



**Textile
Exchange**

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**MATERIALS MATTER
STANDARD PILOT V1.0**



**MATERIALS MATTER
STANDARD PILOT V1.0**
CRITERIA FOR DOWN

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Criteria for Down

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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 Down. 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 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:



SHEEP
WOOL

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



MOHAIR

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



ALPACA

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



SKINS

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



DOWN

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



RECYCLED

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.



MMCF

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.



COTTON

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.



BIO-
MATERIALS

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.



CASHMERE

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.

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.



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*.



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

Major

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

- 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

Recomm

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

- 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

Major

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.

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.



1.1.9

The organization does not conduct “parallel production,” i.e. all animals of the species included in the scope of the certificate meet the requirements of the Standard.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) All animals of the same species as that which is certified and that are kept on the same *farm* are managed according to the Standard. A farm includes adjacent and non-adjacent land parcels that are all under the same management (i.e. the same organization/*farmer*).
- 2) When a farm produces *waterfowl*, rearing a certified flock followed by a non-certified flock would also constitute parallel production.
- 3) For sheep wool only, where an exemption has been granted for a certified organization to purchase mulesed animals for breeding purposes or where mulesed sheep were already in the flock at the time of first certification, their presence on the certified site does not cause a non-conformance under this criterion. However, their wool cannot be considered certified under the Standard and must be separated from that of certified animals.



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.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



DOWN



RECYCLED



MMCF



COTTON



BIO-
MATERIALS



CASHMERE

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

Major

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

Minor

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.



SHEEP WOOL MOHAIR ALPACA SKINS DOWN RECYCLED MMCF COTTON BIO-MATERIALS CASHMERE

2.1.3

Major

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 remendability (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



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



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

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

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

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



Major

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.

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



Major

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.

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



Major

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

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

Major

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**

Major

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



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



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

Major

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

Major

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

Major

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.



Principle 3 – Land Use

The organization monitors soil and land health throughout the entire farm for land-based material production, preventing or minimizing damage and taking proactive steps to mitigate any adverse effects. *Biodiversity* and ecosystem priority areas are recognized and managed, fostering harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife.

3.3 Soil Nutrients

3.3.6 If housed production systems are used, the organization has a written manure management plan.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that the organization has and implements a plan for the management of manure from its farm.
- 2) This criterion is only applicable to organizations raising waterfowl kept in housed systems, as these generate concentrated manure and often do not have any or sufficient additional land to utilize the nutrients from manure, so planning is important to avoid negative environmental impacts.



3.3.7 The manure management plan includes the following information:

Minor

- a. The volume of manure produced;
- b. The nutrient levels within the manure;
- c. The nutrient needs of the soil/plants where manure is spread; and
- d. The timing and method of application.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion details the minimum content of the manure management plan. Even if the land where manure is spread is not under the direct management of the organization, the plan shall include assessments of when the application is appropriate.
- 2) This criterion is only applicable to organizations raising waterfowl kept in housed systems, as these generate concentrated manure and often do not have any or sufficient additional land to utilize the nutrients from manure, so planning is important to avoid negative environmental impacts.



3.6 Biodiversity Management

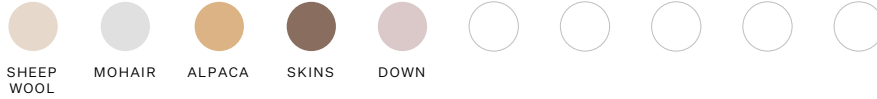
3.6.9 Lethal control of wildlife is only used where non-lethal measures have been demonstrated to be ineffective (i.e. wildlife remains a problem after non-lethal measures have been used), and lethal control is legally permitted.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Rats and mice are not considered “wildlife” under this criterion.
- 2) The organization shall be able to describe the choice of non-lethal methods attempted and how they were applied, demonstrating that all relevant non-lethal methods were exhausted before lethal control or live trapping were considered.

- 3) Lethal control or live trapping shall only be used if legal in the country of operation. It is the organization’s responsibility to check the relevant legislation in the country of operation to ensure that control measures are legally permitted, and that the species involved are not protected by law.
- 4) If used, live traps shall be managed to target the specific problem animal and shall be checked at least twice every 24 hours.
- 5) In situations where invasive species are being controlled under government-mandated programs where lethal control is the first response, the organization is exempt from meeting this criterion 3.6.9 for the invasive species named in the program if the organization can demonstrate it is following the program.



3.6.10 Lethal control targets the specific animal(s) that is/are posing a risk to human-wildlife coexistence.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to reduce the chances of non-selective persecution of non-conflict species, and to reduce the negative effects of such an action on biodiversity.
- 2) If one individual animal is causing a problem that cannot be controlled by non-lethal means, it is not acceptable for all members of that species to be targeted for lethal control. The organization shall implement monitoring to identify the animal(s) that is/are presenting a risk to livestock or crops. The only exception to this is when the species in question is invasive and being controlled under a national or regional plan.

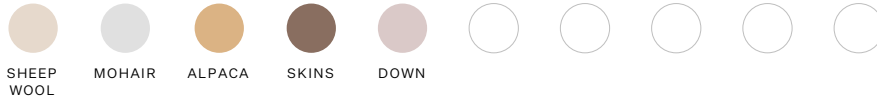


3.6.11 Lethal control is not used for any protected or threatened endemic species.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Endemic species considered include IUCN red list species that are listed as near threatened, vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered.



3.6.12 The organization ensures that lethal control of any animal posing a risk to human-wildlife coexistence results in instantaneous unconsciousness and death.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure the humane treatment of the animal prior to death, and to reduce pain and suffering. The only exception to this criterion is when all the requirements of criterion 3.6.14 below are met.
- 2) Acceptable methods include the use of a firearm by a skilled expert shooter.



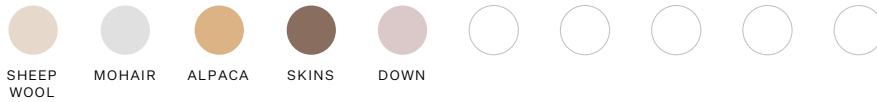
3.6.13 The organization does not use leg hold traps or snares.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to reduce pain and suffering, and the mutilation of non-select species that may need release from such traps.
- 2) Regardless of country legislation, this method of trapping, including “soft hold” traps, is prohibited.



3.6.14 A baiting program using poison for any species other than rats and mice is only used if all the following criteria are met:



Major

- a. The target species is classified as invasive;
- b. If the target species is a *predator*, it presents an active threat to the animals covered under the certificate scope;
- c. The organization has a written wildlife management plan that details the issue, the proposed control, and who does what, where and when;
- d. The wildlife management plan has an integrated approach that includes other species that could increase if the target wildlife population is reduced;
- e. Alternative compliant methods of control (i.e. shooting individual problem animals, use of CO₂ traps, etc.) are considered by the plan, with justification as to why they are unsuitable for the farm situation;
- f. At least two non-lethal control methods have been attempted (e.g. wildlife proof fencing, light or sound deterrents, livestock animals, etc.);
- g. The decision to use poison took into consideration the landscape or regional level impacts, and involved expert input from external bodies;
- h. The choice of poison took into consideration environmental impact, animal welfare, and legal restrictions;
- i. All bait (including that which is unused or uneaten), is utilized and disposed of according to product label requirements;
- j. The poison bait is distributed so as to avoid non-target wildlife, whether this is by primary or secondary poisoning; and
- k. Monitoring takes place before and after poison bait is used, to firstly determine where invasive wildlife is active, and secondly to determine the success of the baiting program.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only permitted if all the associated conditions (those applicable to the country and specific local context), are met and must be part of a wider conservation or regional program informed by experts.
- 2) Rel. 3.6.14.a. This means that the animal in question must be formally recognized as an invasive species and not just something considered a pest by the organization.
- 3) Rel. 3.6.14.a. 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.
- 4) Rel. 3.6.14.a. Non-native species are plants and animals living in areas where they do not naturally exist. “Non-native species” and “invasive species” cannot be used interchangeably.
- 5) Rel. 3.6.14.b. This means that the animal species to be controlled needs to be an active threat to the certified animals, and cannot be persecuted for historical issues, but rather current actions.
- 6) Rel. 3.6.14.c. The organization’s written wildlife management plan needs to align with or form part of the larger conservation or regional management plan, guided by the experts driving the invasive predator management program.
- 7) Rel. 3.6.14.d. An integrated approach takes account of the unintended consequences of the proposed control program. For example, foxes may be causing issues for sheep farmers, but they may also be keeping rabbit numbers in check and thereby supporting the reduction of crop damage done by that species.

- 8) Rel. 3.6.14.e. This sub-criterion calls for a baiting program to only be used where it can be demonstrated that all other compliant methods under the Standard are not effective or suitable for the purpose.
- 9) Rel. 3.6.14.f. This sub-criterion requires that at least two non-lethal controls have been attempted prior to lethal control being considered.
- 10) Rel. 3.6.14.g. These baiting programs cannot be done by individual organizations in isolation. Instead, they should be part of larger landscape-driven management programs and should therefore rely on the experts informing these programs and the considerations made in line with landscape needs.
- 11) Rel. 3.6.14.h. Programs to control invasive species must include the reasoning behind the poisons chosen, including consideration for the environment, animal welfare, and any legal restrictions. The goal is to avoid as many potential negative knock-on effects as possible and promote the most humane options (e.g. avoiding anti-coagulant products where possible).
- 12) Rel. 3.6.14.i. The bait is not to be used for any reason other than for the purpose of the program and must be managed as per the product label requirements. Unused bait must be collected and disposed of safely.
- 13) Rel. 3.6.14.j. The bait needs to be distributed in such a way as to reduce the risk of poisoning non-target wildlife (primary poisoning). This needs consideration of location, accessibility to the bait by non-target wildlife, and the possibility of scavenging on poisoned carcasses; thereby, resulting in secondary poisoning. No indiscriminate distribution of bait or poisons, such as aerial or spray applications, is permitted.
- 14) Rel. 3.6.14.k. Monitoring is crucial to ensure that the progress of the program is tracked to inform adaptation of interventions, and to assess the necessity of continuing with the program at all. Evidence-based outcomes are essential to monitor impact, both positive and/or negative, to ensure that these programs are effective and implemented responsibly.

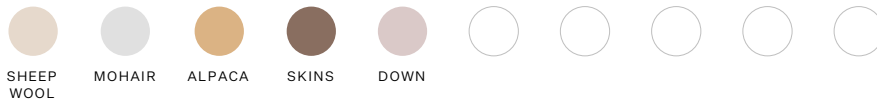


3.6.15 **The organization maintains records of each time lethal control methods are used, including date, target species, and reason for use of lethal methods.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion aims to ensure careful consideration is given to lethal control methods and requires justification for why the lethal methods were used. Tracking these interventions over time may help to monitor trends that can further inform management planning.

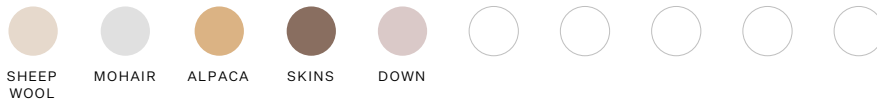


3.6.16 **If lethal control has been necessary, non-lethal control methods used to support human-wildlife coexistence are immediately reviewed to identify improvements and to avoid further conflict.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion ensures that lethal control does not get adopted as an ongoing method of wildlife management in the future, and that constant investigation into alternative non-lethal methods is implemented.



3.6.18

Greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting tools are used to determine annual GHG emissions and sequestrations, and the findings are used in the organization’s annual planning.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion recognizes any efforts made by the organization to record or track its GHG emissions with the intention of adapting management planning to reduce these by promoting the efficient use or the reduction of reliance on these inputs.

SHEEP
WOOL

MOHAIR



ALPACA



SKINS



DOWN



Principle 4 – Animal Welfare

The organization which raises animals adheres to the principles of The Five Domains Model of Animal Welfare throughout the entire lifespan of the animals. The objective is to ensure the animals have adequate nutrition, good health, a favorable environment, appropriate behavior, and a positive mental state. Those responsible for caring for the animals receive proper training and are competent in their roles.

4.1 Health and Welfare Plan

4.1.1



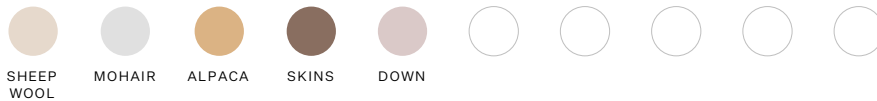
Major

The organization has a written health and welfare plan in place, which includes the following where applicable:

- a. How nutritional requirements are met;
- b. How access to clean and safe drinking water is maintained;
- c. Prevention and monitoring of health issues (e.g. prevalent diseases, vaccination, lameness, injuries, internal and external parasites);
- d. Standard procedures for animal husbandry operations (e.g. castration and euthanasia);
- e. Biosecurity;
- f. Grazing management; and
- g. Loading and transport.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For communal farmer groups, the written management plan for herd and/or flock health and animal welfare may be met at the group level.
- 2) Grazing management is not applicable to waterfowl producers.
- 3) A suggested template for this plan will be provided in the user manual.



4.1.2



Minor

The organization’s health and welfare plan is reviewed by a veterinarian at least annually.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Small producer: This criterion is a recommendation.
- 2) The health and welfare plan may be reviewed by the veterinarian during the annual visit (ref. criterion 4.1.4).



4.1.4



Minor

A veterinarian visits the farm at least annually to monitor the health condition of waterfowl.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For small farms, veterinary access shall be available as needed.



4.1.5

Minor

An emergency plan is in place to maintain animal welfare under exceptional circumstances (e.g. fire, power or water cut off, flood, snowstorm, feeding system breakdown, transport vehicle breakdown, epidemic disease outbreak, etc.), including:

- a. Measures that will be taken to ensure adequate feed and water are available;
- b. A strategy for the provision of *shelter*;
- c. A strategy for assessment and treatment of animals in an epidemic disease outbreak; and
- d. How arrangements will be made, if necessary, to relocate, sell, or humanely euthanize animals to ensure their welfare is not adversely affected.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A written emergency plan exists, addresses the points listed in the criterion and is applicable to the organization (i.e. mitigation of circumstances that are at higher risk of occurrence are given more detail).
- 2) For communal farmer groups, the written emergency plan may be prepared at the group level.
- 3) A suggested template for this plan will be provided in the user manual.



4.1.6

Minor

If personal protection equipment is required, it is either made available by the organization, or visitors are informed of what is required in advance of their arrival.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This is most likely to be applicable to commercial, housed systems of waterfowl production.



4.1.7

Recomm

Foot brush/disinfectant or barrier footwear systems are provided at the entrance to the farm.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This is most likely to be applicable to commercial, housed systems of waterfowl production.



4.1.9

Major

Health and welfare inspections are conducted at least twice per day to monitor for signs of disease, injury, or any other signs of ill health.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) An adequate wellness check includes the following:
 - Walk slowly and carefully through the flock to find injured or lame waterfowl;
 - Be sure to walk close enough to view all waterfowl to identify any issues;
 - Identify any sick or injured waterfowl;
 - Check that all feeding and watering equipment is clean and in good working order; and
 - Check waterfowl feces for signs of disease or worms.



4.1.11

Critical

Workers are *knowledgeable* and demonstrate competency in handling animals, possess and practice the ability necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals, and conduct husbandry procedures, euthanasia, and on-farm *slaughter* that meet the requirements of the Standard.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Workers are knowledgeable in current best practices for animal welfare for the species they work with, as well as recognize when they need to call on veterinarians or other experts.
- 2) Workers who are responsible for conducting any handling, husbandry procedures, euthanasia and on-farm slaughter can describe, when interviewed, techniques that align with the requirements of the Standard.



4.1.18

Critical

Animals that are found suffering from welfare or health problems are treated promptly.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Treatment is “prompt” when it is delivered as soon as possible after the health problem is discovered. For housed animals, this could be within minutes and certainly within an hour, for animals out on pasture that must be caught before treatment, potentially requiring a return to the farm for equipment and the assistance of other workers, it could be several hours before treatment can be accomplished.



4.1.19

Major

Treatment is not withheld in order to preserve the eligibility of individual animals, herds, or flocks for market.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is most relevant where additional certifications that prohibit the use of some medications are held by the certified organization. For example, some retailer programs for meat prohibit all use of antibiotics.



4.1.20

Minor

Sick or injured animals that need to be removed from the herd or flock are provided a safe space for their treatment and recovery.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Not all sick or injured animals need to be removed from the herd or flock for care or treatment to be done, and treating animals within the herd or flock can sometimes lead to quicker recovery.
- 2) Animals that are unable to keep up with the rest of the herd or flock and/or find it difficult to access feed and water may need to be placed in hospital pens or similar.

3) The organization does not need to have a designated hospital pen or similar available at all times but, if the organization does not have a designated area, it shall be able to show how it could create one if needed.



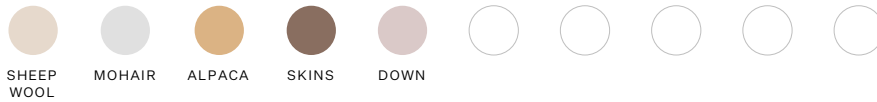
4.1.21

When advice is needed on prevention, treatment and/or strategies to avoid the development of resistant parasites, such advice is sought from a veterinarian or other specialist advisor.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) This requirement is specific to the challenges of parasites that are or may become resistant to treatment, as is happening with some types of medication in certain regions.



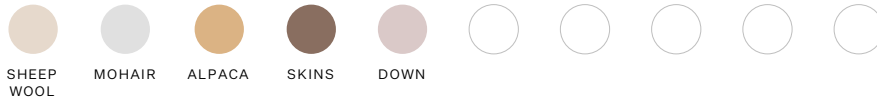
4.1.23

Treatments for the health of the animals are administered according to the label or veterinary advice.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) The organization shall have guidance available to workers on the use of common health treatments and/or interviewed workers responsible for administering treatment can describe how they assess dosage and administer the products appropriately.



4.1.24

For all treatments, the organization maintains records detailing:

Minor

- a. Substance (product) administered and reason for treatment;
- b. Animal or group identification;
- c. Number of animals treated;
- d. Date of treatment; and
- e. Withdrawal period.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) Records provided by the organization demonstrate that this criterion is met.



4.1.26

The organization maintains mortality records for animals that die or are euthanized.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) Records provided by the organization demonstrate that this criterion is met.

- 2) Records distinguish between animals that die (or are found dead) and those that are euthanized and provide a reason for death (where known).



4.1.27

Unexpected deaths and disease outbreaks are investigated; preventive and remedial actions are taken.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is aware of prevalent diseases and/or other risks that could lead to disease or death.
- 2) If deaths or disease outbreaks occur outside normal expectations, these are investigated, with external expert advice if necessary, and remedial actions taken to avoid recurrence.
- 3) Records are kept of any remedial actions taken and their result.



4.1.28

If mortality rates exceed expected levels, actions are taken to resolve the problem.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) There is no set “expected level” of mortality determined by the Standard.
- 2) The organization shall document its expectations for overall mortality and/or mortality for different types or age groups of animals and, if rates exceed these limits, the organization shall demonstrate that it investigates the cause and takes action to bring mortality back to its expected levels.
- 3) The organization shall keep records of mortality rates and the actions taken as a result.



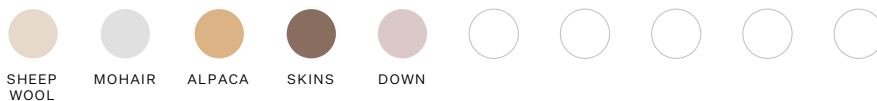
4.1.29

Species of animals kept on the farm which are not included in the certificate scope are also treated humanely. These animals are not continuously under close confinement, and receive nutrition, care, handling, and veterinary attention as necessary for their health, safety, and comfort.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The auditor is not expected to perform a full audit of the welfare for all non-certified species on the site, but if concerns about the management and welfare of other species are observed while auditing the certified species, this criterion is applicable.
- 2) Other species may include working animals, guardian animals, and/or other species of livestock on the certified site.
- 3) Close confinement is defined as situations when an animal does not have freedom of movement to stand up, lie down, move around, and/or get away from other animals.



4.2 Animal Nutrition

4.2.4

Waterfowl are provided with sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs and to maintain them in good condition.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization supplies palatable feed that meets the needs of different ages and types of waterfowl. For example, young waterfowl in the brooding phase require higher protein diets than older waterfowl.



4.2.5

Feed is continuously available to animals during daylight hours.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For waterfowl with access to free ranging areas, this could include vegetation as well as feed provided by the organization.



4.2.6

There is sufficient space at feeders such that waterfowl can eat without undue competition.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Observed waterfowl have space to feed if they choose. There is no sign of waterfowl queuing for access to feeders.



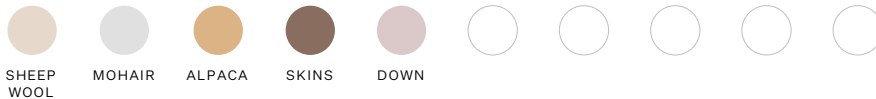
4.2.7

Growth promoters are not used.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Growth promoters are not routinely used in waterfowl or fiber animal production, and are prohibited in many countries; however, this criterion is included in the Standard as some farming systems still use growth promoters for flock or herd-based treatments.
- 2) Antibiotics can function as growth promoters, so any herd- or flock-wide use of such products is justified as addressing a disease rather than simply promoting growth.



4.2.8

Waterfowl are not force-fed, including by contractors through outsourcing.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviews with workers and a review of waterfowl management are conducted to demonstrate that force-feeding does not take place.

2) Any splitting of large flocks into smaller groups should be investigated by the auditor or the group manager (under a group scope certificate). When force-feeding is done, waterfowl are typically split into small, penned groups in the last two to three weeks before slaughter.



4.2.9 The organization does not source waterfowl that were force-fed.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) This is only a risk if older waterfowl are sourced by the organization. If this occurs, the organization shall provide details of the source and how it ensures these waterfowl were not force-fed.



4.2.10 Where soy is included in the animals' diets, it is not sourced from countries where there is a high risk that cropland was created by deforestation or conversion, unless there is verification that this has not occurred.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The cutoff date for deforestation and conversion for this criterion is December 31, 2020.
- 2) Acceptable verification may include declarations from feed suppliers of country of origin where the risk for deforestation/conversion is considered low, and/or a relevant certification such as the Round Table on Responsible Soy (RTRS).

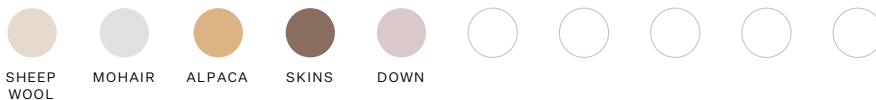


4.2.11 Animals have an adequate supply of clean, safe drinking water every day.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Water (supplied from troughs, drinkers, or natural water sources) is clean and of good quality, and at an easily accessible level at all times.
- 2) Where sheep, goats and alpacas cannot have continuous access to water (e.g. in nomadic herding systems), they are able to drink their fill at least twice per day – in the morning and the evening.
- 3) Waterfowl shall have continuous access to water.



4.2.17 Waterfowl are not deprived of food or drinking water for more than eight (8) hours.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

1) The organization ensures that animals are either returned to feed and water by the maximum determined in the criterion or are slaughtered by the time this maximum is reached.

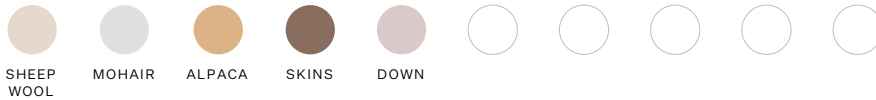


4.2.18 Feed is properly stored to ensure that quality is maintained, and contamination is avoided.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion applies to stored forages (e.g. hay) as well as concentrate or grain-based feeds.
- 2) Proper storage ensures feed remains dry, does not allow easy access for rodents or wild birds, and does not lead to contamination with mold or foreign bodies.

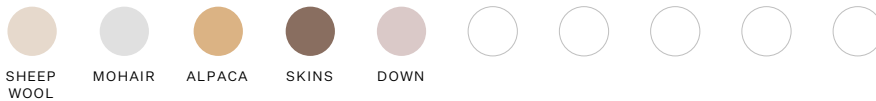


4.2.19 The organization performs regular checks and monitoring to ensure feed and water quality and quantity are maintained, and promptly rectifies any identified supply or storage problems.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The appropriate frequency of checks will depend on the source and availability of feed and water (e.g. natural pasture and water sources where animals always have free access require less oversight than when animals are housed).
- 2) Feed and water are checked whenever animals are inspected.
- 3) Any problems found shall be addressed promptly.



4.3 Living Environment

4.3.1 Housing and handling systems are designed, constructed, and maintained so as to minimize stress and the likelihood of injury to the animals.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The maintenance of housing and handling systems ensures that there are no sharp edges, projections or other features that could cause injury to animals, and that animals do not have access to any electrical points.
- 2) Handling systems are only relevant for fiber animals (i.e. mammals). They shall be designed to accommodate the animals to be handled (e.g. animals tend to move better around curves than at right angled corners).
- 3) This criterion is also applicable to shearing sheds for fiber animals (i.e. mammals).



4.3.2 Housing is located away from areas of (potential) runoff.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Runoff is considered any water running to housing.
- 2) If there are known cases of this occurring, there is a mechanism in place to prevent runoff from entering the housing.

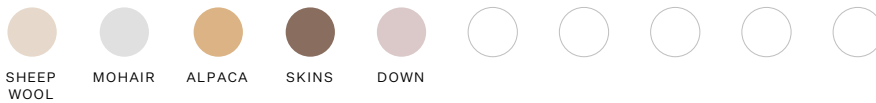


4.3.3 All buildings that are in use on the site are structurally sound.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A building or outdoor pen is considered to be structurally sound if it is capable of adequately and safely confining animals without risk of injury (e.g. from collapse of all or part of the structure).

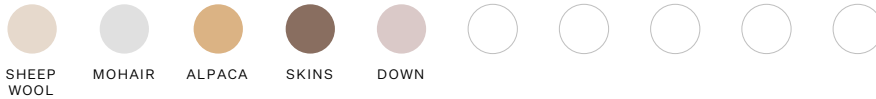


4.3.4 Infrastructure is inspected regularly and maintained in good condition or repaired, as necessary.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The frequency of inspection and maintenance relates to the frequency of use (e.g. shearing sheds shall be inspected and any necessary maintenance conducted ahead of shearing; however, if the sheds are not used at other times of the year there is no need for monthly inspections).



4.3.6 Waterfowl have access to protective housing or shelter to prevent them from suffering from heat and cold stress.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) In systems where waterfowl are permanently housed, they are therefore protected from wind, rain, and snow, but the temperature within the house also shall be managed (e.g. by insulation, cooling fans, etc.), depending on external conditions.
- 2) In free-ranging systems the waterfowl may have continual free access to a house or shelter; however, in smaller scale systems waterfowl may be taken out to a range area in the morning and brought back to shelter at night. During such daytime free-ranging periods, if waterfowl could be exposed to temperatures that could cause heat or cold stress, suitable shelter (either natural or manufactured), shall be provided.



4.3.7 Hatchlings are provided with appropriate supplemental brooding heat.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization provides supplemental heat for the first few weeks of life, for hatchlings raised away from their parents.
- 2) Brood temperature should be set at around 32°C (90°F) for the first week and reduced by 3°C to 6°C (5°F to 10°F) per week after that.

3) Observing how the hatchlings are spread under the heat source is a good indication of correct temperature. If hatchlings are evenly spread under the heat source the temperature is correct. If they are spread to the edges of the pen, it is too hot. If they are huddled under the heat source, it is too cold.



4.3.8 Animals are protected from the threat of predators.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that the organization is aware of local predator threats and takes appropriate action to protect its livestock. This criterion does not set an expectation that no animal will ever be attacked or injured by a predator.
- 2) There are many acceptable options for protecting animals from predators, including fencing, use of night kraals, herders that accompany animals, livestock guardian animals, shelters on the range for waterfowl that are outside, etc.



4.3.9 Any farm cats, dogs, and/or other pets are kept out of the waterfowl housing and shelter area.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Farm cats, pet dogs, and other pets are not seen in waterfowl housing and shelter areas.
- 2) The only exception to this is if livestock guardian animals are in use to protect waterfowl and these have been bonded to the flock.

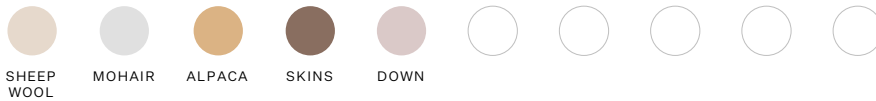


4.3.10 Housing is well ventilated.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable when animals are held in roofed buildings.
- 2) Buildings are effectively ventilated so as to avoid high humidity, condensation, or the build-up of harmful concentration of gases such as ammonia and carbon dioxide.
- 3) Levels of dust and ammonia in housing are not at levels which are noticeably unpleasant to humans. Ammonia and dust are checked at animal height, not at human height.

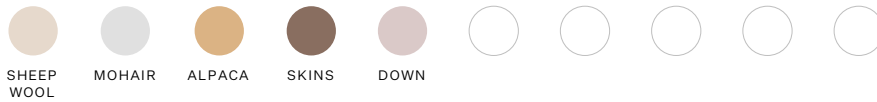


4.3.11 Where automatic ventilation systems or other mechanical systems of ventilation are required to maintain air quality, an alarm system is in place that alerts workers to failures in these systems.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable where there are automatic or mechanical ventilation systems in place.
- 2) Alarm systems may issue an audible or visual alarm at the building where systems have failed or an automated call or text to a cell phone belonging to someone who can and will take action.

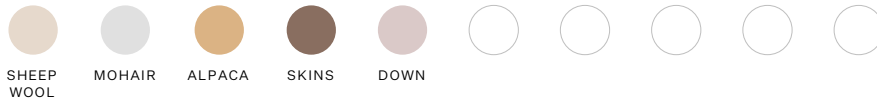


4.3.12 Housing and pens are kept in a sanitary and safe condition.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable to outdoor pens as well as buildings.
- 2) For fiber animals, manure is removed from housing or shelters on a regular basis depending on how often housing is used, and the length of time animals are housed.
- 3) For waterfowl, litter does not need to be removed throughout the lifetime of the flock, but litter management should be carried out in a way which reduces any risk of disease transfer between flocks.
- 4) All applicable equipment and services, including water bowls and troughs, ventilating fans, heating and lighting units, fire extinguishers, and alarm systems are inspected and cleaned regularly.

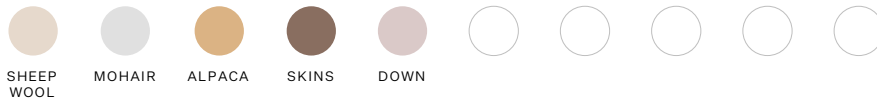


4.3.13 Housing and shelters provide animals with dry, safe, and comfortable footing.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals are not seen to slip or fall when being moved in pens or housing.
- 2) For fiber animals: If the floor in holding pens is made of smooth concrete it should be grooved to provide grip and/or covered with bedding or rubber matting.
- 3) For waterfowl: For hatchlings in particular, slippery flooring can lead to leg problems (splay leg), but abrasive flooring can also cause damage to the bottom of the waterfowl's feet.



4.3.15 Waterfowl experience a minimum of seven (7) hours of uninterrupted darkness — or near darkness — at night, and a minimum of eight (8) hours of light during the day, except those brooding under a heat lamp up to four (4) weeks of age.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is not applicable if waterfowl are solely managed under natural lighting conditions, with no artificial light in housing or pens.
- 2) Where artificial light is provided, the organization shall demonstrate the automated timer settings for lighting in a 24-hour period, and/or how they ensure manual control of lighting meets this criterion.
- 3) Where artificial light is provided, light intensity for the minimum eight hours of light during the day shall be at least 25 lux.



4.3.16 Where waterfowl are housed indoors, there is at least thirty (30) minutes dusk where light levels are reduced, and at least thirty (30) minutes dawn where light levels are increased either side of periods of darkness or near darkness.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is not applicable if waterfowl are solely managed under natural lighting conditions, with no artificial light in housing or pens.
- 2) The organization shall be able to demonstrate its lighting control capabilities for gradual decrease/increase of light intensity.



4.3.17 Shelters and housing allow natural light to enter.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Natural light shall be available to waterfowl during daylight hours for this criterion to be met.
- 2) Natural light may enter through windows, light wells, opened curtain sides, etc.



4.3.18 When artificial light is used, it is distributed evenly.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) There are no areas of bright light or deep shadow within the housed area when artificial lighting is used.



4.3.24 Waterfowl have sufficient available space indoors for all of them to freely move, stand, turn around, stretch their wings, and run.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to ensure that waterfowl can perform their normal behaviors, considering the pen layout as well as the total space available.
- 2) Free movement means that waterfowl are able to move and stretch their wings without having to touch the walls of the outdoor area, and able to rise to their full height unhindered.



4.3.25 Stocking density for ducks does not exceed the following:



Minor

Individual Duck Weight (kg)	Max. Stocking Density (kg/m ²)
1.5	17
2.0	18
2.5	20
3.0	21

3.5	22
4.0	23
4.5	24

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) To confirm appropriate stocking density, the total area available to the waterfowl is divided by the number and weight of the waterfowl present.
- 2) If the waterfowl remain in the house until slaughter, the space provided shall meet the needs of the waterfowl at their anticipated final weight.



4.3.26 Stocking density for geese does not exceed the following:

Minor

- a. From post brooding until thirteen (13) weeks of age: four (4) geese/m².
- b. From thirteen (13) weeks of age and older: three (3) geese/m².

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) To confirm appropriate stocking density, the total area available to the geese is divided by the number and age of the geese present.
- 2) If the geese remain in the house until after 13 weeks of age, the space provided shall meet their needs at that age (i.e. 3 geese/m²).
- 3) If the organization plans to move geese to new pens at 13 weeks of age in order to meet the increased space required, the organization shall demonstrate it has sufficient additional pen space available.



4.3.27 Waterfowl are not housed in cages.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A cage is considered a fully enclosed structure made of mesh, bars, or wires. Both barren (battery), and furnished (colony or enriched), cage systems are prohibited.
- 2) This criterion does not apply to transport containers when waterfowl are only contained in those temporarily.
- 3) If waterfowl are temporarily held in cages, for vaccinations or other justified reasons, justification is provided in writing from a qualified veterinarian.



4.3.30 Waterfowl have continual access to dry, mold-free bedding.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The auditor should assess how friable (easily crumbled), the bedding is. The bedding does not stick to boots as the auditor walks through the house. It does not form a lump when compressed that retains its shape once compression is released, nor does it release water when compressed.

- 2) The areas around water points are difficult to keep dry due to the behavior of waterfowl using water for preening, but any caked, damp, or wet areas of bedding in this area should not exceed more than 10% of the total area of the house or pen.
- 3) Waterfowl do not have wet bedding stuck to their feathers.
- 4) Pens with mesh or slatted flooring areas are not exempt from the need to be bedded. Mesh or slatted flooring may be covered to create the equivalent of a solid surface to hold bedding.



4.3.31 When nesting areas are provided, they:



Minor

- a. Are at least partially closed;
- b. Contain friable nesting material;
- c. Are kept dark, so that they are attractive nesting sites; and
- d. Are weatherproof and dry.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for breeding/laying flocks.
- 2) The presence of floor eggs is a potential indicator that nest boxes are either not attractive or not sufficient in number, particularly if these are found in secluded areas in the house or pen.



4.3.32 When nesting boxes are provided, there is at least one (1) nest box for every four (4) waterfowl.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for breeding/laying flocks.
- 2) The presence of floor eggs is a potential indicator that nest boxes are either not attractive or not sufficient in number, particularly if these are found in secluded areas in the house or pen.



4.3.36 Waterfowl raised for meat have free outside access beginning at forty-two days (42) days of age at the latest.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If the organization only has waterfowl that are expected to be slaughtered before they reach 42 days of age, or only has breeding flocks/parent waterfowl, this criterion is not applicable.
- 2) When the organization can show that the expected age of slaughter is 42 days of age or less, and that exceeding 42 days of age before slaughter only occurs in unforeseen circumstances such as breakdown at slaughter facility, extreme weather that precludes transport of waterfowl or similar, outdoor access need not be provided for individual flocks affected up to the age of 49 days of age.
- 3) Where this criterion is applicable, the organization can provide a record of the age at which each flock is provided with outdoor access.
- 4) Weather conditions may not be used as a reason for withholding outdoor access once waterfowl reach 42 days of age unless these are extreme emergency conditions (e.g. ice storm or cyclone).



4.3.37



Where outdoor access is required, waterfowl have free access to an outdoor area during daylight hours that is big enough to enable them all to move freely, stand, turn around, stretch their wings, and run.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable in situations where outdoor access is provided.
- 2) Free movement means that waterfowl are able to move and stretch their wings without having to touch the walls of the outdoor area, and able to rise to their full height unhindered.



4.3.38



Where outdoor access is required, waterfowl can easily access outdoor areas and there is a combined length of exits to the outside of at least four (4) m for every hundred (100) m² of floor space.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable in situations where outdoor access is required, and/or where waterfowl have the choice to go in and out of housing throughout the day. If all waterfowl are shut in buildings overnight but taken to free ranging areas to be outside all day, this criterion is not applicable. If the organization chooses to offer outdoor access in other circumstances, following this criterion is not required but is considered good practice.
- 2) There may be multiple small exits or fewer larger exits from the house to the outdoor area. Either is acceptable, as long as the combined length of all exits open to waterfowl during daylight hours meets the requirement of the criterion.
- 3) To ensure easy access, exits shall be high enough for waterfowl to easily pass through without having to jump or fly up to access them.



4.3.39



Outdoor space is not entirely waterlogged or muddy.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable in situations where outdoor access is provided. If the organization chooses to offer outdoor access in other circumstances, this criterion shall be met.
- 2) It is understood that it may not be possible to keep the outdoor area completely dry at all times, but it must also not become entirely waterlogged or muddy, so that it is unattractive for waterfowl to use and/or promotes disease or causes foot problems.



4.3.40



Waterfowl have sufficient outdoor space that is consistently dry.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable in situations where outdoor access is provided.

- 2) This leadership criterion goes beyond criterion 4.3.39 to encourage management of the outdoor area to ensure that the majority of it is consistently dry. It is acceptable for the outdoor area to be wet during or immediately after precipitation, but drainage, application of substrate to soak up water, or other techniques quickly return the area to a dry state.



4.3.41 At least 50% of outdoor space is covered by vegetation.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable in situations where outdoor access is required.
- 2) The auditor shall view the outdoor area and visually assess how much vegetation is present.
- 3) Each area occupied by waterfowl shall have at least 50% vegetative cover to meet this criterion.
- 4) The expectation is that this criterion is met by the presence of growing, green vegetation. However, outside of the growing season, the organization can maintain coverage through the provision of cut or harvested vegetation.



4.3.43 Waterfowl have access to water deep enough for them to cover their heads and shake water over their bodies without difficulty.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The water that is provided must allow for the behavior specified in the criterion. Water for this behavior may be provided as part of drinking water provision or through separate systems. If provided as part of drinking water provision, criterion 4.2.11 must be met and disease related to dirty water must not be seen.
- 2) If nipple drinkers are the only available water source, this criterion is not met. Bell drinkers may allow for this behavior - see signs below that indicate waterfowl are unable to do this. Open troughs of a width that allows easy access for multiple waterfowl to dip their heads are preferred.
- 3) If waterfowl are unable to perform the behaviors noted in this criterion, they will have dirty bills, nostrils, and eyes, and may be more at risk of disease and infection.
- 4) Water that is provided in open troughs is recycled or replaced at a frequency such that it does not become fouled to the point waterfowl will not use it and/or it becomes a disease risk. Where water is provided in open troughs, care is taken to ensure young waterfowl are not at risk of drowning.
- 5) If water for behavioral needs is provided separately to drinking water, there is enough provision that all waterfowl could reasonably have free access if they so desired and waterfowl are not seen queuing or fighting to get access to water resources.



4.3.44 Waterfowl have access to water deep enough to be able to swim without their feet touching the bottom.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall demonstrate that waterfowl have continual access to water deep enough for them to swim from the age of three weeks onwards.
- 2) The size of any open water provided allows easy access to multiple waterfowl. A suggested minimum width and length for each individual water point is 50 cm by 100 cm. The suggested minimum depth is 10 cm.
- 3) There are enough water points, of suitable size and depth, such that waterfowl are not queuing or fighting for access.



4.3.45 Waterfowl are provided with environmental enrichment.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to reduce the risk of injurious feather pecking. Provision of enrichment has been shown to be effective for many waterfowl species.
- 2) Examples of enrichment include providing foraging materials, artificial refuge areas, scattered food for foraging, and access to water deep enough to swim.



4.3.46 Total available outdoor space is equivalent to at least two (2) m² per waterfowl.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where outdoor access is provided, the total outdoor area available to the waterfowl is divided by the number of waterfowl that have access to verify conformance.



4.4 Husbandry Procedures

4.4.26 Modifications to the bills of waterfowl including bill trimming, debeaking, or infrared bill treatment (or trimming), are not conducted.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Observed waterfowl do not show any obvious sign of bill trimming.
- 2) The organization has a system in place to ensure that hatcheries supplying them with ducklings or goslings do not perform infrared bill trimming or treatment, or any other physical alterations.



4.4.27 No other physical alterations of waterfowl happen, such as:

Major

- a. Declawing;
- b. Hole punching;
- c. Wing clipping;
- d. Trimming of feathers; or
- e. Castration.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Observed waterfowl do not show any signs of physical alterations.



4.4.28 *Live plucking waterfowl for down and feathers does not occur.*

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to describe its down and feather collection methods, which shall only take place once waterfowl have been slaughtered.



4.4.29 *Molt harvesting, forced molting, or assisted molting does not occur.*

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Harvesting down and feathers that are naturally molted or shed by the waterfowl as a result of forced or assisted molting is not permitted.
- 2) In any case, it should be noted that forced or assisted molting is generally achieved by manipulation of nutrition, sometimes in conjunction with restricted lighting that would not meet other criteria in the Standard.



4.4.30 *All down comes from waterfowl raised for food, or from the parent flocks in supply chains that produce waterfowl for food.*

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is part of a supply chain where the focus of production is meat.
- 2) For smallholders, the stated rationale that ducks and geese are raised for home or local consumption is sufficient.
- 3) For larger operations, the organization shall be able to demonstrate that the main output of the supply chain is meat.



4.4.31 *The organization does not source animals that were ever live plucked, and it does not outsource animals for live plucking.*

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization only transfers live waterfowl off its site to go directly to slaughter. For any other sale or transfer of live waterfowl, the organization shall provide a justification and be able to explain how it ensures there is no risk of live plucking once the transfer has taken place.
- 2) If older waterfowl are sourced, the organization shall be able to provide details of the source, and how it ensures these waterfowl were not previously live plucked.
- 3) Sourcing hatchlings does not constitute a risk for live plucking.



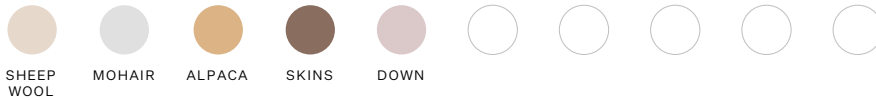
4.6 Herd Management

4.6.1 Animals are maintained in stable groups; mixing animals within the certified herd or flock is avoided.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The intention of this criterion is to allow established social order to be maintained by minimizing mixing. This is not a prohibition on any mixing of animals.
- 2) Mixing is specific to the mixing of animals within the certified herd or flock. This criterion is not applicable for mixed species grazing.
- 3) Whenever necessary to mix groups of animals, additional monitoring should take place to ensure non-dominant animals are not injured while a stable hierarchy is formed.
- 4) For down production, mixing may occur if young waterfowl are initially kept in multiple brooder circles and then all released into the main house. This is not a risky time for aggression. Mixing of older waterfowl should not be done.

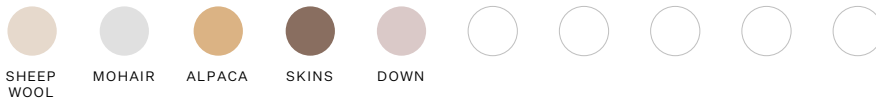


4.6.2 Isolation of individual animals is minimized.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Isolation shall only take place when necessary for animal health and welfare (e.g. treatment of a sick or injured animal may necessitate isolation).
- 2) If isolated animals are seen during the audit, the organization shall have good reason for this, based on supporting the animal's welfare.
- 3) The organization shall be able to describe instances where isolation may be necessary, and these relate to promoting the health and welfare of individual animals, and the wider herd or flock.

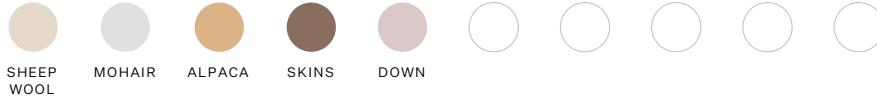


4.6.3 In case individual isolation cannot be avoided, the confined animal is given a companion or able to maintain visual contact with other animals of the same species. Exception may be made for quarantine purposes.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where it is not possible to have a companion in the same pen as an isolated animal, others of the same species shall at least be in sight.
- 2) Exceptions may be made for quarantine, where there is a potential risk of disease that could be spread to companion animals in close proximity to the isolated animal.
- 3) If an animal needs to be isolated for health reasons, it is understood that having a healthy companion in the same pen may not always be the best option (e.g. there may be a risk of disease transfer, or of an injured animal being knocked over by a companion). However, all the animals in scope of the Standard are herd or flock animals, and complete removal from the sight, smell, and sound of other animals of the same species can lead to stress.

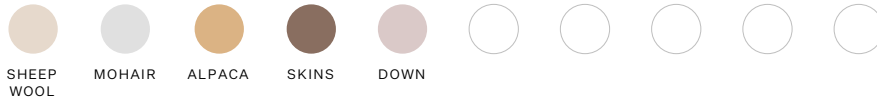


4.6.4 Any livestock guardian animals are suitable for the farm environment and the expected predator threat.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Any guardian animal that could pose a threat to livestock (e.g. guardian dogs with sheep and goats), is well trained before being left unsupervised.
- 2) Several animal species have been successfully used as livestock guardians. The most common are livestock guardian dogs, but donkeys and llamas have also been used.
- 3) The success of guardian animals will depend on the type and number of predators, the size of the herd or flock, and the number of guardians bonded to that flock. For example, llamas have been shown to chase small predators such as foxes away from the flock, but if the main threat is jackal or coyote, guardian dogs will be more appropriate. With a large flock and/or multiple potential predator attacks, multiple guardian animals will be needed.



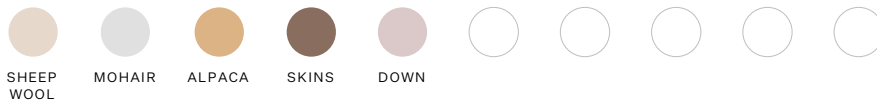
4.8 Handling and Transport

4.8.1 Animals are handled humanely; mistreatment of animals does not occur.

Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for all handling and movement of animals, including loading and unloading for transport.
- 2) The organization shall be able to describe its handling methods, and how it ensures all workers handle animals carefully and calmly at all times.
- 3) Workers shall be able to describe the signs that animals are becoming stressed (e.g. a lot of vocalization), and what actions they take to reduce stress.
- 4) No mistreatment of animals or poor treatment shall be seen during the audit.
- 5) Mistreatment includes but is not limited to rough physical contact such as kicking, striking, slamming gates on animals, tripping, throwing, or dropping animals, dragging, or pulling animals by the fleece, wings, tail, ears, head, horns, or neck, dragging by the back legs, or lifting by the legs.

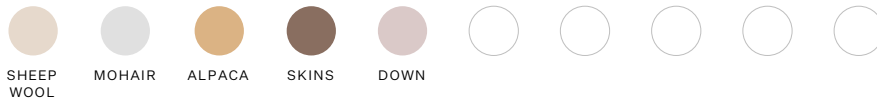


4.8.2 Positive human-animal relationships are developed through confident handling of animals from an early age.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion goes beyond the avoidance of bad handling, as covered by criterion 4.8.1, to the promotion of good handling and positive interactions between humans and animals.
- 2) The workers shall be able to demonstrate how they implement positive handling practices, especially when young animals are gathered for management tasks. Examples to show that workers understand positive handling could include stopping shouting or whistling when handling young animals for the first time or avoiding the use of dogs where possible. Workers may also provide evidence of completion of a low stress livestock handling course.
- 3) For waterfowl, handling of animals may be less important than how workers walk through houses, and otherwise interact with the waterfowl.



4.8.4

Extra care is taken when handling waterfowl with special needs, including hatchlings, chicks, sick, lame, or injured waterfowl.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall be able to describe what is meant by an animal with special needs, and the accommodation available for these animals.
- 2) Extra care includes letting animals with special needs have more time if they are being moved or are expected to move out of the way (e.g. when workers are walking through housing).
- 3) Extra care also involves extra thought about whether animals with special needs even need to be handled or moved.



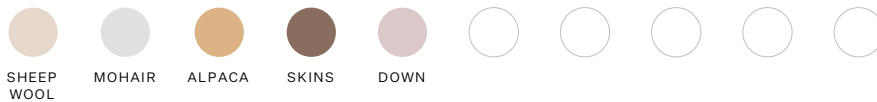
4.8.5

Animals are driven on foot in a calm manner at a relaxed pace, natural to that animal, and not faster than the pace of the slowest animal.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If animals are observed being moved during the audit, animals at the back of the group are not being pushed along or asked to speed up to a trot to keep up with those at the front.
- 2) Waterfowl in free ranging systems may be moved on foot to different ranging areas. If this is the case, this criterion also applies.



4.8.15

Before being transported, each waterfowl is assessed to determine if they are fit for transport. The following animals are not transported, unless it is for the purposes of veterinary treatment:

Major

- a. Sick, injured, weak, or disabled animals;
- b. Those that are unable to stand unaided and bear weight on each leg; and
- c. Those that cannot be moved without causing them additional suffering.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If waterfowl meeting these conditions are suffering and unlikely to recover, they are euthanized on the farm and not transported to slaughter.
- 2) If loading is observed during the audit, no waterfowl meeting the descriptions in the criterion are seen being loaded.
- 3) If loading is not observed, the organization can describe waterfowl that it would not transport, that aligns with the list in this criterion.



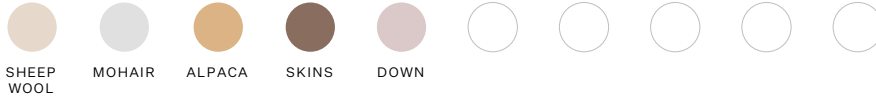
4.8.16 No animals shall have their legs tied or restrained.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No animal is seen during the audit with its legs tied, and interviews with workers confirm that this does not take place as part of any handling or transport.
- 2) The only exception to this criterion is when alpacas are being sheared, in which case the criteria of the Animal Shearing theme shall be met.
- 3) Alpacas shall not be restrained with ropes during transport (e.g. to ensure they remain sitting down).



4.8.18 Animals are loaded and unloaded in a way that minimizes the risk of pain, injury, or distress.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If loading is observed during the audit, animals are loaded and/or unloaded carefully and calmly.
- 2) If loading is not observed during the audit, the organization describes how loading is conducted, and can describe how it reduces risks of pain, injury, or distress. The most important factor is ensuring sufficient time to allow animals to find their own way onto or off the truck.



4.8.19 Waterfowl are not carried by their legs.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No workers are seen carrying waterfowl by their legs during the audit.
- 2) If no waterfowl handling is seen during the audit, interviews with workers show that this method of carrying waterfowl does not take place.



4.8.20 Each worker does not carry more than two ducks in each hand.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No workers are seen carrying more than two ducks in one hand during the audit.
- 2) If no duck handling is seen during the audit, interviews with workers show that this limit is understood.
- 3) Best practice: Ducks should be handled by placing one hand on each side of the body, over the wings, and lifting the duck, then sliding one hand under the body to hold the legs.



4.8.21 Geese are carried individually.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No workers are seen carrying more than one goose at a time.
- 2) If no handling of geese is seen during the audit, interviews with workers show that this limit is understood.
- 3) Geese should be handled by placing one arm around the body and lifting the goose under the armpit, whilst the other hand carefully holds onto the neck.
- 4) Adult geese may also be caught and lifted by both shoulder joints, with a finger in between, to separate each shoulder. Ideally, the breast should be fully supported simultaneously.



4.8.22 Carrying distances of waterfowl are kept to a minimum.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If waterfowl are to be caught and placed into transport crates or onto a trailer, the crates or trailer are placed close to the area in the house where waterfowl are caught, so they are transferred with minimal carrying.



4.8.23 When transport crates are used, waterfowl are placed carefully into the crates, ensuring that none are on their backs.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Observation of catching and loading during the audit shows care taken when placing waterfowl in crates so that none are on their backs.
- 2) If catching and loading are not observed during the audit, interviewed workers shall describe catching and loading practices that meet this criterion.



4.8.24 When transport crates are used, these are maintained in good condition so as not to pose any risk of injury to waterfowl.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Transport crates in use, or identified as available for use, are in a state of good condition with no broken or protruding parts that could injure waterfowl or cause them to get body parts caught.



4.8.25

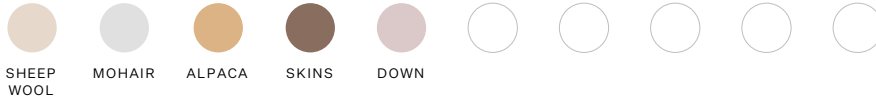
The organization maintains records of injury and death rates associated with transport of its animals and takes appropriate action to address high rates.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall have a goal that no animals are injured or die during transport.
- 2) The organization shall provide records of any injuries and deaths that are associated with transport.
- 3) Any instances where rates of injury or death exceed 0.5% of transported animals or, where injury and/or death rates below this start to show an increase, the organization shall investigate and take actions to reduce that rate in future transport.



4.8.26

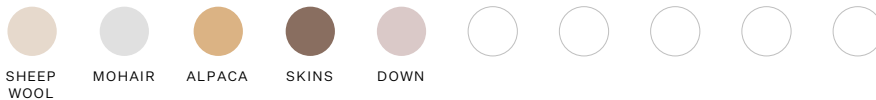
The organization does not knowingly sell its animals to traders or brokers who intend to export its livestock for slaughter internationally.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Live export refers to the sale or transfer of animals from one country to another.
- 2) Knowingly selling animals for live export means that the organization is selling directly to a trader or broker who only deals in live export, and/or when the buyer has advertised or otherwise communicated to the organization that animals sold will be sent for live export.
- 3) If an organization sells animals through an auction barn or market where there are multiple buyers, and the organization has no control over who purchases the stock, this is not considered knowingly selling for live export.
- 4) This criterion is not applicable when live export is across a single border to a neighboring country, animals are only transported on land, and transport is accomplished within all criteria of the Handling and Transport theme of the Standard.



4.9 Handling and Transport Managed by the Organization

4.9.1

At every stage of transport, animals are cared for by a sufficient number of workers, who collectively possess the appropriate ability, knowledge, and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) When responsible for transport, the organization knows all the different people involved in transport from loading and departure from the certified site to final destination and unloading; and can confirm that they are all competent to ensure the requirements of the Standard are maintained throughout transport.



4.9.2 Where the responsibility changes, the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport provides a copy of all relevant procedures.



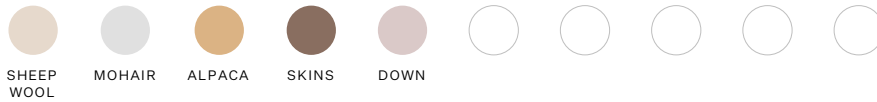
Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The person in charge of animals may change as they move from the farm to their final destination. The responsibility for implementing the criteria in the Standard related to transport lies with the person(s) selecting and presenting animals for transport and the person(s) or organization(s) accepting the animals for transport.
- 4) Where responsibility changes, there shall be a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

For example:

- Producer/consignor (prior to loading): Responsible for mustering and assembling animals; handling prior to loading and during loading.
- Transporter/driver (loading, unloading and management of animals during the journey): Responsible for loading density; additional inspections of livestock post loading; unloading at the destination.
- Receiver (e.g. processor, agent, saleyard manager/superintendent): Reception of animals at the destination; responsible for oversight when unloading.



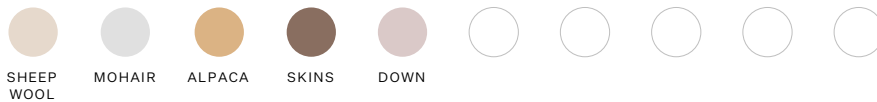
4.9.4 In the event of any delays arising during the journey, there is a contingency plan in place to ensure the needs of the animals are met.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization shall be able to provide details of contingency plans. These could include sources of alternative tractor units for trucks if there is a breakdown that cannot quickly be repaired, alternative route planning in case of road closures, options for rest stops if excessive delays prolong the journey, etc.



4.9.6 The vehicle used for transport is designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid injury and suffering, and to ensure the safety of the animals.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) Vehicles are designed or adapted for the transport of livestock and the maintenance of transport vehicles ensures that there are no sharp edges, projections or other features that could cause injury to animals.
- 4) Vehicles are constructed so that animals cannot get body parts stuck in vents, or other openings and cannot fall from the vehicle.



4.9.7 The transportation vehicle is clean and dry, prior to loading animals.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) If the vehicle can be observed during the audit, the criterion shall be verified. Otherwise, the organization shall describe its protocol for cleaning and ensuring any washed vehicle is completely dry prior to loading animals.

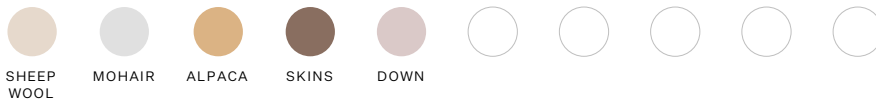


4.9.9 Animals have adequate ventilation or oxygenation during transport, even when stationary, which prevents the buildup of harmful concentrations of gases or impurities, water vapor or temperature.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization understands these principles for ensuring good ventilation and ensures that vehicles have adequate vents which can be adjusted (opened/shut) according to the number of animals on the truck and the outside conditions.
- 4) Animals in transport generate heat and moisture. If this is not removed through ventilation, animals can overheat.
- 5) If animals are transported in vehicles that are not well ventilated, there can also be a buildup of gases such as ammonia from manure and urine, and/or CO₂.



4.9.10 Where animals show signs of heat or cold stress or distress from exposure to noxious gases, immediate corrective actions are taken.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization has a protocol to take immediate actions if animals show any sign of distress during transport, e.g. adjusting vents, moving the vehicle to force air through or to get cross winds to clear out a buildup of noxious gases, or unloading some or all animals if necessary.
- 4) Levels of ammonia in vehicles shall not be at levels which are noticeably unpleasant to humans.



4.9.11 Animals are protected from adverse weather that may be a risk to the animals' health and welfare during transportation.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) The organization is aware of the weather conditions that could impact health and welfare, and ensures vehicles protect animals from these. If extreme weather conditions arise, and the available vehicles cannot protect the animals, transport should be rescheduled.

- 4) The adverse weather that could impact animal health and welfare will vary with season and region. Whether vehicles need to be roofed, how many vents are provided and whether this is natural, or fan assisted, and whether bedding is provided in transport, etc., will all vary depending on the situation.
- 5) In very cold weather, a vehicle with a solid front shall be used to reduce the wind chill factor.



4.9.12

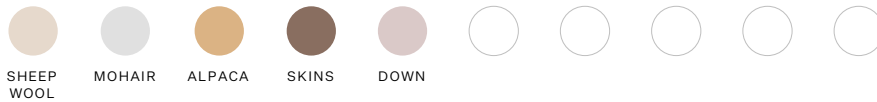
Animals are not transported when climatic conditions are likely to cause significant discomfort or harm.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) For waterfowl, the air temperature within the load should remain in the range of 10°C to 30°C (50°F to 86°F).
- 4) In hot regions, transport should take place in the early morning or evening when temperatures are lower and stopping for long periods should be avoided. If it is necessary to stop in hot weather, the vehicle shall be parked in the shade, and at a right angle to the wind direction to improve wind flow between animals.
- 5) The length of fleece on fiber animals will affect whether they are at risk of heat or cold stress. For example, animals that have recently been shorn are at risk of cold stress if transported in cold weather, and animals with a full fleece can be at risk of heat stress at 28°C (82°F), whereas for shorn sheep the upper critical temperature is 32°C (90°F).
- 6) An exception to this criterion is when animals are being moved away from regions where there is extreme weather, to better conditions. For example, moving animals out of drought-stricken regions where regardless of the time of day of the transport, the conditions may be very hot.
- 7) External temperature alone is not a good measure of the risk of heat stress. Including humidity as part of a temperature-humidity index will provide better insight as to whether fiber animals are at risk of heat stress.



4.9.16

Waterfowl are not overcrowded during transport.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) Exact space per waterfowl is specified below. For waterfowl in crates, the crate shall be designed so that waterfowl are able to sit comfortably, with their heads raised, but not stand.
- 3) For waterfowl that are moved in vehicles without being placed in crates, there shall be sufficient headroom for them to stand if they wish.



4.9.17

The number of waterfowl per container (stocking density) is determined before transport, based on the average weight of the waterfowl.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) The organization shall ensure that calculations are made prior to catching and loading waterfowl into containers. Calculations shall be based on the average weight of waterfowl and the size of transport containers. The calculation does not have to be written down, but the organization shall be able to describe how it is assessed and acted upon.



4.9.18 Stocking densities in transport do not exceed:

Minor

Weight of waterfowl (kg)	Space per waterfowl (cm ² /kg)
< 1.6	180 – 200
1.6 – 3	160
3 – 5	115
> 5	105

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) If transport is not observed during the audit: The organization provides information on the size of containers (or these may be seen), and the maximum number and weight of waterfowl that would be placed in each container.
- 3) To check stocking density when transport is observed during the audit: the size of the container used is divided by the number and average weight of waterfowl present.



4.9.19 Trucks are weighed upon arrival at the *slaughterhouse* to verify stocking density.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) The weight of trucks and the number of containers, waterfowl and their average weight is recorded.



4.9.20 Journeys are direct, without any prolonged stops.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) When the organization transports animals to slaughter or market, it does not bypass a nearby site to go to a further destination without a good reason.
- 4) Stops that take place as part of the journey, where animals remain on the transport vehicle should be planned, so there are no delays. For example, if the transport vehicle needs to pick up a second group of animals from a different site, there is coordination so that the second group has been mustered and is ready to load when the transport vehicle arrives.
- 5) Rest stops are not considered stops for this criterion.
- 6) Note that transport durations, as specified in the following criteria, shall be met for the animals that are loaded first.



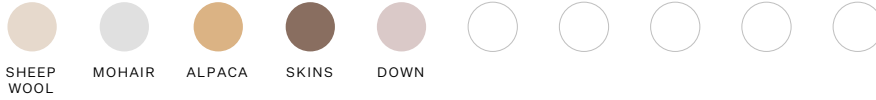
4.9.21 Animals are transported for the shortest possible time.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for mammals only in situations where the organization is responsible for transportation.
- 2) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 3) Journeys that take animals straight from origin to destination are preferred but, if the transport vehicle has to make several pickups, the route shall be planned to avoid major detours and/or doubling back.



4.9.30 Duration of transport of waterfowl does not exceed four (4) hours.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) This criterion does not apply to the transport of newly hatched ducklings and goslings.
- 3) For all other waterfowl transport, duration is calculated from departure of the loaded vehicle from the certified site until containers are unloaded at the destination.
- 4) Transport duration does not exceed four hours, unless waterfowl are being transported to slaughter and there is no site that can slaughter waterfowl according to the requirements of the Standard within a four-hours journey. In this case the journey to the nearest suitable *slaughter site* may exceed four hours, but the requirement that waterfowl be not without feed and water for more than eight hours still applies.



4.9.31 The words “LIVE WATERFOWL” or “LIVE ANIMALS” are visible in the local language on the outside of the truck.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is always applicable for waterfowl, whether the organization handles the transport itself or not.
- 2) If the vehicle can be seen during the audit, the auditor can confirm this. Otherwise, the organization shall confirm this is the case, ideally with photographic evidence.



4.10 Euthanasia and On-Farm Slaughter

4.10.1 There is a clear set of criteria for recognizing when an animal needs to be euthanized that all workers are aware of and competent to follow.

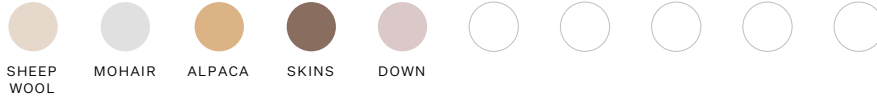


Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization has developed guidance on when euthanasia is appropriate, and interviewed workers are aware of the guidance. This shall be included in the euthanasia protocol within the animal health and welfare plan (ref. criterion 4.1.1).

- 2) No animal that meets the criteria for euthanasia is seen during the audit. Examples of when euthanasia may be appropriate include:
- When the animal is suffering a high level of pain;
 - When treatment is unlikely to be effective and/or cannot alleviate the animal’s pain and suffering;
 - Where even if treatment saves the animal, it will not be able to return to normal function; or
 - When a seriously sick or injured animal shows no sign of improvement 24 hours after treatment.
- 3) Once an animal has been identified as being sick, injured or otherwise in need of care, it is never acceptable to then leave it to die.



4.10.2

When animals are experiencing severe pain or illness and do not have a reasonable expectation of improvement, they are euthanized without delay.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No animals in need of euthanasia are seen on the certified site during the audit.



4.10.3

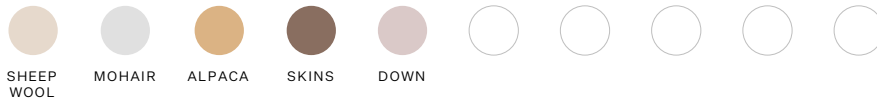
Euthanasia and/or on-farm slaughter is performed using a method that is quick, causes minimal stress and pain, and results in a rapid loss of consciousness followed by death, without the animal regaining consciousness.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization is aware of this overarching principle for euthanasia and on-farm slaughter and reflects it in its euthanasia protocol, as part of the health and welfare plan (ref. criterion 4.1.1).
- 2) Details of how this shall be achieved are provided by the criteria in the rest of this theme.



4.10.4

Only the following methods are used for euthanasia:



Major

- Captive bolt gun;*
- Hand-held stunning followed by exsanguination; or
- Cervical neck dislocation, if other options are not available.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization only uses cervical neck dislocation where either there is no availability of captive bolt guns or hand-held stunners in the region of production, or these are available on site, but the time taken to access them will cause the waterfowl too much additional suffering.



4.10.5 Manual cervical dislocation is only applied to waterfowl up to three (3) kg in weight.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If the organization has waterfowl on site that exceed or may exceed 3 kg in weight, it has and uses alternative acceptable methods of euthanasia for the heavier waterfowl.

**4.10.6 Mechanical cervical dislocation is only applied to waterfowl up to five (5) kg in weight.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Mechanical cervical dislocation uses a device to stretch and dislocate the waterfowl's neck. Mechanical dislocation based on crushing is not permitted.
- 2) If the organization has waterfowl on site that exceed or may exceed 5 kg in weight, it has and uses alternative acceptable methods of euthanasia for the heavier waterfowl.

**4.10.7 Individual workers or veterinarians euthanize no more than twenty (20) waterfowl by manual cervical neck dislocation in a day, unless this is required for waterfowl welfare, or where other qualified and experienced people are not available.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

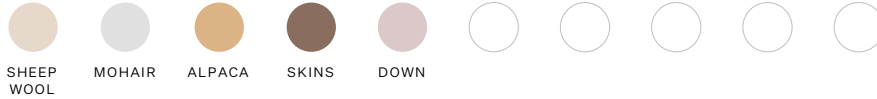
- 1) The organization has sufficient trained workers to ensure the limit of 20 waterfowl euthanized per day by manual cervical dislocation is only exceeded in situations such as disease outbreak, unforeseen absence of workers and other emergencies when sticking to the 20-waterfowl maximum would leave sick or injured waterfowl alive.

**4.10.12 When euthanasia or planned on-farm slaughter takes place, the stunning or killing device is positioned correctly, according to the species and the method being used.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviewed workers can identify the correct placement of the device they use.
- 2) The correct position for captive bolt or firearm slaughter of alpacas is with the device placed at the crown position (i.e. the highest point on the head), aiming downwards to the base of the jaw.
- 3) The correct position for penetrating captive bolt for polled sheep or goats is with the device placed at the intersection of two lines drawn from the outside corner of each eye to the middle of the base of the opposite ear.
- 4) In horned sheep and goats, an alternate position and orientation for penetrating captive bolt or gunshot is on a line from the poll and aimed downward towards the back of the throat.
- 5) An alternative position for placement of the penetrating captive bolt or firearm in horned animals is the front of the skull directing the bolt or bullet toward the spinal cord.
- 6) For waterfowl, the captive bolt should be placed on the highest point of the head with the device aimed straight down.
- 7) See the user manual for additional slaughter and euthanasia guidance.

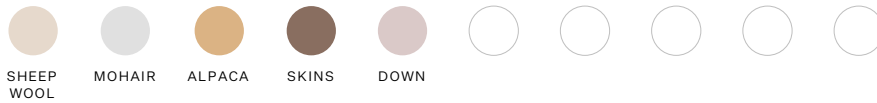


4.10.14 **If captive bolts or firearms are used for euthanasia or planned on-farm slaughter, the appropriate cartridge or propellant for the species and size of animal is used.**

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization shall justify its choice of cartridge or propellant for the animals on the certified site.
- 2) The right propellant will vary with the device used, the manufacturers’ recommendations, and the species and type of animals to be euthanized or slaughtered.



4.10.17 **Death is confirmed prior to disposal or further processing, through observing the following:**

Major

- a. Pupils dilated and centrally fixed;
- b. Lack of corneal or nictating membrane response;
- c. Limp body with no pulse, no muscle tone, no movement; wings drooping; and
- d. No rhythmic breathing.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Interviewed workers shall be able to demonstrate that all the listed signs are checked and confirmed before the animal is moved or further processing takes place.
- 2) If there is any doubt that the animal is dead, the stunning/killing method is repeated, and the animal is again monitored to confirm the signs of death.



4.11 Slaughterhouse

4.11.1 **The organization has documented standard operating procedures for all parts of the slaughterhouse operation, which are reviewed at least annually, and implemented appropriately.**

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Documented standard operating procedures that meet the requirements of this criterion are provided by the organization on request.



4.11.2

The organization has appointed a person responsible for animal welfare, who has the authority to stop slaughter operations if there is a risk to animal welfare.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization provides details of the worker or workers who meet this criterion.
- 2) At least one person is available at all times to make sure the slaughterhouse is operational.



4.11.3

The slaughterhouse complies with all applicable legislation on animal welfare and environmental management.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization presents information that demonstrates it is not currently under investigation for, or has been prosecuted for, failure to meet applicable laws and regulations.



4.11.4

All workers unloading, handling, stunning and slaughtering animals are competent to accomplish the tasks required of them, so as to protect animal welfare.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Workers observed during the audit demonstrate competence and are not seen to do anything that puts animal welfare at risk.
- 2) Workers who are responsible for conducting the procedures listed in this criterion describe, when interviewed, techniques that align with the requirements of the Standard.
- 3) The organization provides details of any internal oversight or evaluation of workers' competence to include areas that are monitored (e.g. the stunning point), and how often monitoring takes place.



4.11.5

Workers responsible for unloading, handling, stunning and slaughtering animals have received training, which includes the following:



Major

- a. Animal welfare principles;
- b. Good handling practices;
- c. Identification of sick/injured animals;
- d. Stunning methods and checking effectiveness of stunning; and
- e. Slaughter methods.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization provides details of training programs (whether conducted internally or externally) that cover all the topics listed in the criterion. Details include the name and qualifications of the person delivering the training, the topic(s) covered in each training session, date on which the training took place, and how the success of training is assessed.
- 2) The organization provides a list of workers who handle live animals, and evidence that those workers have successfully completed training relevant to the area(s) in which they work.



4.11.6 Relevant procedures (e.g. posters or pictograms) are in view of workers in a language they understand.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Relevant procedures are available to all workers, according to their local context and educational capacities.
- 2) Procedures include handling live animals, and stunning and slaughtering processes for the slaughtered species.



4.11.7 All waterfowl are inspected upon arrival at the slaughterhouse for injury or illness. Records are kept and made available to auditors.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse can provide copies of its records of inspection of waterfowl on arrival, showing the number that have been identified as injured or ill.
- 2) Waterfowl discovered suffering from illness or injury are immediately euthanized.



4.11.8 The slaughterhouse provides information to the source organization on the numbers of sick, injured, and dead-on-arrival waterfowl.

Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A written report is sent back to the certified organization after each batch of waterfowl is processed.



4.11.9 The slaughterhouse maintains the following records for all incoming loads of waterfowl from certified farms:

Minor

- a. Rate of dead waterfowl on arrival;
- b. Rate of sick or injured waterfowl on arrival;
- c. Travel time; and
- d. Time from arrival to slaughter.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse can provide copies of its records for waterfowl coming from certified farms, and these records include all the elements required by this criterion.



4.11.10 Animals are handled humanely; mistreatment of animals at the slaughterhouse does not occur.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is applicable for all handling and movement of live animals at the slaughterhouse.
- 2) The slaughterhouse has a strict policy on good handling of animals, and ensures all workers are aware of their responsibilities.
- 3) The organization shall be able to describe its handling methods and how it ensures all its workers handle animals carefully and calmly at all times. For example, the unloading and handling of individual waterfowl and/or transport crates containing live waterfowl is conducted carefully. Waterfowl and/or crates are not thrown or dropped, and movement is smooth and calm.
- 4) Workers know the signs that animals are becoming stressed (e.g. a lot of vocalization) and take actions to reduce this.
- 5) No mistreatment of animals or poor treatment is seen during the audit.
- 6) Mistreatment includes but is not limited to rough physical contact such as kicking, striking, slamming gates on animals, tripping, throwing, or dropping animals, dragging, or pulling animals by the fleece, wings, tail, ears, head, horns, or neck, dragging by the back legs, or lifting by the legs.



4.11.11 Unless the slaughterhouse has a waiting area with appropriate facilities, waterfowl are unloaded and slaughtered within two (2) hours of arrival.

 Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Appropriate facilities allow the control of temperature and humidity and protect waterfowl from external stressors such as noise.
- 2) Appropriate facilities also allow waterfowl to access food and water.



4.11.12 Waterfowl are unloaded or hung at the slaughterhouse in a room with reduced lighting to minimize stress and fear.

 Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Reduced lighting can lower the stress level for the waterfowl; however, this should be balanced with workers' safety — ensuring the room is not too dark for workers to see well what they are doing.



4.11.13 Measures are taken to minimize stress levels of waterfowl, from arrival up to the moment of killing, including preventing waterfowl from seeing other waterfowl being killed.

 Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse ensures that workers consider waterfowl's welfare at all steps from arrival at the plant until death. This goes beyond adherence to the individual criterion, but to the whole Animal Welfare principle, where management is focused on the reduction of stress at all times.
- 2) The interviewed workers shall frame their actions through the lens of what is best for the waterfowl's welfare.



4.11.14 Live waterfowl held at the slaughterhouse are not subject to extreme cold or heat.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Workers shall be able to demonstrate how waterfowl are protected from direct sunlight, as well as from wind and any precipitation. This is particularly important when waterfowl are waiting in their transport crates at the slaughterhouse, as they are unable to move into shade or shelter.
- 2) Attention is paid to the positioning of crates. Waterfowl on the outside of a group of crates will be more exposed to being chilled, whereas those in the middle may be more at risk of overheating, depending on the prevailing conditions.
- 3) If waterfowl are panting, they are too hot and fans or other ventilation may be required. If waterfowl are huddling in their transport crates, they are too cold, and additional shelter or movement into a temperature-controlled building is needed.



4.11.22 Suitable equipment is available for the slaughter of the species, including reserve equipment.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Primary and reserve stunning equipment are observed at the slaughterhouse. Reserve stunning equipment may be of the same or a different type to the primary stunning equipment, as long as both conform to the Standard.



4.11.23 Stunning/slaughter equipment is well maintained, as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Both primary and reserve stunning equipment are kept in good working condition.
- 2) The organization can provide details of its maintenance schedule for both primary and reserve equipment, and this conforms to the manufacturers' instructions.



4.11.24 Waterfowl are stunned using one of the following methods that causes immediate unconsciousness that lasts until death:

Critical

- a. Electrical stunning, followed by neck cutting; or
- b. Captive bolt gun.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse only uses one of the methods identified.
- 2) Electrical stunners can include water bath stunners as well as handheld electrical stunners. The neck cut that is required after electrical stunning takes place within 15 seconds of the stun to ensure death occurs before there is any return to consciousness.
- 3) Captive bolt guns are most likely to be used for geese.



4.11.25 When electrical stunning is applied, the following criteria are met:


Major

- a. Frequency (hertz) is less than 200 Hz; and
- b. Minimum current is 130 mA.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse demonstrates how it ensures that minimum frequency and current are met.
- 2) If water bath stunning is used, the minimum frequency and current shall be maintained when the bath is fully loaded with waterfowl.



4.11.26 When captive bolt or a handheld electrical stunning device is used, it is positioned correctly according to the method being used.


Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The correct position for captive bolt stunning for ducks and geese is with the muzzle of the captive bolt positioned on the highest point of the head on the midline of the skull. When looking from the side, the captive bolt should be pointing towards the area between the bird’s eye and ear at 90 degrees to the head.
- 2) The correct position for head-only electric stunning electrodes is that they span the brain as directly as possible.



4.11.27 Where water bath stunning is used, the heads of the waterfowl are completely immersed in the water.


Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Observation of waterfowl at slaughter shows that the height of the water bath is adjusted for the size of waterfowl to be stunned, and the heads of all waterfowl are immersed in the water bath.



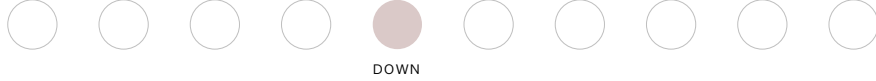
4.11.28 Where water bath stunning is used, the electrode extends the length of the bath.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Observation of the water bath shows the electrode extends the length of the bath.



4.11.29 Where water bath stunning is used, the waterfowl do not receive pre-stun shocks.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) No waterfowl are seen to receive a pre-stun shock at the water bath during observation of slaughter.



4.11.30 Waterfowl are not stunned or killed using water baths.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Water bath stunning is commonly used for commercial slaughter of poultry; however, considering that there are welfare concerns relating to the inversion of live birds that this method requires, as well as challenges in maintaining the electric current level that will effectively stun all waterfowl, at the leadership level this method is not permitted.



4.11.31 Where any form of electrical stunning is used, frequency is checked at least three (3) times per day, and results recorded.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse can provide records of checking stunning frequency.
- 2) The metric of three times per day assumes that stunning takes place over the course of an entire day.



4.11.32 Adjustments are made when the frequency and current settings do not produce an effective, consistent stun.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Where frequency is found to be more than 200 Hz or current below 130 mA, the slaughterhouse can show that immediate remedial action is taken.



4.11.38 If animals show any sign of consciousness, they are immediately re-stunned.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If there are any signs of an animal returning to consciousness, it is immediately re-stunned.
- 2) Checks for consciousness could include corneal reflex, eyelash reflex in response to touch, rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice, spontaneous blinking, vocalization, righting reflex on the rail.



4.11.39 Animals are checked to ensure they are unconscious before being bled.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Animals are not bled until a check has been made to confirm that stunning was effective, and the animal remains unconscious.
- 2) Checks for consciousness could include corneal reflex, eyelash reflex in response to touch, rhythmic breathing where the ribs move in and out at least twice, spontaneous blinking, vocalization, righting reflex on the rail.



4.11.40 Following stunning, animals shall be bled as soon as possible.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Bleeding takes place without any delay.
- 2) Animals are only stunned when there is someone available to bleed them, and that person is ready and able to perform the bleed cut.
- 3) When multiple animals are stunned in succession, bleeding takes place in the order in which animals were stunned.



4.11.41 Following stunning, animals are bled within fifteen (15) seconds of head-only electrical stunning.

Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When head-only electrical stunning is used, the point of stun through to bleeding the animal is timed and the average period does not exceed 15 seconds.



4.11.42 Following stunning, animals are bled within sixty (60) seconds of head/heart electrical stunning, captive bolt stunning, or shooting with a firearm.



Minor

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When head/heart electrical stunning, captive bolt stunning, or shooting with a firearm are used, the point of stun or shot through to bleeding the animal is timed, and the average period does not exceed 60 seconds.



4.11.43 The bleed wound severs the major blood vessels in the neck and allows rapid blood loss, such that unconsciousness is maintained until the point of death.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) For mammalian species, bleeding is carried out by an incision made with a sharp knife in the jugular furrow at the base of the neck, the knife being directed towards the entrance of the chest to sever all the major blood vessels arising from the heart or by an incision made close to the head of the animal using a blade at least 120 mm long to make a cut across the neck that severs both carotid arteries and both jugular veins.
- 2) Blood is seen gushing from the wound.
- 3) At no time are any signs of consciousness seen before the animal is confirmed as being dead.



4.11.45 Animals are not slaughtered in sight of other animals.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) When observing slaughter during the audit, it can be seen that slaughtering/bleeding takes place out of sight of other animals (e.g. behind a curtain or around a corner, away from the pens where live animals are held).



4.11.46 The slaughterhouse conducts inspections of supplier farms to confirm their conformance to the Standard.



Recomm

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The slaughterhouse has records of inspection visits to supplier farms, any non-conformances with the Standard that have been discovered, and the actions taken to resolve these.



Principle 6 – Chain of Custody

The organization demonstrates credible chain of custody for the tracking and handling of certified materials by maintaining the identity of these materials as well as necessary records, including those used for establishing initial volumes of certified materials originating in tier 4. Systems cover annual volume reconciliation, sales of certified materials including eligible claims, and, when applicable, the optional use of approved logos and claims.

6.1 Material Handling

6.1.1

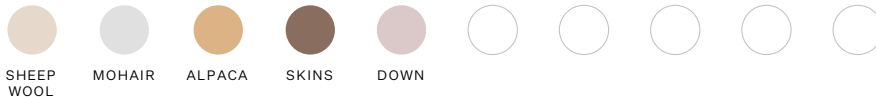


Major

The organization keeps the certified material properly identified and physically separated from any non-certified material.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If all material on site is certified under the Standard, then this criterion is optional.
- 2) “Properly identified” is up to each organization to define; as long as the system is internally clear to all workers (i.e. to avoid confusion of materials by any staff and/or contractors), it could be a color identification, number codes, any chosen legend, signal, etc.



6.1.2

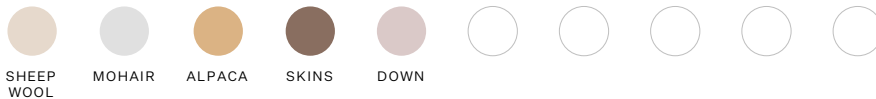


Major

If the organization has storage facilities, the organization has procedures in place to prevent commingling or substitution of the certified material with other materials.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion emphasizes the necessity of a clear and effective system for identifying certified materials within a storage facility. The intent is not to mandate a physically distant segregation of certified and non-certified sections within the warehouse. Rather, the focus lies on implementing a robust identification mechanism to distinguish certified materials throughout the storage space, considering distinct units and the characteristics of the material. In some cases, it may be necessary for the certified materials to be labelled directly, while in others, it will be sufficient for storage containers or areas to use clear signage. It may also be possible that no identification is needed, as in the example of an organization’s storage facility that operates only with certified material under the Standard.



6.1.3



Major

If the organization outsources storage services to a subcontractor, the organization is acting as a contracting organization and the following requirements are met:

- a. The subcontractor does not have common ownership with the contracting organization;
- b. The organization maintains full responsibility for the subcontractor’s conformity with the Standard;
- c. The organization receives approval from its certification body and an updated scope certificate prior to outsourcing to a new subcontractor;
- d. The organization classifies each subcontractor as either:
 - i. An associated subcontractor who is not independently certified to the Standard, and who is audited as needed under the organization’s scope certificate; or
 - ii. An independently certified subcontractor who holds its own scope certificate to the Standard;

- e. The organization maintains a list of all subcontractors who may be used to store certified materials, including the subcontractor’s name, address, contact details, and a description of the outsourced storage activities; and
- f. For independently certified subcontractors, the organization’s records include the subcontractor’s certification body, TE-ID, and the scope certificate expiration date.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) By definition, a subcontractor does not have common ownership with the contracting organization.



6.1.4



Major

If the organization outsources storage services to a non-certified subcontractor, the organization has a valid contract with each associated subcontractor which identifies the work to be outsourced and requires that the subcontractor:

- a. Meets all applicable certification criteria of the Standard;
- b. Maintains physical separation of the certified material from all other materials present at the subcontractor’s site;
- c. Agrees to allow the organization’s certification body to conduct audits of the subcontractor in accordance with the Standard;
- d. Does not make any claims related to the Standard, including claims of the subcontractor being certified to the Standard or any use of the Standard’s logo; and
- e. Does not further outsource any storage of the certified material.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Associated subcontractors are audited by the contracting organization’s certification body, on a risk basis, and are not permitted to further outsource any storage of the certified material.



6.1.5



Major

If the organization outsources storage services to an independently certified subcontractor, the organization has a valid contract with each subcontractor which identifies the work to be outsourced and requires that the subcontractor:

- a. Meets all the applicable certification criteria of the Standard under its own certified system;
- b. Informs the organization within seven (7) calendar days of any changes in its certification status, including suspension, withdrawal, expiry, or recertification; and
- c. Provides the organization with an updated scope certificate upon recertification.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) A subcontractor may choose to hold an individual scope certificate (i.e. an independently certified subcontractor) but is not required to. Independently certified subcontractors are not subject to an additional audit as part of the contracting organization’s audit/certification. Independently certified subcontractors are permitted to further outsource any storage of the certified material, subject to the requirements of the Standard.

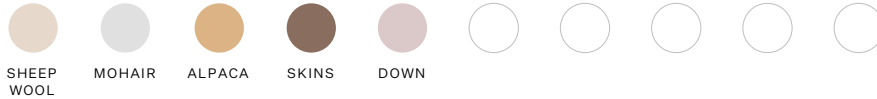


6.2 Volume Reconciliation

6.2.1 The organization maintains records of the following:

Major

- a. Volumes of material produced or collected;
- b. Volumes of material sold as certified under each applicable scope certificate;
- c. Volumes of material sold as non-certified under each applicable scope certificate; and
- d. Volumes of material (certified and non-certified) in stock.



6.2.2 The organization calculates, and retains a record of, the capacity of the individual farm in terms of quantity of material (i.e. yield) which can be produced each year.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The farm’s operational capacity aligns with the projected annual production volume. The organization undertakes robust calculations, providing justifications that lead to a credible assessment of the farm capacity.
- 2) This is needed to measure the organization’s potential, and as a prerequisite to conduct volume reconciliation. Describing an organization’s capacity includes land area and usage, number of animals, yield per animal, and other relevant factors.
- 3) The determination of animal fibers involves assessing the count of animals and the yield from each individual animal. For down production, the organization considers the frequency of animal cycles within a year.
- 4) Farm capacity is calculated per farm. For group certification the group manager may assist with this task.



6.2.3 The organization conducts an annual volume reconciliation which demonstrates that the volume of material sold as certified is credible based on the balance of materials produced, sold (with or without certification claims), and any existing inventory.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The objective of volume reconciliation is to ensure that the certified output volume is credible based on the farm capacity.
- 2) For group certification, the volume reconciliation may be done by the group manager instead of by each group member.
- 3) A suggested template will be provided for optional use by the organization.



6.3 Sale of Certified Materials

6.3.1 The organization holds a valid Materials Matter scope certificate whenever the material is shipped or sold with certification claims. Otherwise, the material shall not be considered to be certified.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The seller organization is always required to hold a valid scope certificate in order to sell materials as certified. Any material which is processed, shipped, and sold by the applicant before a scope certificate is issued, or after a scope certificate expires, shall not be considered as certified, and is not eligible for a *transaction certificate*.



6.3.3

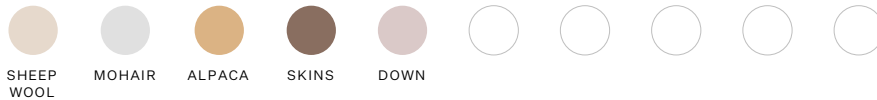


Major

The organization applies for a transaction certificate (TC) from its certification body when it sells materials with a certification claim to another Materials Matter certified buyer.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) If the organization is selling materials from a certified source, but the organization does not want or need to make certification claims to its buyer, there is no need to request a transaction certificate to cover the shipment. However, in that case, the buyer is unable to make certification claims on those materials, regardless of if the buyer holds a scope certificate or not.
- 2) For group certification, the group manager requests transaction certificates from its certification body for each sale of certified material on behalf of its group members. A farm group member may request transaction certificates from the certification body, provided that prior notice to the group manager has been given and the group manager has granted permission to do so to the farm group member.



6.3.4



Major

The transaction certificate application includes documented proof of the sale of certified material. The organization provides the information requested by the certification body, which may include but is not limited to:

- a. Invoices, purchase orders, financial records, third party material quality test reports, and shipping documents (e.g. government transportation documents) that show the outgoing materials have been sold to the named buyer of the materials; and
- b. The identity of the certified materials, quality, and quantities.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) It is important to apply for a transaction certificate as soon as possible after the order is shipped. Transaction certificate applications received by the certification body more than 90 days after the shipment date or after a change in certification bodies might not be eligible for a transaction certificate. For exact transaction certificate application timelines, please refer to the Policy for Transaction Certificates.



6.4 Logo Use and Claims

6.4.1

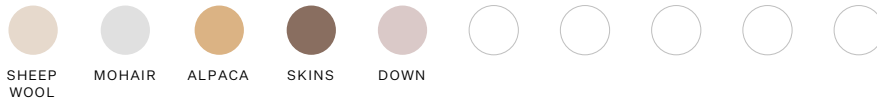


Major

The Materials Matter trademarks and/or claims are only used by certified organizations with a valid scope certificate, in accordance with the Materials Matter Claims & Labeling Policy.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Materials Matter trademarks include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.



6.4.2

Major

The Materials Matter Certified label and/or claims are only used with reference to certified materials that have a valid transaction certificate, and are eligible for labeling, in accordance with the Materials Matter Claims & Labeling Policy.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Materials Matter trademarks include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.



6.4.3

Major

Approval is obtained in accordance with the Materials Matter Claims & Labeling Policy prior to use of any public facing Materials Matter trademarks and/or claims.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The Materials Matter trademarks include the Materials Matter name, the Materials Matter logo, and the Materials Matter Certified label.



Principle 7 – Group Certification

The organization implementing a group certification model designates a group manager responsible for creating and implementing a *group management system* to guide the work of the group members (i.e. individual producers) towards the efficient use of technical and financial resources.

7.1 Group Configuration

7.1.1



Critical

The group is managed by a legal entity which represents the entirety of the group members and is considered to be the applicant or certified organization on behalf of its members.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) “Legal entity” in this context can be a legally established organization (e.g. a commercial enterprise, an association, a cooperative, a non-governmental organization, etc.) or an individual person having the necessary legal authorization to operate in the materials’ producing country.
- 2) The legal entity acting as the applicant or certified organization can either act as the group manager or hire another party to play the group manager’s role on behalf of the certified organization.
- 3) A legal entity can manage more than one certified group, provided it has sufficient capacity and resources to manage more than one scope certificate, and that each certified group is managed by a different group manager.
- 4) Group members can be either farm owners or communal farmers (as defined in criterion 7.1.3 below).
- 5) The group members understand that either the legal entity or the group manager is the applicant or certified organization that is acting on their behalf as group members.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



DOWN



7.1.2



Major

The organization, the group manager, and all group members are all located within a single country or within Europe.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Under this context, Europe is defined as the countries which belong to the European Union, plus the United Kingdom, Norway, and Switzerland.
- 2) For communal farmer groups (including producers of mammal animals and waterfowl): any given farm member shall be located within a straight-line distance of 500 km from its group manager’s headquarters.



SHEEP
WOOL



MOHAIR



ALPACA



DOWN



7.1.3



Major

If the group is made of communal farmers, the group manager maintains evidence that each member meets the following qualifying criteria:

- a. 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); and
- b. The farmer faces significant information constraints, including a lack of technical knowledge and low access to market information.
- c. The farmer shall also meet at least two of the following criteria:
 - i. The farmer has little or no land security;
 - ii. The farmer is independent and not affiliated with a company for which he/she produces fibers;
 - iii. The farm relies on the farmer’s family work;
 - iv. Animal fibers are the farmer’s primary source of income;

- v. 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
- vi. The farm has a relatively small land footprint.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) This criterion is only applicable for communal farmer group certificates.
- 2) A farmer does not necessarily have to share land with other farmers in order to qualify for communal farmer group certification.



7.2 Group Management System

7.2.1 The organization has a group management system in place.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group management system is a system developed by the group manager with input 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.



7.2.2 The organization appoints a group manager, who is responsible for leading the group management system and for ensuring conformity to the relevant Standard requirements by all group members.



Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Ideally, the group manager should be part of the same organization representing the group members (i.e. the legal entity); however, the group manager could also be a different entity delegated by the organization (e.g. a contracted person, or a consulting firm hired for that specific purpose).



7.2.3 The group manager assigns responsibilities among the different roles in the group (e.g. management employees, members, contractors, etc.), depending on who is better equipped to deliver results demonstrating the group meets the relevant criteria of the Standard.



Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager is free to assign responsibilities to the different roles in the group, as long as all relevant requirements are adequately covered by knowledgeable and capable persons, and conformance is demonstrated by each member of the group.


7.2.4

 Critical

The group management system incorporates documented procedures detailing how the group certificate is managed, including procedures for at least the following elements:

- a. Approving and sanctioning of group members;
- b. Maintaining records;
- c. Training of group members and management employees (e.g. officers, assistants, internal inspectors);
- d. Mechanisms to address members' grievances;
- e. Conducting internal inspections of group members to assess their conformance with the Standard;
- f. Follow-up on corrective actions raised to group members; and
- g. Monitoring logo use and claims by the group and group members for conformity.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager has written procedures covering all the required elements to an appropriate level of detail and can demonstrate that they are being followed.
- 2) For accepting and adding new communal farmer group members, the group manager records the assessment of their eligibility.
- 3) Group members' grievances may include the right to appeal any sanctions imposed by the group manager, issues related to membership rights/payments, and volume reconciliation, among others.


7.2.5

 Major

The group manager maintains the following records:

- a. A documented management structure of the system (i.e. an organizational chart);
- b. A complete and updated list of group members;
- c. A signed membership agreement for each member which specifies the member is part of a scope certificate, and the rights and obligations of group members including to receive periodic inspections by the group manager and to be audited by its certification body;
- d. A completed version of the farm questionnaire for each farm;
- e. Polygon data (i.e. GIS shapefiles), for each farm, showing the location and extent of farmland;
- f. Records of internal inspections for all members, showing the site's conformity or non-conformity with all applicable criteria;
- g. Records of any group members who are also part of another scope certificate, including the name of the certified organization and type of certification (e.g. individual or group); and
- h. For communal farmer groups only: copies of the group level records and plans.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager shall provide written records that cover all requirements in the criterion.
- 2) If the group is made of communal farmers 7.2.5.g. is not applicable. Members of communal farmer groups may only be part of the single scope certificate applicable to the communal farmer group.
- 3) 7.2.5.h. only applies to communal farmer groups. In other farm groups, each individual member is expected to have its specific own records and plans, unless otherwise indicated.
- 4) Regarding conformity levels:
 - If the group manager partially meets each requirement; for example, it has details for all but one member, the level of conformity shall be minor.
 - If the group manager has details for most members, but not all, the level of conformity shall be major.

- If the group manager has no details at all for one or more of the requirements of the criteria, the level of conformity shall be critical.



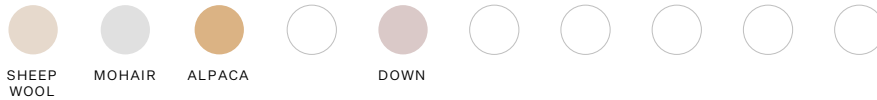
7.2.6

The group manager supports its group members to meet all the relevant criteria listed in the applicable principles of the Standard.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager ensures all group members comply with all the applicable criteria of the Standard (i.e. other principles of the Standard), depending on their specific scope and circumstances for the material(s) they produce.



7.3 Group Member Requirements

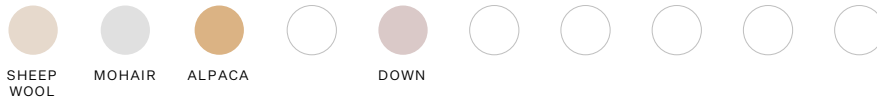
7.3.1

Group members have access to, and understand the relevant criteria of the Standard, and are aware of consequences of non-conformity.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager ensures that all group members understand what needs to be done to meet the criteria of the Standard, and that they are aware of what happens and what they need to do should there be non-conformity. This includes understanding the differences between the levels of conformity that apply.



7.3.2

Group members and group management employees (including internal inspectors), are provided with training regarding the Standard, which is sufficient to ensure they understand how to meet their responsibilities.

Major

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The organization has records to show that group members and group management employees have received training.
- 2) Through interviews, the auditor can verify that they understand how to meet their responsibilities and are equipped to do so.



7.4 Inspection of Members

7.4.1

Major

The group manager documents and implements an inspection protocol to ensure that all the relevant standard criteria are met by all group members, including:

- a. A process for addressing non-conformities by any member (e.g. identification, grading, follow-up until closure or suspension), and for keeping records of non-conformities issued and closed, with explanation of the corrective actions taken;
- b. If needed, the group manager designates inspectors to carry out the internal inspections;
- c. The group manager ensures on-site inspections for each of the group members take place. These will either be conducted annually by internal inspectors or at intervals according to risk level by the certification body following specific guidelines defined in the Certification Procedures;
- d. A written inspection report is prepared after each inspection, identifying findings and all non-conformities; and
- e. The group manager ensures group members are aware that they may be selected for annual sample audits according to the risk assessment done by the certification body and must be prepared for possible additional visits by the certification body without notice.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager can provide a copy of its inspection protocol, which includes all points listed in the criterion.
- 2) The internal inspectors cannot conduct inspections to immediate family members or to their own operations.
- 3) The internal inspectors collect and keep means of verification (e.g. pictures or other records) of key findings, especially when issuing non-conformities.
- 4) The group manager can provide copies of written internal inspection reports conducted to its members, upon request by its certification body and by Textile Exchange.



7.5 Adding and Removing Members

7.5.1

Major

The group manager ensures that new members are added to the group only after all the following conditions are met:

- a. The group manager receives a signed membership agreement by each member;
- b. The group manager receives a completed version of the farm questionnaire for each farm;
- c. The group manager receives the polygon data (i.e. GIS shapefiles), for each farm, showing the location and amount of farmland;
- d. The internal inspector has completed an inspection of the site; or its certification body has conducted an audit of the site in case the group manager has declined to conduct internal inspections;
- e. All critical and major non-conformities for the site have been closed; and
- f. The group manager receives approval from its certification body for the addition of the new member.

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) The group manager shall demonstrate that new members are only added to the group once all the elements of the criterion have been met.
- 2) Unless a farmer is member of a communal farmer group, a group member may be part of more than one scope certificate, including individual certificate or another group certificate. Different scope certificates may be for the same or for different materials.

3) When a new member joins a communal farmer group, the group manager reviews the group level plans with the new member and makes any amendments to ensure these plans continue to reflect the group situation.



7.5.2

The group manager is responsible for removing members from the group when necessary to ensure that the group certificate continues to meet the Standard.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Possible reasons for removal of a group member include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Voluntary withdrawal by the member;
 - Non-payment of agreed fees to the group manager by the member;
 - Inability to close an open non-conformity; and/or
 - Repetitive non-conformities; among others the group manager may define.



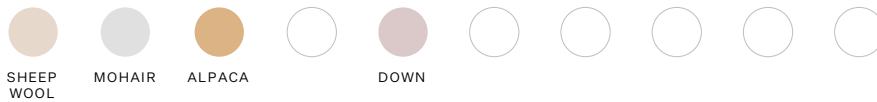
7.5.3

When a member is removed from the group, the group manager notifies both the affected group member and its certification body of the removal and reason for removal in writing within two (2) weeks of the date of the formal decision.

 Critical

INTENT AND CLARIFICATION:

- 1) Possible reasons for removal of a group member include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Voluntary withdrawal by the member;
 - Non-payment of agreed fees to the group manager by the member;
 - Inability to close an open non-conformity; and/or
 - Repetitive non-conformities; among others the group manager may define.



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.