

Responsible Leather International Working Group Call

4 February 2020

Subject: Report on RL IWG progress in Responsible Leather program development

Agenda:

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Progress report
 - Workplan targets
 - Funding
3. Scope Committee updates
 - Deforestation/Conversion - Free
 - Leather Production
 - Animal Welfare
 - Traceability
 - Claims
4. Next steps

Next call:

When: Apr 7, 2020 | 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/uJwldO-opjlo8o8eDd_OzMo-Qm-wLP_I-g

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Call Notes

There are 6 components of the Responsible Leather program:

1. Animal welfare benchmark
2. Deforestation/Conversion-free protocol
3. Leather production benchmark
4. Traceability Guidelines
5. Impact Incentives (former name Impact Credits)
6. Claims framework

Progress Report

2020 Work plan:

By end of March: First draft of the Responsible Leather toolkit is expected to be presented

April-June: piloting of the Responsible Leather toolkit

July- September: Revision of the piloting stage outcomes and findings

September-November: approval

Credit Platform design, development and testing goes in parallel with the Responsible Leather toolkit development.

Big Decisions:

- Animal Welfare and Deforestation/Conversion-Free 'credits' will be decoupled
- To have first draft completed in Q1 of 2020
- Credit determinations

Support

We still need your support! We are in the home stretch, but we will need your help to get us to the end line:

- Become an IWG voting member - sign the RL IWG Charter
- Attend key calls
- Give feedback
- Set aside budget to keep us funded

Scope Committee Updates

Deforestation/Conversion-free (DCF) committee

Deforestation-free (synonym: no-deforestation): Commodity production, sourcing, or financial investments **that do not cause or contribute to deforestation of natural forests**. For companies and supply chains, the appropriate policy and goal is "no gross deforestation" (a "net" approach is NOT appropriate).

Conversion-free (synonym: no-conversion): Commodity production, sourcing, or financial investments that **do not cause or contribute to conversion of natural ecosystems**. For companies and supply chains, the appropriate policy and goal is "no gross conversion" (a "net" approach is NOT appropriate).

Definitions have been developed through the Accountability Framework Initiative (along with Collaboration for Forests and Agriculture)

The cut off date for DCF benchmark has been set to January 1st, 2020.

To be determined

- What percentage of sites need to be audited
- Time frames for auditing and reporting

Metrics needed for assessing:

- deforestation and conversion (total area of land owned, controlled, or managed by company/farmer)

- ecosystem conservation
- livestock production

Responsible Leather Production committee

Focus areas:

- Social Policy
 - Social policies
 - Record Keeping
- Social Requirements
 - Forced, bonded, indentured and prison labor
 - Child Labor
 - Freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
 - Discrimination, harassment and abuse
 - Wages, benefits and terms of employment
 - Working Hours
 - General Health and safety
 - Chemical Health and Safety

Animal Welfare committee

Finalizing the details of what must be benchmarked in each of the three AW options (presented at the previous meeting). This includes details of recommendations for each option that could become required in time.

Pain relief is a key topic. The AW committee would like to explore whether RLRT benchmark criteria could help leverage licensing and improved availability of pain relief for cattle in different countries

Review of standards against one of the benchmark options only part of the story. We also need to review level of oversight (Audit frequency, auditor qualification, how non-compliances are dealt with etc.). We want to be able to benchmark farmer group protocols as well as better known certifications.

Traceability

Impact Credits name has been changed to Impact Incentives as it is a more accurate term.

The work is being done on setting up partnerships (Impact Alliance) and outlining data flow and credit and payment flow between involved parties of the Impact Incentives scheme (farm or farm group, verification body, credit platform, facilitator, brands and Impact Alliance).

Data will be collected on the farm (name, location, total area, conserved area, restored area, number of cattle, breads, farm system, etc.). We are encouraging the Responsible Leather stakeholders to inform us of what data they would like to see being collected. Contact us to provide your input.

Claims framework committee

Considering different opportunities for commitment claims:

- Support claims
- Commitment claims
- Responsible Leather product claims

It is important to note that Impact Incentives scheme encourages claiming support of Responsible Leather production, and not the content of the product itself.

Our primary goal is to create a clear set of guidelines for brands and other program participants to clearly and credibly communicate about their work with Responsible Leather.

Some of what we will discuss includes:

- How can brands communicate about Impact Incentives
- What requirements claim-makers need to meet in order to qualify for making claims about Responsible Leather and/or Impact Incentives
- Other challenges

Therefore, if you have experience developing claims framework/guidance for sustainability standards or programs, please contact Stefanie@TextileExchange.org for consideration of your participation in the Claims Committee.

Next Steps

Follow up:

2020 RL IWG and RLRT Meeting Calendar

	Date	Meeting	Time
Q1	Tues. Feb 4	Responsible Leather IWG	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	Tues. Feb 25	Responsible Leather Round Table (RLRT)	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	TBD March	Responsible Leather Webinar Series: Pt 1	TBD
Q2	Tues. Apr 7	Responsible Leather IWG	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	Tues. May 12	Responsible Leather Round Table (RLRT)	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	Tues. June 2	Responsible Leather IWG	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	TBD June	Responsible Leather Webinar Series: Pt 2	TBD
Q3	Tues. July 21	Responsible Leather Round Table (RLRT)	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	Tues. Aug 4	Responsible Leather IWG	9:00-10:30 AM EST
	TBD September	Responsible Leather Webinar Series: Pt 3	TBD
Q4	TBD November	Responsible Leather Round Table Summit	9:00-5:00 PM Dublin
	Tues. Dec 8	Responsible Leather IWG	9:00-10:30 AM EST

Contacts:

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