

Why Fashion Must Take Supply Chain Transparency Past Tier 1



CREDIT: Danish Khan/Adobe

The fashion industry has traditionally been highly opaque, but pressure is mounting to have more transparency about each stage in the supply chain. From regulatory demands to consumer attention toward sustainability, brands require visibility to know their true and full impact and work toward reducing apparel's environmental effect.

"As an industry, we have a pretty sizable amount of impact, even though it's only maybe 2 to 3 to 4 percent of the entire impact of carbon on the planet," said Kevin Myette, director, global brand services at Bluesign, which acts as a third-party partner to assist companies in achieving sustainable progress.

Due diligence legislation—such as the proposed New York Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act—is making it a necessity to know supply chain details, down to the facility level. During a recent Sourcing Journal webinar, Myette explained that most companies know their tier 1, or finished goods suppliers, but awareness of tier 2 and beyond is lower.

According to Bluesign's assessment of its own customers, almost half of brands studied have

limited knowledge of up to 50 percent their tier 2. Complicating visibility further is subcontracting. While subcontracting disclosure policies are common at tier 1, it is far less likely to have these agreements in place for tier 2.

"Do you know your supply chain? One of the hardest things you're going to deal with as an organization when you try to understand and unpack this is how much honesty are you going to get from that supplier," said Alex Lauer, director of commercial innovation at outdoor gear brand Outdoor Research. "In many cases, your relationship with that supplier will dictate how honest they are with you and how transparent they are."

There is also a knowledge gap around textile volumes, with only half of brands saying they have full understanding of these figures. Textile amounts are often measured in units such as yards, but to get a true sense of impact, companies should instead be tracking fabric volumes by weight, such as kilograms.

Myyette noted that much of the effort to better know a supply chain comes down to "operational excellence." Rather than starting with sweeping goals around aspects like carbon reduction, Bluesign begins new client engagement by identifying key immediate priorities that create a foundation to then set targets. One example is establishing supplier agreements. Lauer added that once working with Bluesign, the action plan put in place had unexpected benefits beyond environmental health. "All of these things support and better your business in addition to supporting and bettering the earth," he said.

Having a clearer view of your supply chain also has implications for consumer-facing communications. Lauer pointed to consumer

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studies that have shown customers place more trust in brands than in the government. “As a brand or a company, it’s your responsibility to make sure your story is accurate and that you’re doing a good job, and whatever you decide to market, that you’re appropriately educating your consumers as to why you think it’s important so that they understand that, and then it becomes important to them,” Lauver said.

Myette warned against oversimplifying sustainability messaging, encouraging companies to tell a big-picture story. “Some of the most important actions you can take in sustainability are the least sexy,” Myette said. “However, being able to tell the story is also very, very important because it increases awareness of what really matters.”

Link

[Bluesign Says Fashion Must Take Supply Chain Transparency Past Tier 1 – Sourcing Journal](#)

Provided by Sourcing Journal

SLCP conducts webinars at apparel & footwear facilities in India



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To support facilities to implement SLCP and save on unnecessary social audits, SLCP is running training webinars targeted at apparel and footwear facilities in Karnataka, India. The Social & Labour Convergence Programme (SLCP) is an initiative led by leading manufacturers, brands, retailers, industry groups, service providers and civil society organisations.

The aim of the programme is to eliminate audit fatigue by replacing current proprietary tools with a Converged Assessment Framework. SLCP's aim is to improve working conditions by freeing up resources that were previously wasted on compliance audits to be redirected towards the improvement of social and labour conditions, SLCP said in a press release.

Since launching operations in 2019, SLCP has quickly scaled with over 4,000 facilities worldwide completing an SLCP verified assessment in 2021. Over 55 brands, retailers and standard holders are already publicly committing to accept SLCP verified data from their suppliers instead of requesting a separate audit. India was one of the first countries where the Converged Assessment Framework became available and is a priority country for SLCP.

To further boost SLCP adoption in 2022, SLCP is holding a series of free training webinars in local languages. This will include two sessions in

Kannada in April: the first to help facilities complete an SLCP self-assessment and the second to explain the verification process and how the verified data can be shared. SLCP invites all interested stakeholders, in particular apparel and footwear facilities in Karnataka, to sign up for these webinars so they can get started with SLCP this year. Completing an SLCP verified assessment can help facilities to reduce the number of social audits they have to do each year, as the SLCP verified data can be shared with multiple buyers.

"The Gap is fully committed to adopting SLCP in order to reduce the proliferation of social audits. We are therefore pleased that SLCP is providing this free training to support our suppliers in Karnataka to have a smooth experience when they complete an SLCP assessment and verification. We encourage facilities to attend these sessions if they would like to find out more about SLCP," Sharmila Nithyanand, programme manager, supplier sustainability at Gap, said in a statement.

SLCP is a non-profit multi-stakeholder initiative that aims to eliminate audit fatigue in global supply chains. They provide the tools and system for a high-quality comparable data set on working conditions that can be used by all industry stakeholders.

Link

[SLCP conducts webinars at apparel & footwear facilities in India - Fibre2Fashion](#)

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OEHHA added PFOA(Perfluorooctanoic acid) to the list of chemicals known to cause cancer



The California Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) intends to list perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) (CAS RN 335-67-1) as known to the state to cause cancer under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65).

This action is being proposed pursuant to the “Authoritative Bodies” listing mechanism². According to the National Toxicology Program (NTP 2020), PFOA was widely used in manufacturing of a variety of consumer products that included many nonstick applications, such as for clothing and cookware.

PFOA is no longer produced in the US and its production and use worldwide was significantly curtailed with the 2019 ban of the compound under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants³. However, its persistence in the environment and breakdown of certain other per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances result in continued PFOA exposure.

Background on listing by the Authoritative Bodies mechanism: A chemical must be listed under the Proposition 65 regulations when two conditions are met: 1) An authoritative body formally identifies the chemical as causing cancer (Section 25306(d)⁴). 2) The evidence considered by the authoritative body meets the sufficiency criteria contained in the regulations (Section 25306(e)).

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However, the chemical is not listed if scientifically valid data which were not considered by the authoritative body clearly establish that the sufficiency of evidence criteria were not met (Section 25306(f)).

NTP is one of several institutions designated as authoritative for the identification of chemicals as causing cancer (Section 25306(m)). OEHHA is the lead agency for Proposition 65 implementation. After an authoritative body has made a determination about a chemical, OEHHA evaluates whether listing under Proposition 65 is required using the criteria contained in the regulations.

OEHHA's determination: PFOA meets the criteria for listing as known to the state to cause cancer under Proposition 65, based on findings of the NTP (2020).

Link

[Notice to Interested Parties Chemical Listed Effective February 25, 2022 As Known to the State of California to Cause Cancer: Perfluorooctanoic Acid - OEHHA](#)

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