



Corporate Fiber & Materials Benchmark

Insights. Action. Impact.

Creating Material Change for Nature
Biodiversity Benchmark
(Beta) FAQs



TextileExchange
Creating Material Change

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Q1. Why a benchmark for biodiversity?

The Biodiversity Benchmark is designed to help companies consider their materials production and sourcing practices through a biodiversity lens and take important action.

Climate change is arguably the biggest challenge humanity faces. The climate crisis and the nature crisis are inextricably linked. We are living beyond our planetary boundaries and we all must do everything we can to change practices that are harmful to our ecosystems. The way we cultivate raw materials and extract natural resources for the production of apparel and textiles plays a vital role in the conservation, restoration, regeneration, and “cooling” of our planet.

The Biodiversity Benchmark will enable companies to understand their impacts and dependencies on nature in their materials sourcing strategies, chart a pathway to delivering positive biodiversity outcomes, and benchmark their progress. Alongside benchmarking, “bench-learning” will be an integral part of the program and we will be supporting peer-to-peer themed learning and other opportunities to exchange knowledge. Outcomes and insights will be channeled back into the community to support further improvements. The success of the benchmark will be in the collaboration and scale of impact it helps enable.

The benchmark is currently customized for the apparel and textile industry, i.e., fashion, sports, luxury, and home textiles brands, retailers, manufacturers, suppliers.

Q2. Who is eligible to participate?

During this beta phase, we invite companies as well as other organizations with an interest in biodiversity to take part in the Biodiversity Benchmark. We are looking for feedback on the survey as well as baseline data entry to support the textile and apparel industry in continuous improvement.

Any company or organization sourcing raw materials is eligible to take part. You might already be benchmarking with us through the Corporate Fiber & Materials Benchmark (CFMB) Program (170+ companies in 2019, see [Insights Report](#) page 108), or you might be taking part in the Biodiversity Benchmark independently – it’s up to you. For companies, participating in the Biodiversity Benchmark will help you to set a baseline of your biodiversity performance, measure progress annually, and provide access to a learning community.

We also encourage other organizations (non-profits and NGOs, academics, researchers, consultants, etc.) with an interest in biodiversity to register and help us shape and improve the program by “road testing” the survey and sharing feedback and suggestions during this initial beta phase.

All participants are invited to provide feedback in the last section of the benchmark survey.

Q3. What are the benefits of taking part?

In short, companies benefit from participating in the Biodiversity Benchmark by gaining new insights into their biodiversity-related performance, constructively engaging with peers, and driving change for the industry as a whole. All corporate participants receive a standard scorecard free of charge.

There are five core business benefits of participating in the Biodiversity Benchmark:

1. Use of a robust framework for aligning and implementing biodiversity into your business operations.
2. A standardized system for tracking progress both year-on-year and against other companies.
3. An annual scorecard for internal (and external) communications, e.g., c-suite, supply partners, investors.
4. An opportunity to contribute to data pooling, industry insights, and knowledge exchange.
5. Recognition as an industry leader, setting the bar for industry in biodiversity action.

These benefits are key to creating industry-wide change for biodiversity, and benchmarking is the tried-and-tested tool to deliver these services. Of course, this list is not exhaustive, as each company will see their own unique benefits from participation.

Alongside the benchmark survey itself, we have developed a [Survey Guide](#) and a [Companion Guide](#) (which provides additional background on select material types) to support participants' learning journey. Benchmark participants have access to a world-class secure benchmarking platform developed by [73bit](#) (powered by "Probench") and used by Textile Exchange for almost 10 years. Companies can use their digital "portal" to safely house annually archived surveys, confidential scorecards (see Q7 for more information), and other important and/or sensitive documentation. Participants benefit from a survey submission review and response validation process, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and all participants are encouraged to shape the program through Textile Exchange's commitment to facilitating business-led benchmarks and annual consultation.

Q4. How does the Biodiversity Benchmark fit with the Material Change Index?

The Biodiversity Benchmark – just like the Material Change Index (MCI) - is part of the Corporate Fiber & Materials Benchmark (CFMB) program. The Biodiversity Benchmark aligns with the goals of the CFMB program to help companies measure, manage, and integrate a preferred materials strategy into mainstream business operations. It also fits with Textile Exchange's [2030 Climate+ Strategy](#) since biodiversity is a key focus.

Biodiversity is integral to a preferred materials strategy and companies do not have to start from scratch when it comes to developing a biodiversity strategy. Until now, the CFMB has focused on a company's materials portfolio mix and sourcing practices – without a strong emphasis on geographical context. The Biodiversity Benchmark takes this good work in building a preferred portfolio and places it in a geographical context. This "place-based" context is key to exposing on-the-ground biodiversity risk including impacts and dependencies.

Pragmatically speaking, companies are able to complete the Biodiversity Benchmark survey in addition to their MCI survey or, alternatively, elect to engage with the Biodiversity Benchmark only

Q5. How does this benchmark co-exist with other biodiversity initiatives?

This Biodiversity Benchmark was not created in a vacuum nor will it exist in isolation. Textile Exchange worked with The Biodiversity Consultancy and Conservation International to co-create the benchmark. Over fifty biodiversity experts and industry stakeholders including the SBTN and the Fashion Pact have contributed to its development.

The Biodiversity Benchmark is currently in "beta version" for a reason: we want to make sure the benchmark serves its purpose, adds value, and is meaningful to all companies large and small. The first version (beta) was developed with support from an interim [Biodiversity Advisory Group](#) (see Appendix 3) and the benchmark will continue to be informed and shaped by experts in the field including [The Biodiversity Consultancy](#), [Conservation International](#), the [Science-based Targets Network](#) (SBTN), and the [Fashion Pact](#). The benchmark will continue to be influenced through multi-stakeholder engagement, an annual open consultation, and through direct feedback from the companies taking part in the benchmark.

Textile Exchange is a member of the new SBTN Corporate Engagement Program, and we will work closely with the SBTN on consistency in language, frameworks, and measurements to support benchmarking participants on their biodiversity journey. Our benchmarking methodology and targets will adapt to align with the SBTN as they develop over the next two years.

Q6. How will a company's confidential data be handled?

Textile Exchange treats company data and any information shared with us very carefully. We believe that confidentiality is key to building trust - and we recognize the role we play in being entrusted to handle data responsibly.

For companies to get valuable learnings out of benchmarking (including gap analysis, progress tracking, and industry positioning), discrete data reporting is necessary. Participants receive confidential feedback through their secure benchmarking portal. Results are aggregated for trend analysis, best practice sharing, and reporting industry-level insights. We only show-case companies publicly when we have explicit permission and in full collaboration with the companies featured. Individual company results in the Biodiversity Benchmark will NOT be publicized or shared with other companies or organizations.

Note, Textile Exchange is [GDPR compliant](#) and we have developed a [terms of use](#) and a [data use policy](#) for the Corporate Fiber & Materials Benchmark (CFMB) program. If participants feel more comfortable with an additional level of data sharing agreement they can either sign the CFMB [Non-Disclosure Agreement](#) (NDA) or ask us to comply with their corporate NDA.

Q7. How much does it cost to take part?

There is no fee to participate and all participants receive a “standard scorecard” for their efforts. The scorecard provides a gap analysis and highlights where a company should focus next. The CFMB team can also provide additional support and feedback for any company interested in a deeper analysis.

Our priority is to encourage as many companies as possible to get involved, to start the journey, to keep improving their own practices, and to improve the benchmark program through participation and feedback. To achieve these goals, we have made the Biodiversity Benchmark free of charge and accessible for all stakeholders including biodiversity experts as well as corporations. All corporate participants receive a confidential scorecard free of charge, and additional support can be arranged. Please contact us at CFMB@TextileExchange.org to find out more about your options. As the program grows, we will be looking for supporting partners and other ways to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the program. Financial support will allow us to invest further and ensure we have the resources required to deliver a high-quality benchmarking product.

Q8. What is the timeline?

Benchmarking is a cycle starting with survey development, followed by an open submission window, review, analysis of results, and delivery of company feedback and insights. This is followed by survey improvement and then the cycle begins again. Each year’s benchmark builds on the one before, allowing for trend analysis and improvement tracking.

The Biodiversity Benchmark “beta” survey is now live. We launched on December 2nd, 2020 and our aim is for all company submissions to be made by February 20th, 2021. We then close the submission period and enter the submission review phase. Following reviews, we will make any final adjustments based on the outcomes of the review and analyze the results. For this cycle, we aim to provide confidential company feedback and industry level insights by May 2021. Since this cycle will create the baseline, we expect feedback and learnings to flow both ways between participants and program developers.

Q9. How do we get involved?

Please register your interest in the Biodiversity Benchmark through our [online form](#) and we will come back to you directly with access to the tech platform and more details on how to take part.

As mentioned earlier, we also welcome biodiversity enthusiasts to register, “take a tour” of the benchmark, and provide feedback so we can use this beta cycle to not only get a sense of the industry’s starting place in biodiversity but also to refine and take the program from beta to pilot phase. Other ways to get involved include joining our virtual community. We created a Biodiversity Advisory Group in 2020 and will be exploring next steps for a growing group of those hoping to create a better world for biodiversity. We are also exploring ways to support biodiversity through our [CFMB Community Hub](#). To find out more please contact us at CFMB@TextileExchange.org.



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Find out more about the CFMB here:
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