Responsible Wool Standard 2.0 Revision and Responsible Mohair Standard 1.0 IWG Call #11

Date: 6, February 2020

Topic(s): Herding Module & Voting Process

Attendees

From Textile Exchange: Hanna Denes, Callie Weldon, Amish Gosai, Val Colden

- Victoria Powers – TSGRA
- Carla de Clerk – Control Union
- Anna Heaton – Animal Welfare Consultant
- Haldi Kranich-Wood – British Wool
- Karin Wiske - Varner
- Mackie Hobson – Mohair South Africa
- Maria Belen Yanguas - Letis
- Nicholas Allen - Patagonia
- Pedro Otegui – Lanas Trinidad
- Clement Castagna – Saint Laurent
- Priyanka Vasudev - Aritzia
- Srinivasan K
- Suhel
- Victoria Lacroze – Control Union

Call Notes

News and Updates

Schedule:

The Public Feedback Period ran from November 6th- January 8th

The final drafts of the RWS 2.0 & RMS 1.0 were sent out on January 30th.

Feedback on the final drafts will be collected until February 13th.

Revised final drafts will be circulated by February 20th. The IWG members who have signed the charter will have one vote (yes or no) for each of these documents. We will send out individual emails as a reminder for those who have already signed the digital charter.

An electronic vote on the final drafts will take place after February 20th.
RWS Revision/RMS Development Process

Voting Process

If you have not signed the charter and would like the opportunity to vote on the final draft, please sign our digital document below:

https://form.jotform.com/193467003000141
Summary of Changes

We will be sending out a summary of changes document that will give a higher level overview of the changes that have occurred to the RWS and RMS for each both the IWG and public feedback periods.

Herding Module

Herding module: Introduction

- Project Aim:
  - An additional RWS module with a set of requirements that have been adapted to make the standard applicable to nomadic and semi nomadic herders. The animal welfare framework is being used to guide the process to ensure alignment on a principle level. Depending on the degree of divergence with the final result, a different claim may be required. The FSC approach for ‘Small and Community Forest’ sourcing claims could be applied. (more details here: https://scio.fsc.org/)

- Background:
  - Indepth field studies have taken place in India exploring the full supply chain for wool. The intended scope is global but the development is focused on India.
**Field visits**

Phase 1: Supply chain mapping and field visits
Field visits 1 and 2.
- Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh.
- Production facility visits
- Wool trading mandi visits
- Shepherds
- Meetings with Government bodies Central Sheep Research and Wool development board and states promoting Sheep & Goats farming
- Meetings with NGOs

Project sponsored by William Sonoma. Amish led field visits to various sites both individually and with William Sonoma.

Spoke with 80-90 local shepherds from India to hear about key challenges.

High cost barriers involved for individual farmers, we need to think of a different approach from individual certification to maybe group certification or other solutions.

**Herding Module – Challenges for RWS**

**Key challenges**

Key challenges (issues)
- Poverty
- Literacy
- Reduction in available grazing land

Key challenges (system)
- Cost of certification
- Assurance system
- Standard approach
What are the challenges for the RWS by incorporating a herding module? We don’t want to devalue the RWS by certifying poor practice. One of the key takeaway based on all of the barriers to entry for the farmers is that it would be best for them to be grouped to obtain certification.

**Herding Module – Challenges for RWS**

- Ensuring herders meet RWS standards (verifying compliance with RWS)
  - Do not want to undermine/devalue RWS by certifying poor practice
  - How to deal with non-compliance
- Definition of “herders”
- Different types of herders – nomadic, semi-nomadic
- Can herders be organized into groups?
  - Groups can assist with control systems to assess compliance, manage risk, and document performance of their members relative to external standards

**Herding Module – Challenges for Herders**

- No land security
- Land used for grazing will vary season to season/year to year
  - In some communities availability of grazing land is reducing over time
- Lack of finance
- Difficulty in accessing training and support
- Difficulty in maintaining records (illiteracy, lack of access to record keeping systems)
- Cost of certification (who pays)
How do we define a herder?

Possible definition of a herder

- No land security
- Maximum flock size [to be defined]
- Reliance on family labour
- Use relatively low levels of agricultural inputs and have comparatively low yields (relative to the range of yields for the given commodity and context)
- Face significant economic constraints, such as lack of capital assets and low access to finance
- Face significant information constraints, including lack of technical knowledge and low access to market information

• Note: Adapted from Accountability Framework: Operational Guidance on Smallholder Inclusion in Ethical Supply Chains

This framework will create an ‘eligibility’ for those who can participate in the herding module.

Animal Welfare in Herding

Animal welfare

- From Amish’s work, herders generally have good animal management practices
- Water supplied by publicly available resource. Water not available all day every day as sheep are moved.
- For herders, each individual sheep is a key part of their income.
- Use of natural/traditional remedies - lack of funds to buy veterinary medicines
- Tail docking not carried out
- Castration?
- Euthanasia/slaughter – no stunning, knife cut

- Much of the shearing done by hand shears, not electric clippers

In general, Amish’s field study showed that the animals in herd are being treated well. There are some aspects that are very different from our current RWS (ex: water is not available all day since they are using public water sources, but they do have access to good water sources a number of times during the day).
Land Management

Land management

- Herders don’t own the land, have no control over its management
- Land used for wool production varies depending on where herders roam
  - Permits for forest land
- Available grazing land reducing year on year

Moving Forward

Moving forward

- Helping herders organize into groups
  - With existing NGOs already working with herders (identified by Amish)
  - Training for herders to promote understanding of RWS by groups
  - Certification on a group model

- Keep documentation requirements to a minimum
  - Group manager keeps a record of all herders in the group and the number of sheep they have
  - Herders do not keep records, instead, outcomes are reviewed
    - i.e. no written health and welfare plan, but group leader and/or auditor reviews sheep health status [e.g. based on AWIN]
  - Traders record wool volumes from different herders

It will be beneficial for both the shepherds and the standard if we can help herders organize into groups. There are existing NGOs that we can partner with that are already working on these efforts on the ground.
As many of the herders are illiterate, we would be reviewing outcomes, rather than plans. For example: rather than having the farmers fill out a written health and welfare plan, the auditor will review the health status of the flock.

We realize that written plans are valuable for auditing and oversight but when thinking about how to work with these groups, we are looking more for outcome indicators to accommodate their needs.

Outcome Assessments

Outcome assessments – adapted from AWIN

AWIN = Animal Welfare INdicators Project
RWS standard AW3.2 says The producer shall have a written management plan for flock health and animal welfare.
Alternative assessments from AWIN under their health category could include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absence of injuries</th>
<th>Absence of disease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body and head lesions</td>
<td>Lameness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg injuries</td>
<td>Faecal soiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mucosa colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ocular discharge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respiratory quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fleece quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AWIN provides information on number of animals to score, how to score and photo guidance

Moving Forward

• Land Management
• Herders not using pesticides/fertilisers (so low risk for non-compliance with these standards)
• Group leaders can identify regional soil health risks e.g. erosion
• Predation risk assessed by group, promotion of non-lethal control e.g. guardian dogs (already in use in some areas)
• Permits which cover some grazing will set requirements for numbers of animals, time spent grazing etc.
There is low risk for non-compliances with the Land Management section since herder’s are not in control of the land. We don’t want to just remove this section from the standard, but we are looking at possibilities for taking a landscape approach and to partner with local NGO partners to assess the land year to year. Similarly, using this approach with predation risk.

**Non-Compliance and Herder Groups**

**Non-compliance and herder groups**

**Accountability Framework Smallholder Guidance:**
- Focus on continuous improvement
- Decide what support should be provided to facilitate such improvement
- Decide at what point non-compliant suppliers must be suspended/excluded

**Possible options**
- Critical compliance issues must be addressed immediately before certification can be granted/renewed
- Major and Minor compliance issues
  - Group leader must present an acceptable plan and timescale to work with herders to resolve these.
  - Major non-compliances must be addressed first – and the plan to resolve non-compliances must cover all Major NCs
  - Potentially allow herder groups longer than the current RWS timelines for resolving major and minor compliance issues
  - Set a minimum % of minor non-compliances that must be met for certification to be granted. For example RDS v2 set a requirement of at least 50% minor requirements per module met for certification to proceed
- Progress towards compliance must be regularly reported to certification body/TE
RWS/RMS Transition Policy: Labelling

In releasing the RMS, we wanted to make sure that we were not complicating the auditing process without adding any value to our system. We have reframed the standards to be a Responsible Animal Fiber – RWS, RMS scope certificates still issued but they would be under the same umbrella standard.

Looking for input on the labeling requirements.

**Option A**: completely allowable for a product to contain RWS wool and non-RMS mohair and other non-wool fibers.

**Option B**: both animal fibers, Mohair and Wool, would need to be certified by January 1, 2022 in order to make on product labeling claims.
Next Steps

RWS/RMS: Voting

Voting Process

- Sign the digital charter for ability to vote
- Each company/group gets one vote
- Send out final draft on February 20th
- Online vote 'for' or 'against' the final draft

- All voting and decision-making is done to ensure balanced representation of interested parties, covering the following Sectors:
  a) Material Producers
  b) Supply Chain
  c) Brands and Retailers
  d) Civil Society
  e) Professional Services

Next Call

RWS/RMS Call #12

February 6th, 2020 – 7:00 AM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Register Here: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/vJwudOysqz4p5ax6F3NGh8md9Oz-N7rEbg

Follow up

Sign the digital charter to become a voting member

https://form.jotform.com/193467003000141