Accepted Equivalent Standards Policy

Textile Exchange believes that industry standards have a strong role in ensuring the changes along the supply chain as the industry moves towards sustainable practices. Our goal in recognizing equivalent standards is to reduce the cost of certification for facilities along the supply chain, to reduce audit fatigue, and to acknowledge standards with shared principles. Equivalent standards must be at minimum equal to the requirements of our standards. The requirements are not required to be the same but must match in their credibility and desired outcomes.

The *ASR-106-V2.4* Accepted Equivalent Standards Policy replaces *ASR-106-V2.3*. It becomes effective and may be used April 1, 2024 and becomes mandatory July 1, 2024. Please see Section B2 for additional criteria related to effective dates.

Section A – Recognition Process

A1. Recognition of Equivalent Standards and Audits

A1.1   Textile Exchange will consider requests to recognize the following:

A1.1.1   Equivalent standards, which allow material certified to the equivalent standard to be accepted as an input to a specified Textile Exchange Standard; and

A1.1.2   Equivalent audits, which may be accepted in place of evaluation of particular criteria of a Textile Exchange Standard.

A1.2   Recognition requests will be evaluated based on both the requirements of the standard or audit and the policies and procedures of the standard's assurance system. Approval will be at the discretion of Textile Exchange on a case-by-case basis and may require additional data to be submitted to Textile Exchange.

A1.3   Recognized standards and audits shall be listed in this document.

A1.4   Requests for recognition may be submitted to assurance@textileexchange.org.

A2. Reliance on Other Audits

A2.1   In the case of external audit processes that are not part of our recognition, the *certification body* may consider audit reports from other audits conducted (e.g. social audits for GRS) in its evaluation. In this case, the certification body remains responsible for ensuring that the auditee shows full conformity with the applicable requirements.

NOTE: Criterion A2.1 shall not be used as justification to reduce the minimum auditing time required within the applicable Textile Exchange standard, policy, and/or the related certification procedures.

Section B – Recognized Standards and Audits

B1. Content Claim Standard (CCS)

B1.1 No equivalent standards or audits are currently recognized for the Content Claim Standard (CCS).

B2. Organic Content Standard (OCS)

B2.1 No equivalent audits are currently recognized for the OCS.

B2.2 The following equivalent standard is recognized as an input for OCS products with additional requirements:

B2.2.1 Until December 1, 2022, Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) V6.0 for all materials, noting that wool has additional requirements in B2.4. Any material covered by an incoming GOTS transaction certificate which is issued prior to December 1, 2022 may be accepted as input to OCS products.

B2.2.2 GOTS V6.0 (as of December 1, 2022) and GOTS V7.0 (as of the effective date) for all materials, noting that wool has additional requirements in B2.4 if the following criteria are met:

a. Textile Exchange shall receive the following from a responsible certification body using the approved submission methods provided by Textile Exchange such as online form and SFTP:

i. GOTS transaction certificate data for the input(s) and all previous input transaction certificates' data that establishes traceability back to the farm input transaction certificate(s); and

ii. *Removed for V2.4.*

b. If the documents and information submitted as per B2.2.2.a does not allow Textile Exchange to identify all of the sites involved in producing and processing the GOTS input, product traceability back to the OCS first processor(s), and their input farm transaction certificate, Textile Exchange may require further information to be submitted by the site or applicable

certification body, including but not limited to farm scope certificates, farm to the first processor transaction certificates, supply chain transaction certificates, shipping or transport documents, invoices, purchase orders, product quality test reports, and financial documents.

NOTE: As of the publication of this policy, email submission is not accepted. Automatic confirmation will be provided via online submission form upon submission. Submission is for review purposes only and approval beyond the automatic confirmation is not required for the issuance of transaction certificates.

NOTE: The certification body is not required to collect the additional data required by B2.2.2.b unless it is requested by Textile Exchange. This data is not required to issue the transaction certificate.

c. The first processor shall meet B2.2.4.

B2.2.3 *Removed for V2.4.*

B2.2.4 Effective December 1, 2022, first processors of organic product shall also meet one of the following two options in order for their outgoing GOTS transaction certificates to be accepted as inputs for OCS products:

a. The first processor shall be certified to the OCS, in addition to GOTS, and by the same certification body in accordance with *OCS-102-V3.0 OCS Certification Procedures*, section D2.2.1. First processors and their certification bodies are required to meet all OCS criteria, including the submission of data from *OCS-504 OCS GMO Policy Data Report* for all incoming organic materials, regardless of whether the output transaction certificates are OCS or GOTS. Or

b. The first processor shall be certified to GOTS by a certification body which held GOTS accreditation on December 1, 2022 and which is not licensed for either the OCS or the CCS. The certification body shall have an agreement in place with Textile Exchange to ensure that the required data is submitted to Textile Exchange for all incoming organic materials which may be included on an outgoing GOTS transaction certificate.

B2.3 *Removed for V2.4.*

Additional Criteria for Wool

B2.4 GOTS V6.0 and GOTS V7.0 certified wool, which is verified as non-mulesed or from a farm with ceased mulesing status, may qualify if it meets one of the following criteria:

B2.4.1 The wool is sourced from a country where mulesing is illegal or not practiced, and the country of origin is indicated on the transaction certificate;

B2.4.2   The organic standard used to certify the farm does not permit mulesing, and the organic standard is listed on the transaction certificate; or

B2.4.3   The wool is certified to the Responsible Wool Standard.

B3. Recycled Claim Standard (RCS)

B3.1   The following equivalent standard is recognized as an input for RCS products:

B3.1.1   *GRS-101-V4.0 Global Recycled Standard*

B3.2   No equivalent audits are currently recognized for the RCS.

B4. Global Recycled Standard (GRS)

B4.1   No equivalent standards or audits are currently recognized for the GRS.

B5. Responsible Down Standard (RDS)

B5.1   No equivalent standards or audits are currently recognized for the RDS.

B6. Responsible Animal Fiber (RAF) Standards – Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS), and Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS)

B6.1   No equivalent standards or audits are currently recognized for the RAF standards.