	Facility with ≤ 5 hired workers*.	Facility with > 5 and ≤ 25 hired workers*.	Facility with > 25 hired workers*.

* Hired workers: can be full-time and part-time employees, temporary workers, and seasonal workers (excluding contractors).

2.1 Policies, Management Systems, and Records

2.1.1



The organization has a publicly available, written commitment to respect all human rights, as recognized in international agreements and guidelines*, in its own operations and across its supply chain, including to:

- a. Avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts to human rights;
- b. Address existing or potential adverse impacts to human rights, based on the organization's connection to the impact (cause, contribution, or linkage); and
- c. Provide for, or cooperate with others in providing, fair, and just remedy in the case of adverse impacts to human rights (whichever applies, based on cause, contribution, or linkage).

***Specifically, the OECD Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct and the OECD Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains and Garment and Footwear Sector, which are rooted in the UN Guiding Principles (UNGP) on Business and Human Rights.**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about the organization's commitment to protect human rights within the organization and its supply chain.
- 2) Small producer: A commitment is in place, though may not yet be publicly available.
- 3) Large producer: A written commitment is in place and publicly available.
- 4) Facility (any size): A written commitment is in place and publicly available.
- 5) Available guidance will include the list of all applicable international agreements and guidelines that apply — either list full publications or individual declarations.



2.1.2


The organization has clear, written policies and codes of conduct, accessible to relevant stakeholders, to meet its commitment to respect internationally recognized human rights which outline the objectives, strategies, actions and intended outcomes related to each of the following topics, including relevant content from the corresponding section of the Standard:

- a. Stakeholder engagement;
- b. Grievance mechanism;
- c. Remuneration;
- d. Working hours;
- e. *Child labor*;
- f. *Forced labor*;
- g. *Freedom of association and collective bargaining*;
- h. Discrimination;
- i. Harassment and abuse;
- j. Health and safety;
- k. Workers' housing; and
- l. *Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' rights*.

Note: Per 1.2.2, the policies and codes of conduct are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. Per 1.2.4, all policies are easily accessible to all workers.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about having policies explaining how the organization is going to meet its commitments to respect human rights.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: All priority policies are in place and fully implemented.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: All priority policies are in place and fully implemented.
- 6) The organization is not necessarily expected to have policies on all of the listed topics, but rather should be able to:
 - Demonstrate its understanding of which *rightsholders* in its operations and supply chains are most vulnerable to human rights violations;
 - Identify the most salient human rights issues affecting them; and
 - Develop policies for those priority topics which demonstrate how the organization will appropriately manage the issues and adjust or develop new policies in line with the organization's ongoing due diligence and/or any changes to its saliency assessment over time.
- 7) The organization shall provide its written policies and codes of conduct to relevant stakeholders upon request if they are not publicly available/accessible.


2.1.3


The organization has identified, assessed, and documented the human rights risks associated with its operations and supply chains, maintains a list of indicators of those risks, and conducts regular assessment updates as conditions evolve. The risk assessment prioritizes the most salient (adverse) risks, by considering the severity and the likelihood of any actual or potential risks of infringement to any of the internationally recognized human rights; in particular those outlined below and in the following sections of the Standard:

- a. Remuneration;
- b. Working hours;
- c. Child labor;
- d. Forced labor;
- e. Freedom of association and collective bargaining;
- f. Discrimination;

- g. Harassment and abuse;
- h. Health and safety;
- i. Workers’ housing; and
- j. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities’ rights.

Note: Per the UNGP/OECD, “severity” refers to the scale (how serious), scope (how widespread), and remediability (how easy or possible it is to return rightsholders to their former state — prior to the human rights violation); “likelihood” considers the nature of the business activity, the operating context and business relationships; and takes into account any mitigation measures already in place.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about identifying potential human rights risks within the organization’s operations and its supply chains. It is expected this risk assessment informs the prioritization and effective action on the part of the organization, as described further in the following criteria (see Management Systems, Labor Rights and Social Justice themes below).
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is applicable in a simplified way, which is not necessarily formalized but must be evidenced by actions undertaken on the production site.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Producer group member: This criterion can be met at the group level.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is applicable in a simplified way, which is not necessarily formalized but must be evidenced by actions undertaken on the production site.
- 6) Medium and large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.4

Minor

The organization maps and maintains an up-to-date record of its suppliers and service providers/contractors involved in the production of the relevant material, including the following:

- a. For each supplier:
 - i. Name;
 - ii. Address/location
 - iii. Type of supplier;
 - iv. Type of contract;
 - v. Materials received; and
 - vi. Volumes received.
- b. For each service provider/contractor:
 - i. Name;
 - ii. Address/location
 - iii. Type of contractor;
 - iv. Type of contract; and
 - v. Service(s) provided.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about mapping the supply chain.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The supply chain mapping is in place; it is complete and regularly updated.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: Supply chain mapping is in place; it is complete and regularly updated.
- 6) The expectation is that a risk-based approach will be used if the organization is not able to conduct a full mapping of its supply chain at the time of the audit. The organization shall focus on suppliers and contractors to whom the most salient

(adverse) human rights issues are most likely to occur (e.g. prioritizing the mapping of all labor providers over suppliers of machinery).



2.1.5

Minor

The organization engages with its stakeholders in accordance with the following:

- a. The organization has a written, publicly available commitment to actively engage with its identified stakeholders to meet their right to meaningful and effective participation in decisions which may affect them; and
- b. The organization maintains a record of the stakeholders who may be impacted by the organization’s activities (i.e. a stakeholders’ map).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about the organization’s engagement with stakeholders (some of which could be rightsholders).
- 2) Small producer: In situations where vulnerable groups have been identified based on the organization’s risk assessment and their engagement is necessary to address salient human rights risk, this criterion is implemented; otherwise, it is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The stakeholder engagement plan is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the plan is regularly updated.
- 4) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 5) Small facility: In situations where vulnerable groups have been identified based on the organization’s risk assessment and their engagement is necessary to address salient human rights risk, this criterion is implemented; otherwise, it is a recommendation.
- 6) Medium and large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) For full conformity, there is a publicly available commitment, record of stakeholders (i.e. stakeholders’ map), and the stakeholder engagement plan.
- 8) Stakeholder mapping should consider the following, at a minimum:
 - Workers;
 - Local communities;
 - Indigenous peoples;
 - Local businesses; and
 - Organizations that support or advocate for rightsholders (e.g. civil society organizations, independent unions, etc.).



2.1.6

Recomm

The organization has assessed the risk of impacts of its current activities on its identified stakeholders (i.e. a risk assessment). The organization also has and implements a stakeholder engagement plan based on the results of the organization’s stakeholder mapping and risk analysis (criterion 2.1.3) and engages with stakeholders in accordance with that plan. The organization’s engagement plan includes:

- a. The expected periodicity of engagement with each rightsholder/stakeholder (for example, once per year or once every month);
- b. A schedule for the implementation of specific consultation activities over a twelve (12) month period; and
- c. A written procedure for recording feedback received and actions taken.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The means of verification for conformance with this criterion are the existence of a publicly available commitment; the record of stakeholders (i.e. stakeholders’ map); and the stakeholder engagement plan.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.

- 3) Large producer: The stakeholder engagement plan is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the plan is regularly updated.
- 4) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Medium and large facility: Criterion fully applies.



2.1.7

Major

The organization has a grievance mechanism which:

- a. Aligns with the UN Guiding Principles’ Effectiveness Criteria for Non-Judicial Grievance Mechanisms (Legitimate, Accessible, Predicable, Equitable, Transparent, Rights compatible, a source of continuous learning and based on engagement and dialogue);
- b. Relies on rightsholders’ engagement for its design, implementation and monitoring (per criterion 2.1.5);
- c. Includes procedures for receiving and addressing complaints from workers and other stakeholders, as well as internal and external remediation guidelines; and
- d. Shares the procedures and guidelines with workers upon hiring, and with all stakeholders when those procedures and guidelines are developed and if/when changes are made.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.



2.1.8

Major

The organization maintains a record of grievances, remediation actions and timelines (e.g. date the grievance is received and date it was effectively resolved).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.



2.1.9

 Major

The organization protects the confidentiality and safety of affected parties, including by safeguarding their anonymity (when requested and lawful), managing anonymous grievances like any other matter.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.


2.1.10

 Major

The organization investigates reports submitted through their grievance mechanism and takes necessary corrective actions.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.


2.1.11

 Major

The organization prohibits all forms of retaliation against those who submit grievances in good faith.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how grievances related to the organization’s conformity with the Standard shall be handled.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is not applicable.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 6) Large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if grievants are found to be retaliated against.



2.1.12


Major

The organization has a recruitment management system in place, which:

- a. Is aligned with all local and regional regulations;
- b. Applies to all workers, including those recruited via third-party hiring agencies;
- c. Includes verification of the age of workers; and
- d. Ensures that no fees are collected from workers as a condition for their recruitment, per the *Employer Pays Principle*.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about how workers are recruited.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.13


Major

The organization ensures that workers hired for year-round tasks are hired directly, rather than contracted or secured through a third-party hiring agency. The organization ensures that contracted workers used for tasks that cannot be considered year-round are provided and expected to have the same labor rights as the organization’s directly hired workers.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: this criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 2) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Some exceptions may apply if workers are hired through an established national employment program, such as a work visa program.



2.1.14


Major

The organization ensures that wages are paid in a timely manner and are not withheld under any circumstance. It also ensures that all wages and benefits are paid directly by the organization to the workers themselves, with the expectation that all workers are afforded all legally applicable social protections.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 2) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.15

 Major

The organization maintains documentation on how contracted third-party hiring agencies recruit and pay the workers, where applicable. It maintains agreements with third-party hiring agencies, where applicable, which include:

- a. The right of the organization to perform annual inspections to verify conformance with labor rights criteria of the Standard; and
- b. For the organization, certification body, and Textile Exchange to have access to the workers' documentation and interview them when requested.

The recruitment management system includes procedures for the organization's annual inspection of its third-party hiring agencies, where applicable, to verify their conformity with the criteria of the Human Rights and Livelihoods principle of the Standard, and with the Labor Rights criteria (i.e. theme 2.2) in particular.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for organizations which contract with a third-party hiring agency.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation, noting that small-scale producers are nevertheless expected to comply with all applicable laws and will be audited accordingly.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.1.16

 Major

The organization maintains, for all its workers, written employment records, including the following:

- a. Maintaining confidentiality, the records are accessible to the workers by their request, and a copy of their contracts should systematically be provided in a format and language that they can easily understand;
- b. Each worker's record includes written contracts and supporting documentation for hiring; and
- c. The organization maintains additional records for young workers under the age of eighteen (18) years, detailing any potential risks or *hazards* associated with their work, and how these are being monitored to protect them.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about specific employment records that the organization must retain.
- 2) Small producer: If the organization employs any workers, the criterion is fully implemented; otherwise, it is not applicable.
- 3) Large producer: The organization has a full employment record system in place.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.1.17

 Major

All contracts are signed by both the worker and employer (i.e. the organization or contractor), prior to employment. And the employment contracts/agreements include at least:

- a. The date of birth of the worker, complete with age verification;
- b. Job description;
- c. Working hours and pay rate;
- d. Location of workplace, employer name and address;
- e. Contract length (start and end dates), complete with contract renewal provisions, conditions for early termination by the worker (with/without reasonable notice) and by the employer;
- f. Daily break time;

- g. Wage rates including overtime hours, payment methods and frequency, deductions from salary; and
- h. Benefits and leave provided, and repatriation terms (for overseas workers, this includes who arranges travel/pays).

 INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about specific employment records that the organization must retain.
- 2) Small producer: If the organization employs any workers, the criterion is fully implemented; otherwise, it is not applicable.
- 3) Large producer: The organization has a full employment record system in place.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.18


Contractors keep similar records as detailed in 2.1.16 and 2.1.17 above, which are made accessible to the organization and auditors upon request. The organization keeps a record of all policies and procedures which have been passed on to contractors.

 INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about specific employment records that the organization must retain.
- 2) Small producer: If the organization employs any workers, the criterion is fully implemented; otherwise, it is not applicable.
- 3) Large producer: The organization has a full employment record system in place.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.19


Following applicable national and regional regulations, the organization's remuneration management system tracks the following for each worker:

- a. Daily start and end times;
- b. Total payment amount for regular working hours, or 48 hours per week³, whichever is lower;
- c. Total overtime payment for work performed over regular working hours;
- d. Pay rates for different units of pay (e.g. per unit of time, task or piece), quota amounts, overtime rates, disincentive pay, efficiency pay, etc.;
- e. Payment structures (including mixed job scenarios, piece work, quota-based, casual/as-needed work, etc.);
- f. Number of days of paid leave and unpaid leave earned and used, including for holiday, vacation, sick time, maternity leave, etc.;
- g. Daily break times, including for meals or before overtime begins; and
- h. Work status (e.g. formal, informal/casual/without social security, temporary visa, contractor labor, etc.).

 INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about payment (i.e. remuneration) for workers.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.

³ In the context of the Standard, a week refers to seven (7) days.

4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.20



Minor

The organization has a written procedure, accessible to all workers, which clearly explains its remuneration management system, such that:

- a. Workers understand how their remuneration is determined (based on applicable national and regional regulations), including:
 - i. The unit basis of pay;
 - ii. The guaranteed cash earnings that they should expect; and
 - iii. Any performance-based earnings or other bonuses and benefits;
- b. Workers know when to expect their remuneration and how to read their pay slips;
- c. Workers understand that they have a right to review their information and know what to do if they have questions, would like to review their information, and/or believe that their payment is incorrect;
- d. All pay slips are translated in a language that workers fully understand, and/or are explained verbally to workers who are illiterate; and
- e. There can be no illegal deductions of wages. Wages are paid in a timely manner and cannot be withheld under any circumstance.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about ensuring that workers understand their payment/remuneration.
- 2) Small producer: Workers must understand their remuneration and be afforded reasonable opportunity to question remuneration, which auditors shall verify via worker interviews. The other components of this criterion are recommendations.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.1.21



Recomm

The organization is actively working towards providing a living wage to all workers by:

- a. Identifying a recognized *local living wage benchmark*, according to forthcoming guidance;
- b. Tracking the living wage gap for all workers, not only the lowest paid workers, acknowledging that these figures can change over time;
- c. Having a written roadmap describing how the organization plans to progress towards achieving a living wage for all its workers, including what might be needed from other stakeholders; and
- d. Implementing its living wage plan and increasing wages to equal a recognized living wage benchmark.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about identifying a local living wage benchmark and setting a plan to meet it.
- 2) Producer (any size): This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Facility (any size): This criterion is a recommendation.
- 4) This criterion requires appointing a sufficiently knowledgeable person, with relevant expertise and/or training, as having responsibility for regularly reviewing living wage plans.



2.2 Labor Rights

2.2.1 The organization protects the health and safety of all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers), in accordance with applicable national and regional regulations.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place, undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.2 The organization implements preventative health and safety measures, training, and procedures to control any workplace hazards identified by its risk assessment which are, as a minimum, aligned with legal requirements or relevant international conventions — whichever affords the workers’ (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) greater protection.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.3 The organization ensures that at least one worker at each site has completed first-aid training within the last five (5) years.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.2.4

 Major

The organization ensures all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) are provided clear instructions on safe usage of machinery and maintains clear signage to identify areas or equipment that are potentially hazardous.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.5

 Major

First-aid equipment is available to all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers), as well as accessible and commensurate with the potential risks of the organizations' operations.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.6

 Major

The organization ensures health checks are carried out for all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) where the law requires it, and guarantees the results are not used in discriminatory ways.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.7

 Major

The organization provides all workers (i.e. both direct workers and contracted workers) unrestricted access to clean, safe sanitation facilities (at least toilets and wash basins), and clean, safe drinking water to all workers while on site.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.8

 Major

The organization provides appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) free of charge to all workers (i.e. both direct and contracted workers), as well as training on the proper usage of PPE, and bi-annual drills, free of charge.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.9

 Major

The organization ensures machinery is appropriately maintained to limit hazards, and dangerous parts are guarded or encased.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about conformance with organizational health and safety measures.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.10

 Recomm

The organization monitors the effects of extreme weather events (e.g. droughts, heatwaves, etc.) on all workers' health and safety, and introduces appropriate shift modifications to prevent adverse impacts.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 2) Large producer: A monitoring process is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the corresponding action plan is regularly updated.
- 3) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: A monitoring process is in place, active stakeholder engagement is taking place, and the corresponding action plan is regularly updated.


2.2.11

 Major

The organization does not discriminate against any person for any reason, and takes actions to prevent discrimination of any kind in the workplace, through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization develops and implements employment procedures which identify and prevent discrimination, including through recruitment, compensation, benefits, work assignments, access to training, advancement, discipline, termination or retirement;
- b. The organization develops and implements a *remediation plan* for any identified cases of discrimination, which protects and prioritizes the welfare of the victim; and
- c. The organization maintains a record of identified issues, the remediation process, and outcomes.

 INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about ensuring that workers are not discriminated against in the workplace.
- 2) Small producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place; undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement), evidence of continuous improvement on documenting practices across all of the requirements included in this criterion is acceptable.
- 4) Large producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.12


Major

The organization forbids any kind of harassment or abuse, including gender-based-violence for all workers irrespective of their type of contract, and implements the following practices:

- a. The organization abides by all applicable regional and national laws pertaining to harassment or abuse, including gender-based-violence, and provides relevant training to all workers;
- b. Procedures are implemented to identify and prevent forms, and/or threats of verbal, physical, sexual or other harassment and abuse, including gender-based violence;
- c. A remediation plan is implemented for any identified cases, forms, and/or threats of verbal, physical, sexual, or other harassment and abuse, including gender-based violence, which protects and prioritizes the welfare of the victim; and
- d. Records are maintained of identified harassment and abuse cases, the remediation process, and the outcomes.

 INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is designed to ensure that no worker is subjected to any kind of harassment or abuse, including gender-based violence, recognizing certain cross-sections of vulnerable workers are disproportionately targeted.
- 2) Small producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented in situations where vulnerable groups have been identified through the organization's risk assessment; otherwise, it is a recommendation.
- 3) Medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement), evidence of continuous improvement on documenting practices across all of the requirements included in this criterion is acceptable.
- 4) Large producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 6) The level of conformity shall be considered critical if incidences of harassment or abuse are identified and remediation procedures are not implemented.
- 7) Harassment or abuse may be indicated by differences in wages, occupational health and safety protections, contractual dispositions, and/or working hours.



2.2.13

The organization aligns with all applicable local and regional regulations and ensures that its workers are free to exercise their right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, including by becoming members of a workers' association or trade union of their choice, through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization proactively engages, in good faith, with independent trade-unions or other worker representative organizations that are present locally and which currently or could potentially support workers, as national law permits;
- b. Workers are not subjected to discrimination or retaliation measures for exercising their right to freedom of association or collective bargaining;
- c. The organization has and implements a remediation plan for any identified cases of restriction of freedom of association or collective bargaining;
- d. Where national law restricts workers' organizations from operating, the organization supports the establishment of alternative means of workers' organization, such as worker-representative committees;
- e. Where there is an established worker-representative committee, its representatives are elected by workers and the organization offers an enabling environment for representatives' training (including the time necessary to carry out their duties);
- f. The organization recognizes and implements applicable sectoral *collective bargaining agreements*;
- g. The organization offers awareness-raising sessions to all workers (irrespective of whether they are affiliated to any worker organization or not) on their freedom of association; and
- h. The organization respects the independence of workers' organizations and is not involved in any way with regard to representing or providing funding which may influence their activities.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about freedom of association and collective bargaining rights for workers.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Small facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement); undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 4) Medium facility: This criterion is fully applicable. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through worker engagement), evidence of continuous improvement on documenting practices across all of the requirements included in this criterion is acceptable.
- 5) Large producer/facility: This criterion is fully applicable.
- 6) Producer group member: This criterion may be met at the group level.
- 7) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if workers are found to be subjected to discrimination or retaliation measures.

**2.2.14**

The organization manages fair working hours for its workers through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization records the actual working hours for workers during each day of work, including the start time at the moment that they enter the site and the end time at the moment that they leave the site;
- b. The organization communicates expected working hours to its workers and their representatives in a transparent manner; and
- c. The organization keeps regular working hours to within (whichever is lower):
 - i. Legally established regular working hours;
 - ii. Collective bargaining agreement (CBA) negotiated working hours; or
 - iii. Forty-eight (48) hours a week.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about working hours.
- 2) Producers and facilities (any size): The criterion is fully implemented, except where there are no workers.


2.2.15


Major

The organization ensures that workers receive at least one day of rest in seven. Besides, the organization does not require overtime work, and ensures that voluntary overtime hours (hours beyond the regular working hours) comply with (whichever provides more protection to the workers):

- a. Legal limits,
- b. CBA negotiated limits, or
- c. Do not exceed twelve (12) hours in the week.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about overtime.
- 2) Producers and facilities (any size): The criterion is fully implemented, except where there are no workers.
- 3) Exemptions to the criterion are permissible under exceptional circumstances, which meet the following requirements:
 - Overtime is always voluntary;
 - The overtime is necessary for specific activities that must be completed within a window of up to 6 weeks to prevent adverse impacts to production;
 - The maximum period is 12 weeks per year;
 - Overtime is capped at 24 hours total per week, with workers working a maximum of 21 consecutive days; and
 - Following the overtime period, affected workers are given time off in line with the worked time (e.g. after 21 consecutive days workers should accrue 7 days of rest).
- 4) The producer/facility should be able to demonstrate that the situation is truly an exceptional circumstance and not a regular practice, e.g. through having a production plan which is based on working time within limits, employing enough workers, etc.


2.2.16


Major

Through its remuneration management system, the organization pays at least the applicable minimum wage to all workers for work performed during the defined regular working hours, in accordance with:

- a. The applicable regional or national legal minimum wage;
- b. The CBA negotiated wage; or
- c. The industry standard wage, whichever is higher.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers' remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers' contracts, organizational policies, and the organization's remuneration management system.



2.2.17



Through its remuneration management system, the organization pays a premium for any voluntary overtime according to (whichever is higher):

- a. What is legally required;
- b. What has been negotiated through a CBA;
- c. The industry standard; or
- d. The sum of 125% of regular wage.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers’ remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers’ contracts, organizational policies, and the organization’s remuneration management system.



2.2.18



The organization’s remuneration management system ensures that:

- a. Payments for all working hours are made according to legal requirements, or at least twice a month, whichever is greater;
- b. Workers are paid on time and in a form which is acceptable to them; and
- c. Workers receive paid annual leave (holiday and vacation), medical leave, and maternity leave.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers’ remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers’ contracts, organizational policies, and the organization’s remuneration management system.



2.2.19



The organization’s remuneration management system ensures that, if labor contractors are used, they meet the same requirements for their workers, and provide documentation to the organization on how their workers are hired and paid.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This requirement is about workers’ remuneration.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer and facility with workers.
- 3) Small producer, small and medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented. An informal record system is acceptable.
- 4) For all: Conformity with this criterion shall be verified by reviewing workers’ contracts, organizational policies, and the organization’s remuneration management system.



2.2.20 If the organization offers loans to its workers:


 Minor

- a. The loan system is within legal limits;
- b. The aggregate amount of a worker’s loan and salary advances cannot exceed 50% of one month’s base wage, and the monthly loan payment cannot exceed 10% of the base monthly wage;
- c. Terms and conditions are documented, including the loan request from the worker; and
- d. Any interest rate charged to workers:
 - i. Does not put undue burden on them for repayment and/or bind them to the job; and
 - ii. Does not exceed that set by government-regulated financial institutions, or the prevailing market lending rates in the region.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intent of this criterion is to avoid instances of debt bondage, which is commonly considered a marker of forced labor.
- 2) This criterion is applicable for any size of producer or facility that offers (or intends to offer) loans to its workers.


2.2.21 The organization prevents and/or remediates child labor in its operations through implementation of the following practices:


 Major

- a. Children under the national or regional minimum legal working age (as applicable) are prohibited from working;
- b. Wherever young people between the minimum legal age and eighteen (18) years of age do work or are present in the workplace, the organization has and implements a plan that ensures that their work does not interfere with their schooling and that they are not exposed to hazardous work; and
- c. Children who are present on the farm/at the facility, but not working (e.g. who may be living on site), are protected from harm (e.g. by restricting access to hazardous operations, being supervised by a dedicated adult, etc.).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about prevention of child labor.
- 2) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 3) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.


2.2.22 The organization has and implements a remediation plan, which considers the best interest of the young person, for:


 Major

- a. Any identified cases of child labor;
 - b. The exposure of young people to hazards; and/or
 - c. The interference with education which the organization has directly or indirectly contributed to.
- Moreover, the organization maintains a record of all incidences, remediation actions, and outcomes related to child labor or exposure of young people to hazardous work.**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about the remediation of child labor.
- 2) Remediation shall be informed by expert organizations that specialize in child labor remediation or a child labor monitoring system, where possible.

- 3) Producer (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.
- 5) Level of conformity shall increase to critical if the worst forms of child labor are identified (per ILO Convention No. 182).
- 6) Level of conformity shall increase to critical if identification of child labor does not result in timely remediation measures (see forthcoming guidance).
- 7) Hazardous work is defined as work which could jeopardize a young person’s health, safety, or emotional development, and includes nighttime or overtime.



2.2.23

Major

The organization ensures that it does not engage in any form of forced labor through implementation of the following practices:

- a. Development and implementation of a remediation plan which protects and prioritizes the welfare of the worker in the event that the organization’s risk assessment finds any risk indicators of forced or bonded labor;
- b. Maintaining a record of any identified issues (including discrimination, harassment/abuse, and forced or bonded labor), as well as the remediation process/outcomes;
- c. Not withholding workers’ belongings or documents such as passports, visas or other personal documents of workers; and
- d. Not withholding wages as a penalty or to force workers to work as a payment against debt to the organization.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about prevention of forced labor.
- 2) Small producer: The criterion is implemented, with an understanding that more time may be necessary for remediation.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Small facility: This criterion is implemented, with an understanding that more time may be necessary for remediation.
- 5) Medium and large facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 6) Level of conformity shall be considered critical if forced labor is identified without the activation of the organization’s remediation plan.
- 7) The expectation is that the organization does not engage in any of the risk areas identified through its risk assessment.
- 8) In cases where personal documents are kept as a service to workers for security purposes, it is based on a voluntary decision by the workers and secure storage facilities are provided, which enable them to access their own belongings directly and without restriction (note: this does not constitute withholding of documentation which is commonly regarded as an indicator of forced labor, and should not be regarded as such, provided the auditor ascertains unrestricted access on the part of workers).



2.2.24

Major

When the organization provides housing to individual workers, or to workers and their families, the following applies:

- a. Housing meets either of the following, whichever is higher:
 - i. The space, safety, hygiene, and comfort specifications in the accompanying guidance, which follows ILO Recommendation, Workers’ Housing Recommendation, 1961 (No. 115); and ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Agriculture, 2010; or
 - ii. National legal requirements;
- b. The organization provides workers that are housed on site with safe and *well-ventilated* cooking facilities, and with clean, safe drinking water, and sanitation and cleaning facilities 24/7; and
- c. Any children who live on site are in a safe place during the workday and have access to age-appropriate schooling.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is designed to protect all workers against unhealthy living quarters (especially in the absence of relevant legal requirements) and thus is only applicable when workers are housed in accommodation provided, on or off site, by the organization.
- 2) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 3) Large producer: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Facility (any size): The criterion is fully implemented.



2.3 Social Justice

2.3.1


Major

The organization addresses Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities’ (IP/LC) issues through implementation of the following practices:

- a. The organization respects IP/LC’s rights and enjoyment of their rights, as defined by local laws and customs, and international conventions and declarations;
- b. The organization does not engage in any actions that might affect the value of IP/LC’s resources, limit their access to lands where they live or have the right to use, or infringe on the special connection they enjoy with those lands as necessary for their physical and cultural survival;
- c. The organization has and implements documented procedures and practices which prevent and address risks to IP/LC’s rights including, where applicable, engaging in *Free, Prior, and Informed Consent* (FPIC) prior to any land acquisition or development, as well as law assessment, social baseline assessment and/or land tenure and use study as needed;
- d. The organization has and implements a remediation plan for any identified cases of infringement of IP/LC’s rights, including those caused by potential environmental harms; and
- e. The organization implements a zero-tolerance approach to retaliating against forest, land and human rights defenders.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is about respecting Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities’ rights.
- 2) Small producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented. Provided practices are in place (as evidenced through stakeholder engagement), undocumented processes are acceptable.
- 3) Large producer/facility: The criterion is fully implemented.
- 4) Medium facility: The criterion is fully implemented, though the details may not be fully articulated.
- 5) Per this Standard’s requirement that organizations remedy adverse impacts and respect FPIC principles, additional guidance will specify expectations for conducting operations.
- 6) Level of conformity shall increase to critical if identification of IP/LC right violations does not result in timely remediation measures. Further guidance will be available.



2.4 Livelihoods

2.4.1


Recomm

The organization assesses the prices that it pays to raw material suppliers on an annual basis to ensure its payments are at or above established national and regional minimum or living wages, as applicable.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.



2.4.2


Recomm

The organization assesses the impacts of its procurement practices and adjusts prices, accordingly, including adjusting purchasing prices for inflation on an annual basis.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.



2.4.3


Recomm

The organization engages in fair and two-way negotiations with all suppliers, contractors, and third-party agencies.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.



2.4.4


Recomm

The organization engages with its upstream and downstream supply chain to work towards achieving a living wage (or living income, as appropriate).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Facilities (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 2) Producers (any size): This criterion is recommended.
- 3) Effective implementation may require collaboration with supply chain partners to scale wages, benefits, and investments in decent work.



2.5 Management of Waste Collection for Recycled Inputs

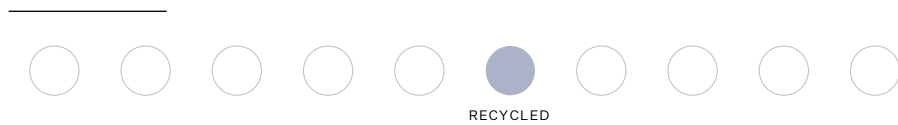
Theme 2.5 applies to all organizations (of any size) managing waste collection for recycled inputs.

Textile Exchange acknowledges a considerable share of waste-picking currently relies on the informal economy and thus practices and systems must be built and reinforced to meet these requirements. Globally recognized principles (e.g. [Fair Circularity Principles](#) and various national and supranational due diligence laws) require that companies progress towards implementing such practices and systems.

2.5.1



The organization has and maintains a record of formal and informal waste pickers (who provide input material) and sorters, including company information or, if individuals, their name, date of birth, and contact information.

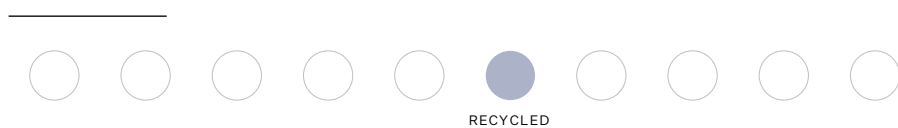


2.5.2



The organization has and implements a procedure for transparently recording the inputs received from each waste picker or sorter, which includes:

- a. Date inputs received;
- b. Description of inputs;
- c. Quantity of inputs; and
- d. Pay given for the inputs received.

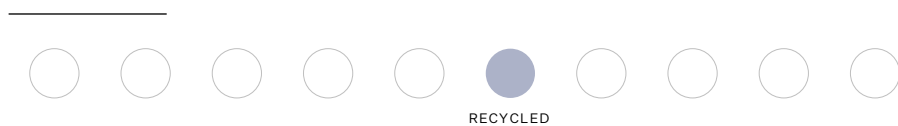


2.5.3



The organization has identified, assessed, and documented the human rights risks specifically associated with waste collection and sorting, maintains a list of indicators of those risks, and conducts regular assessments of risk as conditions evolve. The organization’s risk assessment considers the likelihood, severity and nature of the following potential risks associated with waste collection and sorting:

- a. Child labor, including educational impacts;
- b. Forced labor, including identifying the most vulnerable groups of workers; and
- c. Health and safety, including the consideration of potential hazards of local waste collection, and relevant laws and regulations.



2.5.4



The organization has a process for directly engaging with informal waste pickers and sorters, and with workers for formal waste pickers and sorters, on a regular basis, and ensures that they are able and comfortable to access the organization’s grievance mechanisms.





2.5.5

The organization implements risk mitigation and remediation procedures specifically associated with waste collection and sorting, as necessary.



Minor



Principle 5 – Processing Facility

The organization responsible for the initial processing of *certified materials* within its facilities adopts an environmental management system. This system encompasses proper chemical usage, waste management, water utilization, handling wastewater and *effluents*, air emissions, and energy consumption. Processing facilities are required to enhance resource management through efficiency and continuous improvement.

5.1 Environmental Management System

5.1.1

Major

The organization has an environmental management system (EMS) in place, which includes:

- A designated management level staff person who is responsible for its implementation;
- A procedure for updating the EMS to remain in compliance with applicable legal requirements;
- A procedure for documenting, measuring, and tracking the relevant environmental indicators (e.g. energy use, water use, wastewater/effluent, emissions to air, waste management);
- A plan to develop/review targets annually, and reach meaningful environmental improvements across all indicators (energy use, water use, emissions to air, waste management);
- Procedures and records for training of relevant workers in environmental issues; and
- Updated permits, as required/applicable.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- The environmental management system is appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations.



5.2 Chemical Management and Restrictions

Theme 5.2 addresses the management and use of chemicals by the organization in the manufacturing of certified materials. Even if produced in conformance with the Standard, certified materials may carry traces of residues. Hence, it is the responsibility of the final sellers of certified products to consumers to ensure that the final products being sold meet their own or nominated restricted substance list (RSL), or any legal requirements in the country of sale.

To address the issue of chemicals that might be present in the reclaimed materials that are used as initial inputs in the production chain for recycling, refer to criterion 5.2.15 which focuses on monitoring and testing recycled outputs (*pellets, flakes, filaments, and fibers*) for restricted substances.

5.2.1

Major

The organization has a chemical management system (CMS) in place, which includes the following:

- A mechanism to monitor and meet all the relevant legal requirements related to chemical management;
- Procedures for training of relevant workers in chemical management and, where necessary, training to properly manage the CMS;
- Complete information on all input suppliers, including street address and key contacts; and
- Accurate lists of all chemical inputs used in all materials.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) It is not required that an entire position be dedicated to managing the use of chemicals at the facility, but instead that someone has been assigned the role as part of his/her job responsibilities.



5.2.2

Minor

Each input has a complete and current safety data sheet (SDS), available in English and in any other language(s) used by workers in the facility, which meets the guidelines found in criterion 5.2.5.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The safety data sheets are up to date.
- 2) The chemical supplier should be responsible for the English translations of the safety data sheets.



5.2.3

Minor

In addition to the CMS, the organization maintains the following:

- a. Accurate lists of all chemical inputs used in the certified materials, and
- b. Documentation for each input that demonstrates they are accepted for use in the certified materials.



5.2.4

Major

The organization has and implements a procedure for assessing all the chemicals used in certified materials against the criteria in this theme of the Standard (Chemical Management and Restrictions).



5.2.5

Minor

The organization maintains safety data sheets (SDS), for each substance or *mixture* used in production, which are not more than five (5) years old, and meet at least one of the following:

- a. ANSI Z400.1-2004, which identifies information that must be included to comply with the U.S. OSHA Hazard Communication Standard;
- b. Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH), as adapted to consider the rules for SDS of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), and the implementation of other elements of the GHS into EU legislation that were introduced by Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 (CLP); or
- c. Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Any SDS prepared by country-specific norms that are aligned with GHS, or have implemented GHS, is considered compliant to GHS.



5.2.6



Any chemicals used in processing of certified materials do not contain substances of very high concern (SVHC), as referred to in Article 57 of European Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the registration, evaluation, authorization and restriction of chemicals (REACH), and included in Annex XIV of the Regulation.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Substances still under review by REACH, and not yet listed on the SVHC list, may be used in certified products.
- 2) Exemption to the non-use of SVHC listed chemicals, may depend upon specific end purposes of the product such as high performance or athletic wear, etc.



5.2.7



The organization does not use substances or mixtures classified with any of the hazard codes and/or risk phrases listed below:

This list is in accordance with the codification system of the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) as published by the United Nations.

- H300 Fatal if swallowed
- H310 Fatal in contact with skin
- H330 Fatal if inhaled
- H340 May cause genetic defects
- H341 Suspected of causing genetic defects
- H350 May cause cancer
- H351 Suspected of causing cancer
- H360 May damage fertility or the unborn child
- H361 Suspected of damaging fertility or the unborn child
- H370 Causes damage to organs
- H371 May cause damage to organs
- H372 Causes damage to organs through prolonged or repeated exposure
- H400 Very toxic to aquatic life
- H410 Very toxic to aquatic life with long-lasting effects
- H411 Toxic to aquatic life with long-lasting effects
- H413 May cause long-lasting harmful effects to aquatic life
- H420 Harms public health and the environment by destroying ozone in the upper atmosphere
- H433 Harmful to terrestrial vertebrates

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) "Mixtures" refers to chemical formulations sold by chemical manufacturers, having a recognized SDS for the formulation, not to the mixtures made internally during production by facilities.
- 2) This criterion is applicable to commercial chemical formulations used during material manufacturing, e.g. cleaners, detergents, inks, dyes, pigments, spinning additives, flame retardants and anti-static agents.



5.2.8 The organization implements control technologies and treatments and retains evidence of the resulting recovery of chemicals/solvents and by-products related to its production process.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable only to synthetic fibers, even when the material category is “Recycled”.
- 2) For more information on technologies, treatments, and recovery rates, please refer to “European Commission (EC), Best Available Techniques (BAT) Reference Documents (REF) – EU BREF”; or to available ZDHC guidelines.
- 3) ZDHC Polyester Guideline is scheduled to be released in 2024.



5.2.9 The organization sets targets, implements actions for meaningful improvement in solvent recovery rates, and reviews its progress annually; otherwise, the use of hazardous chemicals is phased out and replaced with safer alternatives.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable only to synthetic fibers, even when the material category is “Recycled”.
- 2) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.2.10 Organotin compounds are not used to manufacture elastane. Lead-based pigments are not used in the manufacturing of polypropylene.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable only to synthetic fibers, even when the material category is “Recycled”.



5.2.11 The organization does not use elemental chlorine for bleaching pulp.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable to both virgin and recycled pulp manufacturing.



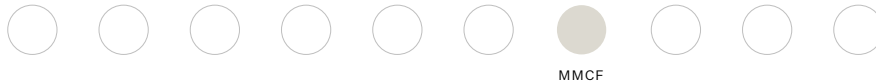
5.2.12

The organization follows the best available techniques for responsible manufacturing of *dissolved grade (DG) pulp/dissolving pulp*.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable to both virgin and recycled pulp manufacturing.
- 2) For “responsible manufacturing” refer to the “EU BREF document for Production of Pulp, Paper and Board”; or to available ZDHC guidelines.
- 3) The ZDHC MMCF Guidelines update is scheduled to include pulp manufacturing from virgin and reclaimed feedstocks.



5.2.13

The organization meets the “Foundational/Progressive/Aspirational Level” requirements for the recovery of chemicals/solvents, as set in the chapter “Responsible Fiber Production” of the “ZDHC MMCF Guidelines”.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable to both virgin and recycled MMCF.
- 2) Refer to the latest version of the ZDHC MMCF Guidelines. The timelines to achieve different levels are set in the latest version of the “ZDHC MMCF Industry Standard Implementation Approach”.
- 3) For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.



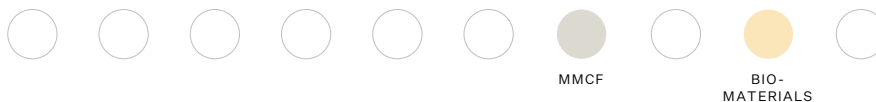
5.2.14

The organization is committed to making a transition towards more innovative processes/fibers, which lead to a greater positive environmental impact, and retains evidence to show how it is moving away from “business as usual” practices, as well as its progress and results to date.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Greater positive environmental impact” means that the process/fibers have one or more of the following attributes:
 - Positive climate impact;
 - No release of toxic chemicals;
 - *Biodegradable*;
 - *Recyclable*; and/or
 - other.



5.2.15

Pellet, flake, filament, or fibrous form recycled outputs are tested for restricted substances prior to further processing, and records of test results are maintained.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Testing is required for Textile Exchange data collection, improved understanding of restricted chemicals’ potential impact on recycling, and knowledge building on recycled materials.

- 2) Test parameters, limit values, test methods, sampling requirements, frequency, etc., shall be conducted using a risk-based approach.
- 3) Recycled wool fibers can follow the Italian Detox Consortium (CID) document that provides parameter and limit values for testing.



5.3 Waste Management

Except where the criterion refers explicitly to reutilization of reclaimed textile material, the criteria in theme 5.3 apply to the management, handling, and disposal of non-fiber related waste generated at the facility.

5.3.1 The organization has a waste management plan in place to minimize pollution and health risks from organic and other production-related waste.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Production-related waste” may include organic, chemical, hazardous, and packaging materials.
- 2) The waste management plan shall include baseline measures, continuous improvement targets, as well as maintaining records of disposal sites.



5.3.2 Procedures for waste inventory, management, storage, and transportation, are in place for all waste streams, which include measures to minimize workers’ health risks, and how to improve environmental safety.

Major



5.3.3 Workers are trained on the proper handling and segregation of waste.

Major



5.3.4 An internal waste inspection is performed annually to establish a baseline measurement and inform the development of continuous improvement targets for the waste management plan.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization’s inspection includes an assessment of a selection of on-site waste disposal and recycling sites and bins, to evaluate the correct implementation of the waste management plan, as well as help guide improvements of processes and training of workers for its implementation.
- 2) The baseline measurement is appropriate to the scale and nature of the operation.



5.3.5 Landfill/incineration avoidance targets are met by five (5) years from initial certification.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Avoidance targets may be based on minimum percentage reductions per waste category and tracked in the waste management plan.



5.3.6 The organization has a reporting system in place, where waste streams are described and quantified relative to the input.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to provide transparency for chemical recycling processes. Often, chemical manufacturers position their processes as solutions to plastic waste; however, when observing how much usable products (base chemicals, gases, and monomers) are coming from their process relative to the amount to feedstocks (on a mass basis), many companies are making gross overstatements about their overall production capabilities.
- 2) The organization shall demonstrate its understanding of conversion ratios relative to the total inputs into the system, following this logic:
 - Process input (feedstocks or raw materials intended for conversion into products): 100kg/hr.
 - Process output (process derivatives that can be sold or further processed downstream into usable products): 75kg/hr.
 - Process waste (products that cannot be sold or utilized by the manufacturer; hence, they are sent to landfills or incinerators): 25kg/hr.



5.3.7 The organization measures and maintains records of the amount of waste produced on a monthly basis.

Major



5.3.8 The organization sets targets for a meaningful reduction in waste production and improvements in waste management and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is that the organization demonstrates its good faith effort to reduce waste. Publicly available targets are not required.
- 2) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.3.9

The organization routinely looks for and implements ways to increase material reuse and/or recycling.

Recomm



5.3.10

Facilities that collect and reutilize certified materials from their own processing (i.e. by-products such as *cotton lint, gin notes, blow room waste, carding waste, comber noils, sliver waste, dyed fiber reject, oligomer waste, etc.*), retain the following records, which can be used to verify their volumes of reutilized certified material:

Major

- a. Records of all materials reutilized back in the process;
- b. A description of the material (by-product), and the stage where it was collected; and
- c. Any other relevant transfer notes.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is an integral component for the Textile Exchange Climate and Nature Impact’s strategy, which reduces the reliance on newly grown fibers or virgin materials and in turn contributes to reducing fossil inputs, soil damage, chemical pollution, and water use. Currently, the primary focus appears to be recycling pre- and post-consumer materials, although there is a wealth of unexplored potential for suppliers and manufacturers to further develop and expand their efforts in terms of circularity.
- 2) Fulfillment of the criterion is not, in any way, linked with recycled product claims; with the exception of materials collected as waste or by-products from the processing of 100% Recycled Material, which may continue to be considered Recycled Material.
- 3) For this criterion, the term “by-product” is as defined by the EU Waste Framework Directive (WFD), Article 5(1).
- 4) “Any other relevant transfer notes” (ref. 5.3.10 c.) could include demonstration of the reduction of virgin inputs required, volume reconciliation (i.e. process loss does not exceed the industry average), resource efficiency, and circular business strategy-targets.



5.3.11

Material recyclers that reutilize inputs that are coming from outside the process, which do not qualify or are not accepted as reclaimed under pre-consumer or post-consumer material, retain the following records to verify their volume of reutilized material:

Major

- a. Records of all such disqualified materials entering the process;
- b. A description of the disqualified material, and the industry from where it was collected; and
- c. Any other relevant transfer notes.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is an integral component for the Textile Exchange Climate and Nature Impact’s strategy, which reduces the reliance on newly grown fibers or virgin materials and in turn contributes to reducing fossil inputs, soil damage, chemical pollution, and water use. Currently, the primary focus appears to be recycling pre- and post-consumer materials, although there is a wealth of unexplored potential for suppliers and manufacturers to further develop and expand their efforts in terms of circularity.
- 2) Fulfillment of the criterion is not, in any way, linked with recycled product claims.
- 3) For more guidance on pre-post-Consumer Reclaimed Textile Material, please refer to the supporting document titled “Textile Exchange Guide to Recycled Inputs”.
- 4) “Any other relevant transfer notes” (ref 5.3.11 c.) could include demonstration of the reduction of virgin inputs required, resource efficiency, and circular business strategy-targets.



5.3.12 **Inputs for recycling are from a textile feedstock and are recycled into outputs that are usable for textile applications.**

 **Recomm**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Textile applications include woven, knitted, and non-woven.



5.3.13 **All waste materials are collected, segregated, and treated properly.**

 **Major**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall demonstrate its efforts towards the conservation of resources and environmental protection through the planning of waste disposal for all types of waste generated on-site, by implementing a hierarchy of waste management through its waste management plan.
- 2) “Treated properly” means implementing the best available method (depending upon the scale and intensity of the operation) for waste management, such as waste handling, storage, and disposal, each designed to address the distinct types of waste and minimize their potential risks.



5.3.14 **Waste collection and recycling programs are used when available.**

 **Recomm**

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization makes use of waste collection services and participates in recycling initiatives if such programs are accessible and offered in the area or region.
- 2) Qualifying voluntary programs may include those organized by the municipality, community extension offices, or private collection schemes.



5.3.16 **The organization obtains necessary permits/licenses and stays updated on changes to relevant legal requirements and regulations, to ensure ongoing waste management compliance.**

 **Major**



5.3.17 Waste contractors have all the required permits.

Major



5.3.18 Hazardous waste is segregated from non-hazardous waste.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Hazardous waste,” as defined per the categories stipulated by local regulations; or has one or more of the following characteristics: Ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity.
- 2) “Hazardous waste,” as defined by CPA, Guidance on Waste Definitions: “The substance or object that does not fulfil all relevant product, environmental and health protection requirements for the specific use, and will lead to overall adverse environmental or human health impacts.”



5.3.19 There is no open air or illegal waste burning, or uncontrolled waste landfilling, occurring on site.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is not applicable to waste incineration for energy recovery happening on-site with permits.



5.4 Water Use and Discharge

5.4.1 The organization sets targets for meaningful improvements in water usage and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is that the organization demonstrates its good faith effort to reduce its water use. Publicly available targets are not required.
- 2) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.4.2 The organization measures and maintains a record of its monthly water usage.

Major



5.4.3 The organization monitors its compliance with relevant legal requirements related to its water usage.

Major



5.4.4 The organization monitors and maintains records of its compliance with the relevant legal requirements related to wastewater/effluent.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Off-site treatment: The common effluent treatment plant (CETP) is legally operating by providing the existence of a permit, agreement, or contract with the certified site or with any other system participant, such as the local pollution control board.



5.4.5 The organization has a drainage plan in place, which includes wastewater flow direction and discharge points.

Minor



5.4.6 If an organization elects to treat wastewater on-site, the organization meets requirements in accordance with the Foundational, Progressive and Aspirational Levels for (Heavy Metals, Conventional and Anions) parameters of the latest version of the ZDHC’s Wastewater Guidelines (WWG), or national and local requirements where these are more stringent, before discharging it to the environment.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The timelines to achieve different levels are set in the latest version of the “ZDHC Wastewater Guidelines Industry Standard Implementation Approach”.
- 2) Wool scourers shall meet the following chemical oxygen demand (COD) values for the final discharge of effluent from wool scouring:
 - Coarse wool: 25 g COD/kg of greasy wool; and
 - Fine wool: 45 g COD/kg of greasy wool.
- 3) MMCF manufacturers shall follow the “Wastewater” chapter of the latest version of the “ZDHC MMCF Guidelines.”
- 4) The latest version of the ZDHC WWG under its scope does not cover effluent discharge from polymer manufacturing, dissolving pulp, and raw wool scouring, but whenever ZDHC releases a version with dedicated guidance around those, the organization shall follow it.
- 5) For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.



5.4.8

Major

Wastewater testing is conducted at least every six (6) months by trained people (staff, or external service providers) and using equipment as directed by the ZDHC’s approved wastewater testing laboratories.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for organizations with an on-site treatment facility.
- 2) The organization shall provide evidence of training and equipment used.



5.4.9

Minor

Where an organization chooses to treat wastewater offsite, it ensures that the treatment facility has adequate capacity for the volume of wastewater to be received.



5.4.10

Major

Sludge from the water treatment system is properly treated and disposed of.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For organizations with on-site treatment: The organization shall provide a copy of the valid contract between the site and the sludge disposal contractor.
- 2) For organizations with off-site treatment: Sludge generated by the CETP meets local legal parameters.



5.4.11

Recomm

Reverse osmosis water treatment is used on wastewater after it is discharged from the processing system.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.4.12

Recomm

An automatic control system is in place to provide water for the scouring process.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.4.13 The organization has a system in place to reuse water before it is discharged to maximize the resource and reduce overall water use.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5 Air Emissions

5.5.1 The organization has a plan in place to monitor, measure, and reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHG) generated by the processing facility.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).
- 2) The organization should have a documented plan in place which details the monitoring and measurement approach for air pollutants and GHG emissions (including the specific air pollutants). This covers the method followed for monitoring and measurement, including the time over which monitoring, and measurement takes place. The method should also document the scope of the operations included.
- 3) In addition to or contained within the documented monitoring and measurement plan, the organization should have a documented approach in place that demonstrates actions being taken to reduce air pollutants and GHG emissions.



5.5.2 The organization sets targets for meaningful reduction of air emissions and reviews its progress annually.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).
- 2) “Air emissions” can include air pollutants and GHG.
- 3) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic and whether material air emissions are included within the target scope.
- 4) The auditor should check that the targets set are SMART targets for air emissions.
- 5) The auditor should check that annual progress against targets is documented.



5.5.3 The organization meets all relevant legal requirements related to air emissions and maintains monitoring records.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5.4 The organization maintains up-to-date permits, as required/applicable.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5.5 The organization maintains an inventory of main point source emissions to the air.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).
- 2) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines “point source pollution” as “any single identifiable source of pollution from which pollutants are discharged, such as a pipe, ditch, or factory smokestack.”



5.5.6 The potential for fugitive emissions is regularly assessed and addressed, as necessary.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable at the facility level (i.e. it is not applicable at the farm level).



5.5.7 Equipment containing Ozone-depleting substances (ODS), or any other potential air pollutants, undergoes regular maintenance to prevent and detect fugitive emissions.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The list of ODS under the Montreal Protocol can be found at [this website](#).



5.6 Energy Use

5.6.1

Minor

The organization has a written energy management plan in place to track and monitor the use of all energy inputs for the purposes of improving energy efficiency and reducing fossil-fuel based energy sources over time.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Energy inputs monitored at the facility level include fuel use for machinery and electricity consumption (kWh) onsite.



5.6.2

Major

The organization meets all the relevant legal requirements related to energy use and maintains monitoring records.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is aware of all current local, regional, and national laws and regulations related to energy use, and regularly reviews the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. This may include laws related to energy efficiency, emissions, renewable energy, and other energy-related matters.



5.6.3

Major

The organization measures and maintains records of its energy usage on a monthly basis.



5.6.4

Minor

The organization sets targets for meaningful improvements in energy usage and reviews its progress annually.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When assessing whether the targets set for improvements are meaningful, the auditor shall consider how advanced the organization is, and how much improvement is adequate and/or realistic.



5.6.5

Recomm

The organization employs the use of any available renewable energies (e.g. biofuels, biogas, solar, or wind energy), produced on site or procured, for some or all of its energy needs.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The use of renewable energies is recorded in the energy management plan and used to yield a percentage of total energy utilization as renewable.



5.6.6 The organization is moving towards renewable energy as its main source of electricity.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Renewable energy” can mean solar, wind, hydro/water, biogas, geothermal and any other non-fossil-fuel sources.



5.6.7 The organization is moving towards energy-efficient equipment by replacing old, inefficient equipment to help reduce energy use.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The following are characteristics for preferred equipment for scouring and slaughter:
 - For the scouring process: an automatic system to control the temperature of water is in place; energy sources like solar or geothermal are used; coal fired boilers are not used or eliminated over time.
 - For the slaughter process: energy sources like solar or geothermal are used; coal fired boilers are not used or eliminated over time.
- 2) The following are characteristics for preferred equipment for cotton processing:
 - The motor of the seed cotton conveyor (used for the preparation and feeding stage of the cotton gin process) has an energy efficiency of at least IE3 (International Efficiency, class 3).
 - An automatic and complete set of equipment is used in the seed cotton conveyor, with interlocking control between each piece of equipment.
 - In the drying stage of the ginning process: a moisture monitoring system is installed to help control the hot air and heat exchanger efficiently; the temperature of hot air and the contact time between hot air and seed cotton is controlled automatically; high efficiency heat exchange equipment is used for heat blower and heat exchanger; all heat media distribution pipes are well-insulated; the surface temperature of surface of these pipes should be lower than 50°C (122°F); heat and water from the steam-condensate is recovered; use of the pneumatic system is avoided; low efficiency heat fans and heat exchangers are eliminated; coal-fueled boilers are not used or eliminated over time.
 - In the ginning process: energy sources like solar or geothermal are used; the power consumption per bale of lint (500 lb or less) is no more than 35 kWh; an automatic set of equipment for the sawtooth gin is adopted, with an interlocking control system.
 - In the fleece stripping stage of the ginning process, the sawtooth fleece stripping machine uses an energy efficient motor (higher than IE3).
 - In the processing and stripping stage of the ginning process, the sawtooth stripping machine adopts an automatic set of equipment, with an interlocking control system.
 - In the moistening stage of the ginning process, high precision cotton moisture testing equipment is used.
 - In the cotton humidification stage of the ginning process: the pumps are Variable Speed and Flow (VSF) model; the humidification control system has an automatic control and display system. The key process parameters can be displayed in real time and can be automatically adjusted.
 - In the lint humidification stage of the ginning process: the temperature of the wet air and the contact time of the lint can be controlled automatically; high-efficiency heat exchange equipment is used.



5.6.8**Dissolving grade (DG)/dissolving pulp manufacturers recover value from their spent liquors by generating at minimum 50% on-site electricity and steam.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Even when the material category is “MMCF,” this criterion is applicable to virgin pulp manufacturing.
- 2) DG/dissolving pulp manufacturers have appropriate energy equipment installed in the manufacturing site.



MMCF

Appendix A: Acronyms

AFi	Accountability Framework initiative
AI	Artificial insemination
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
BCS	Body condition score
BMP	Biodiversity management plan
BREFs	Best available techniques reference documents
CB	Certification body
CBA	Collective bargaining agreement
CETP	Common effluent treatment plant
CMR	Carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic
CMS	Chemical management system
COD	Chemical oxygen demand
CPA	Circular Plastics Alliance
DG	Dissolving grade
EC	European Commission
EMS	Environmental management system
FPIC	Free, prior, and informed consent
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GHS	Globally Harmonized System of classification and labelling of chemicals
GIS	Geographic information system
GM	Genetically modified
GMO	Genetically modified organisms
IHRB	Institute for Human Rights and Business
IP/LC	Indigenous Peoples/Local Communities
IPM	Integrated pest management
KBA	Key biodiversity areas
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning

MMCF	Manmade cellulosic fibers
ODS	Ozone-depleting substances
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PAN	Pesticide Action Network
POP	Persistent organic pollutants
PPE	Personal protective equipment
RAF	Responsible animal fibers
REACH	Registration, evaluation, authorization, and restriction of chemicals
RSL	Restricted substance list
RTRS	Round Table on Responsible Soy
SDS	Safety data sheet
SVHC	Substances of very high concern
TC	Transaction certificate
WWG	Wastewater Guidelines
ZDHC	Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals

Appendix B: Terms and Definitions

Agroecology:

An integrated approach that applies ecological concepts and principles for the design and management of agricultural systems to optimize interactions among plants, animals, humans, and the environment.

Agroforestry:

Agroforestry involves the deliberate growing of trees and shrubs with crops and/or animals in interacting combination for a variety of objectives.

Auditor:

Person with the competence to conduct an audit. Referred to the certification body's representative on site, auditing an organization to confirm conformance with the Standard.

Biodegradable:

Capable of decomposing rapidly by microorganisms under natural conditions (aerobic and/or anaerobic). Most organic materials, such as food scraps and paper are biodegradable.

Biodiversity:

The total variety of all Earth's species (above and below ground), their genetic variation, and the ecosystems they form.

Biodiversity hotspots:

Regions that contain a high level of species diversity, many endemic species, and/or a significant number of threatened or endangered species.

Biosynthetics:

Synthetic fibers that are wholly or partially derived from biobased resources (i.e. biomaterials). Biosynthetics can be made from a variety of biomass feedstocks. The main feedstocks currently used for biosynthetics are high sugar or starch-containing agricultural crops such as corn, sugar beet, sugarcane, and — to a minor extent — also wheat and cassava, as well as oil crops such as castor.

Body condition score:

System of measuring the fat and muscle cover of an animal — and therefore how good its nutrition and health has been — by reference to a standardized scale, normally from 1.0 (very thin) to 5.0 (obese).

Buffer zones:

Areas of land that are maintained next to, or around, sensitive and/or natural ecosystems, to protect them against harmful impacts (include buffer strips and areas).

Captive bolt gun:

Device used to stun animals prior to slaughter or euthanasia. The gun has a retractable steel bolt that, when operated correctly, hits the head of the animal with sufficient force so as to render it instantly unconscious. Captive bolts may be penetrating or non-penetrating.

Carding:

A mechanical process that disentangles, cleans, and intermixes fibers to produce a continuous web or sliver suitable for subsequent processing.

Carrying capacity:

The average number of animals that can be placed on a pasture for a year without harming it. It is a measure of the pasture's ability to produce enough forage to meet the requirements of grazing animals. Carrying capacity may change from year to year, depending on climate and other factors.

Ceased mulesing:

Wool from sheep where mulesing has ceased on the property. No lambs born on the property in the last 12 months have been mulesed. No sheep purchased in the last 12 months and/or following certification are mulesed.

Certified material:

Formerly referred as "Claimed Material" for any material produced under the rules of a certification system, indicating that adequate confidence is provided that the material is in conformity with the Materials Matter Standard, for instance.

Child labor:

Work that is performed by a child which is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children and/or interferes with their schooling. Child labor is addressed in the ILO Conventions on child labor. Age of work and general protections against child labor are covered in Convention No. 138 and Recommendation No. 146. The "worst forms of child labor" are addressed in further detail in ILO Convention No. 182 and Recommendation No.190.

Collective bargaining:

A means by which employers and their organizations and trade unions agree and establish wages and working conditions and ensure equal opportunities for different genders and groups. The right to organize and collective bargaining is rooted in the ILO Constitution and the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. It is found in ILO convention No. 98, which "provides that workers shall enjoy adequate protection against acts of anti-union discrimination, including requirements that a worker not join a union or relinquish trade union membership for employment, or dismissal of a worker because of union membership or participation in union activities."

Collective bargaining agreement:

Formalized agreement established through the process of collective bargaining, whereby workers and employer bargain to agree on wages and working conditions.

Colostrum:

Milk produced by female mammals in the first day after giving birth. This milk has a higher fat content than normal milk and is particularly rich in proteins and antibodies. A young animal needs to receive sufficient colostrum so that it can acquire immunity.

Comber noil:

Comber noil is a by-product of the cotton yarn spinning industry produced when cotton is combed to remove short fibers. Due to being a low-trash product, it has varied uses in security paper, medical industry and also as a blend for good quality cotton in open end spinning.

Communal farmer:

The farmer who meets the following three conditions:

- 1) The farmer faces significant economic constraints, such as a lack of capital assets and low access to finance (i.e. lack of economies of scale);
- 2) The farmer faces significant information constraints, including a lack of technical knowledge and low access to market information; and
- 3) The farmer shall also meet at least two of the following:
 - The farmer has little or no land security;
 - The farmer is independent and not affiliated with a company for which he/she produces fibers;
 - The farm relies on the farmer's family work;
 - Animal fibers are the farmer's primary source of income;
 - The farm uses relatively low levels of agricultural inputs and has comparatively low yields relative to the range of yields for the given commodity and context; and/or
 - The farm has a relatively small land footprint.

Competent person:

Someone who has acquired the knowledge to safely and humanely carry out a specific task or operation.

Contractor:

A contractor may be:

- Any legal entity (individual or company) that is hired to perform work for another individual or organization on a contract basis. This encompasses individuals hired for specific tasks, often due to their specialized expertise or skills, such as shearing, tail docking, or applying fertilizers; or
- Third-party (hiring) agency that offers labor recruitment to carry out an activity to deliver a product or service.

Conversion:

The change of a natural ecosystem to another land use or profound change in a natural ecosystem's species composition, structure, or function. Conversion includes severe degradation, or the introduction of management practices that result in substantial and sustained change in the ecosystem's former species composition, structure, or function.

Cotton lint:

The fibrous coat that covers the cotton seed.

Deforestation:

The loss of natural forest as a result of conversion to agriculture or other non-forest land use. It also includes the conversion of natural forest to a tree plantation or severe and sustained degradation.

Dissolved grade (DG) pulp/Dissolving pulp:

Dissolving pulp, also called dissolving grade pulp, is bleached wood pulp or cotton linters that has a high cellulose content (>90%). Dissolving pulp is so named because it is not made into paper but dissolved either in a solvent or by derivatization into a homogeneous solution, which can be spun into textile fibers.

Down:

The fine plumage on a waterfowl that sits under the outer feathers. For simplicity, the term "down" in the Standard refers to all plumage including feathers and down. All standard requirements for down are applied to the production of both down and feathers from waterfowl.

Dyed fiber:

The dyeing takes place at the fiber stage before fibers are spun into yarn.

Effluent:

The wastewater discharge from industrial facilities.

Electric prodder:

Handheld object also known as "electric prod" or "hotshot" used to administer an electric shock when an animal is touched with it.

Electric stunning:

Passing a current through the brain of an animal to render it instantly insensible. Stunning through the head can be followed by stunning the heart which causes death.

Eligible material:

Formerly referred as "Claimed Material" for any pre-consumer or post-consumer materials used as feedstocks for the production of Materials Matter certified products. Under the recognition program, a certified (under a certification program different than the Materials Matter) feedstock can become an eligible material to be used for the production of Materials Matter certified products.

Emasculator:

A tool for castrating a male animal. There are different types of emasculators. Some contain a blade/scalpel to completely remove the testes, and others work by clamping the spermatic cords with no blade or cutting. Those that use a blade are treated in the same way as a scalpel in this standard.

Employee:

A person who is employed to do physical or mental work for wages in order to earn a living, as in a trade, industry, business, office, or on a farm, ranch, etc.

Employer Pays Principle:

No worker should pay for a job — the costs of recruitment should be borne not by the worker but by the employer. IHRB mentions that migrant workers frequently pay fees to agencies and brokers for recruitment and placement in jobs abroad.

Euthanasia:

The act of killing a terminally ill or hopelessly injured animal by using a humane, painless method for reasons of mercy.

Facility:

A place or building where a particular activity happens within a site, often through the use of specialized equipment.

Farm:

Any site where crops or livestock are raised for the production of food and/or textiles. Non-adjacent fields may be considered part of the same farm, provided they are under the same management (i.e. same farmer).

Farmer:

A person raising livestock on a farm where there is a fixed base of operations (i.e. using the same land areas), and where the land available is largely the same from year to year. Animals may be moved away from the base site, but the farmer does not usually stay overnight with those animals.

Feedlot:

A lot or building, or combination of lots and buildings intended for the confined feeding, breeding, raising, or holding of animals and specifically designed as a confinement area in which manure may accumulate, or where the concentration of animals is such that a vegetative cover cannot be maintained within the enclosure.

Fetotomy:

Also known as embryotomy. Dismemberment of an already dead fetus when natural birth is not possible.

Filament:

A type of man-made (synthetic or cellulosic) fiber made by extruding a polymer through a spinneret to form long continuous filaments.

First processing stage:

The first level of processing (still part of tier 4), whereby raw materials collected or harvested from plants and/or animals are converted into human manufactured materials to be used in the textile industry.

Flake:

Plastic that has been shredded and washed into small fragments.

Force-feeding:

Any form of feeding that forces the waterfowl to eat more than it wants/needs. In particular, this refers to manual intervention using mechanical equipment (i.e. tubes), to increase the fat content, often for the production of “foie gras”.

Forced labor:

Work that is performed by any person which is involuntary and/or whereby the person is coerced to work through violence, intimidation, threats, fear of punishment or any other form of manipulation. Extreme and subtle forms of forced labor (e.g. debt bondage, retention of papers, manipulation, or use of legal status), are covered in the ILO Forced Labor Convention (No. 29 and No. 105).

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent:

A legal condition whereby a person or community can be said to have given consent to an action prior to its commencement, based upon a clear appreciation and understanding of the facts, implications and future consequences of that action, and the possession of all relevant facts at the time when consent is given. Free, prior, and informed consent includes the right to grant, modify, withhold, or withdraw approval.

Freedom of association (including relevant international conventions):

A fundamental human right identified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 25 (1948) which proclaims that non-state actors shall be allowed effective participation in economic and social policy. This right is described in ILO convention No. 87, which “sets forth the right for workers and employers to establish and join organizations of their own choosing without previous authorization. Workers’ and employers’ organizations shall organize freely and not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority, and they shall have the right to establish and join federations and confederations, which may in turn affiliate with international organizations of workers and employers.” It is further detailed in conventions No. 135 and No 141.

Gin notes:

Small, broken, or immature cotton seeds with attached fibers.

Greasy animal fiber:

Animal fiber as it is shorn from the animal before any processing (e.g. greasy wool).

Grievance mechanisms:

A formal, transparent complaint process that allows users to voice their concerns safely and easily, without fear of retaliation. The UN Guiding Principles’ Effectiveness Criteria for Non-Judicial Grievance Mechanisms provide criteria for an effective grievance mechanism (including GP 25 and others).

Group certificate:

A scope certificate which includes multiple, separately owned, sites whose general conformity with the Standard falls under the responsibility of another separately owned legal entity managing the group system. The entity which manages the group is considered “the organization.” Group eligibility requirements are defined in the Standard.

Group management system:

A system developed by the group manager with inputs from all its group members, consisting of documented procedures, templates, and non-verbal instructions, which helps the group to effectively organize and achieve its objectives (i.e. all responsibilities are clearly assigned). The group management system provides the necessary framework and processes for managing the group, supporting, and monitoring the group members, and it allocates resources to implement the activities required to ensure conformance with the applicable criteria of the Standard.

Group member:

A site which is part of a group certification. The word “member” may be used to refer to a group member. A group member usually owns his/her farm, but a group member could also be a communal farmer with little or no land security.

Hatchery:

Any site where waterfowl eggs are mechanically, or naturally hatched to produce waterfowl.

Hazard:

A dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity, or condition.

Hazardous waste:

The substance or object that does not fulfil all relevant product, environmental and health protection requirements for the specific use, and will lead to overall adverse environmental or human health impacts.

Indigenous Peoples:

People and groups of people that can be identified or characterized as follows:

- The key characteristic or criterion is self-identification as Indigenous Peoples at the individual level, and acceptance by the community as their member;
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies;
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;
- Distinct social, economic or political systems;
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs;
- Form non-dominant groups of society; and
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

Integrated Pest Management:

IPM is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment.

Intensity:

A measure of the force, severity or strength of a management activity or other occurrence affecting the nature of the activity's impacts.

Invasive species:

An invasive species is a species:

- That is non-native (or alien), to the ecosystem under consideration; and
- Whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health.

Irrigation:

To water crops by bringing in water from pipes, canals, sprinklers, or other manufactured means, rather than relying on rainfall alone.

Knowledgeable:

Having information, understanding, or skills that come from experience or education.

Live plucking:

Any form of removing down and feather from living waterfowl, including any form of molt harvesting.

Local communities:

Communities of any size that are in or adjacent to the farm, and also those that are close enough to have a significant impact on the economy or the environmental values of the farm; or to have their economies, rights or environments significantly affected by the management activities or the biophysical aspects of the farm.

Local living wage benchmark:

The threshold at which a person's wage is considered to be sufficient to afford him/her and his/her family at least a basic, decent standard of living in the locality where he/she works. A living wage benchmark is generally agreed as acceptable by global actors when it has met certain criteria of credibility.

Mixtures:

Mixtures refers to chemical formulations sold by chemical manufacturers, having a recognized SDS for the formulation, not to the mixtures made internally during production by facilities.

Mortality rate:

Percentage or proportion of a flock or herd that die or are euthanized.

Mulesing:

By any method, the removal of wool-bearing strips of skin from between the hind legs of sheep (i.e. the “breach” area), and/or from the tail or tail stump that remains after tail docking, in an effort to avoid problems of fly strike.

Notching:

Cutting the ears of animals to permanently identify them. Notching is usually done in a pattern particular to the farm or ranch.

Oligomer:

A low molecular weight polymer comprising of a small number of repeat units whose physical properties are significantly dependent on the length of the chain.

Organic waste:

Any material that comes from a plant or animal, and which is biodegradable.

Organization:

A legal entity which is certified, or in the process of becoming certified. A scope certificate is held by an organization, and an organization has one or more sites. The organization is responsible for decisions, policies, and management activities related to the farm or site. The organization is also responsible for demonstrating that other persons or entities that are permitted or subcontracted by the organization to operate in, or for the benefit of the farm or site, comply with the requirements of the standard criteria. Accordingly, the organization is required to take corrective actions in the event of such persons or entities not following the standard requirements.

Overgrazing:

Overgrazing occurs when plants are exposed to intensive grazing for extended periods of time, or without sufficient recovery periods.

Oxidized grease:

The reaction of grease with oxygen.

Pain relief:

The administration of analgesic and/or local anesthetic drugs given to animals with the aim of providing them significant alleviation of pain.

Parent farm:

Any farm where waterfowl are kept for producing eggs. Any time certified down is collected from a parent farm, the entire farm is subject to certification.

Pasture:

Land covered with vegetation suitable for grazing or foraging by animals.

Pellet:

Plastic that has undergone at least one previous processing method such as molding or extrusion, and ground into chips.

Permaculture:

An approach to agricultural design that focuses on whole systems thinking, as well as using or simulating patterns from nature.

Pest:

Pests are organisms that damage or interfere with desirable plants in the fields and orchards, landscapes, or wildlands, or damage homes or other structures. Pests also include organisms that impact human or animal health. Pests may transmit disease or may be just a nuisance. For purposes of the Standard, a pest can be a plant (weed), invertebrate (insect, tick, mite, or snail), nematode, pathogen (bacteria, virus, or fungus), that causes disease, or other unwanted organism that may harm water quality, animal life, or other parts of the ecosystem.

Pesticides:

Substances used for destroying insects or other organisms which are harmful to cultivated plants or to animals. Pesticides include bactericides, baits, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, and repellents.

Pithing:

Destruction of the brain by insertion of a metal rod. Carried out after the use of penetrating captive bolt gun.

Predator:

Animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals in order to survive.

Processor:

Organization engaged in the processing of materials into a refined material or a product.

Raw material production:

Farming animals or cultivating plants to collect or harvest materials from them, for use as primary feedstocks in the textile industry. Also known as tier 4.

Recyclable:

Being recyclable means an object can be collected and remanufactured into new products. This should not be confused with being recycled, which means an object has already been collected and remanufactured into a new product.

Remediation plan:

A series of steps designed to eliminate an identified risk or fix an existing problem.

Rightsholder:

Person or person(s) whose human rights are potentially at risk or threatened — by an organization's operations, products, or services — and/or who requires particular attention or action to help protect their rights.

Risk assessment:

An evaluation of risks, potential risks, the key factors leading to or increasing those risks, and the condition(s) that could materialize if those risks are not remediated.

Scale:

A measure of the extent to which a management activity or event affects an environmental value or a management unit (site), in time or space. An activity with a small or low spatial scale affects only a small proportion of the site each year, an activity with a small or low temporal scale occurs only at long intervals.

Scope:

The scope of a certificate defines the organization's sites, materials, and activities that are included in the evaluation by a licensed certification body, together with the certification standard(s) against which these have been audited.

Scope certificate:

A document issued by the certification body, which certifies that an organization is compliant with a specified scope of the Standard, and as a result the organization is able to produce and sell certified materials.

Scouring:

The process of cleaning wool that makes it free from grease, suint, dead skin, dirt, and vegetable matter present as impurities in the wool.

Shelter:

Something that provides animals with protection from natural events (e.g. rain, wind, sunlight, snow, etc.), either via natural features such as trees, or artificial structures like buildings or shades.

Site:

Any geographically distinct unit within a certificate scope, which could be a production farm or an industrial/manufacturing facility. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are considered to be separate sites (see exception for farms). Subcontractors are not considered to be sites.

Slaughter:

The planned act of killing animals whenever they reach the age or weight for which they were raised, to obtain meat and/or skins.

Slaughterhouse / Slaughter plant:

A formal facility designed and built for slaughter of animals to harvest their meat for human consumption.

Slaughter site:

A location where slaughter of animals takes place. In some rural areas it might be a multi-purpose shed or even an open-air area.

Sliver:

Loose, soft, untwisted rope like strand of textile fiber having a roughly uniform thickness. It is produced by the carding process, which separates raw fibers to prepare them for spinning.

Solvent:

A substance that dissolves a solute, resulting in a solution.

Stakeholder:

A person, group or organization with a vested interest, or stake, in the decision-making and activities of a business, organization or project. Stakeholders can be members of the organization they have a stake in, or they can have no official affiliation. Stakeholders can have a direct or indirect influence on the activities or projects of an organization. Their support is often required for business and project success.

Steining:

Removal of wool-bearing skin in the breech area by application of liquid nitrogen. This is a form of mulesing.

Stocking density:

Number of animals kept in a particular space (e.g. in a house or on a transport vehicle).

Stocking rate:

Number of animals kept on a particular area of land for a specified time.

Stunning:

The action of rendering an animal insensible and unconscious.

Subcontractor:

Any legal entity (individual or company) that is hired by the organization to perform services (e.g. storage, processing), on certified material. Subcontractors take physical possession, but not legal ownership of certified materials.

Suint:

A natural greasy substance in sheep's wool.

Suitable (pain relief):

A product that has a pain-relieving effect for the type and method of husbandry procedure that is undertaken.

Tail docking:

Complete removal of all or part of an animal's tail.

Thermocautery:

Use of a heated blade that cauterizes the wound and prevents bleeding. Used for tail docking sheep.

Threshold:

The level or point at which something starts to be experienced, or at which something starts to happen, such as when a pest becomes active and triggers the need for intervention.

Transaction Certificate:

A document issued by a certification body which verifies that materials being sold or shipped from one organization to another conform to the Standard and may be treated as certified materials by the receiver.

Undergrazing:

Grazing at a level where there is evidence of an increase in scrub or coarse vegetation, and such changes are detrimental to the environmental health of the site.

Waste:

Any substance or object which the holder discards or is required to discard.

Waste picker:

An individual who, formally or informally, salvages materials that are thrown away by others as a waste. This includes collecting recyclable materials to sell to recycling facilities, such as facilities that upcycle for textiles.

Waterfowl:

Domestically raised ducks and geese.

Well-ventilated:

Being kept within good air quality parameters, free from pollutants and high heat, through either or both natural and artificial means.

Wildlife corridors:

Natural or manmade connections across the landscape (e.g. wildlife bridges or underpasses), that link up areas of habitat.

Worker:

A person who is hired (not necessarily employed) to do physical or mental work for wages in order to earn a living, as in a trade, industry, business, office, or on a farm, ranch, etc. Family members may be workers on a farm, even if not for daily wages.

Year-round tasks:

Work tasks which are performed throughout the majority of a calendar year.