Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA)-Clean Fibre Processing Standard v2 stakeholder consultation

Introduction: The SFA's Clean Fibre Processing Code of Practice (C003, and hereafter referred to as the Clean Fibre Processing Standard, CFPS) was published by the SFA in 2021, covering the primary processing of fibre derived from the undercoat of cashmere goats. Since then, the SFA undertook an extensive stakeholder consultation in January 2025. Based on the feedback received during that consultation and considering the ISEAL Code requirement that standards be reviewed every 5 years, this revision has been initiated. While the secretariat functions are performed by the SFA, a core working group comprising representation from brands and industry, academia, and CABs participated in the development of this revision, which is now presented for wide stakeholder consultation for 60 days, commencing 10.09.2026, **until 06.11.2026**. Thereafter, the feedback obtained will be analysed, the standard updated and circulated for an additional round of 30 days of further stakeholder consultation, should major challenges arise in consolidating this feedback. The final decisions lie with the SFA's Standard Setting Improvement Committee (SSIC) and the Board. It is intended that version 2.0 will be published by 28.02.2027.

Before completing this consultation, we encourage you to review the draft SFA Fibre Processing Standard v2.0 in full: https://sustainablefibre.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/SFA_FibreProcessingStandard_v2.0_DRAFT.pdf

You are invited to participate in this consultation by responding to the following questions:

If you are unable to complete the online feedback form for any reason, feel you are unable to participate due to a language barrier or have any other questions, please do contact us at ***standards@sustainablefibre.org****, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.*

1. a) Scope Expansion – Multiple Species: This revision takes into consideration the intended scope expansion of the SFA's Animal Fibre Standard (AFS) to include Camelids and Yak, preceded by previous assessments carried out by the SFA. It is well known that in many herding communities, these species are reared together as mixed herds, and much of the fibre processing is carried out under similar conditions. The species are then utilised for extended use to enhance alternate livelihoods. The scope of the CFPS is expanded with the intent to initially include these species in addition to cashmere goats, in readiness to commence certification when the AFS expanded scope certification commences. *

- ○ Do not expand scope
- ○ Expand to include Cashmere goats, Camelids and Yak

Expand to increase one species at a time

Other

2. b) Scope Expansion – Secondary Processing: The Clean Fibre Processing Standard v1.0 only included primary processing and was limited to sorting, dehairing, and scouring of cashmere fibre. Thereafter, the Chain of Custody Standard prescribed certification based on an aggregation model and implemented via traceability along the supply chain. This left some gaps in the CFPS where sustainability standards criteria (health and safety, fair work, environmental management, chemical usage and management, good governance) were not extended to the secondary processing production aspects. This revision not only strengthens these criteria but also expands the scope to cover secondary processing (excluding assembly of final products-see section 13). It is envisaged that organisations will be able to obtain certification by now being able to be 'on par' with other standard certification systems, should they wish to. It also provides more certification service opportunities to CABs, who wish to expand their services into this version. Stakeholders had previously enquired about including secondary processing in the CFPS. *

Do not expand scope to include secondary processing aspects

Expand scope to include secondary processing aspects covered in Section 13 of the Standard

Other (e.g., merge with another Standard, such as the SFA Chain of Custody)

3. If the standard does not cover secondary processing, do you believe this would create additional sustainability, traceability, quality, or market risks within the supply chain? *

Yes

No

Maybe

Other

4. If you answered ‘Yes’ to Question 3, which risks are of greatest concern? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Loss of traceability

☐ Misleading product claims

☐ Chemicals management and handling risks

☐ Environmental risks through chemical contamination, poorly managed effluent discharge

☐ Labour and human rights violations risks

☐ Product substitution or fraud risks

☐ Customer or regulatory expectations not met

☐ Supply chain risks

☐ Market access risks

☐ Other

5. If the standard were extended to include secondary processing to address the risks in 4, up to which stage/s should it apply? *

☐ Cover all wet processing steps under secondary processing as in the Standard

(Secondary wet-processing operations including dyeing, bleaching or whitening, washing, rinsing, aqueous preparation and wet chemical finishing)

☐ Cover the above wet processing only up to the manufacture of Yarn

☐ Cover the above wet processing up to the manufacture of Fabric

☐ Other recommendation

6. If you chose 'Other' in question 5, please describe your recommendation/view *

7. If you selected 'Do not expand the scope to cover secondary processing', could you please describe how the risks mentioned in question 4 are mitigated in your operation /business/industry? *

8. Including the Recycling of Animal Fibre within the scope of v2.0, the SFA's previous consultations with stakeholders revealed an appetite to be certified to produce recycled fibre. This enhances the textile industry's circularity and reduces its environmental footprint. However, the procurement of especially post-consumer fibre for recycling exposes the SFA's certification and assurance system to a variety of risks, including the introduction of chemicals that are damaging to human health and the environment. It could potentially increase loopholes that may attempt to introduce undeclared synthetic materials and virgin materials, thereby increasing malpractices and uncertainties within the supply chain as well as for consumers. This also makes auditing and certification cumbersome and ineffective. Therefore, the SFA stipulates that post-consumer recycled material is only procured from verified suppliers able to provide certification of the supplied material against internationally recognised standards (see Annex 7), with full declaration of composition while maintaining stringent traceability within the processing. The processing itself is covered by the sustainability requirements of the standard that applies across all processes. **Should this Revision include requirements for recycling animal fibres?** *

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

9. If you answered 'Yes' to question 7, which recycled materials should be covered? (Select all that apply). *

- Pre-consumer recycled animal fibre only
- Post-consumer and pre-consumer recycled animal fibre only
- The standard should NOT cover recycling of animal fibre
- Unsure

10. If you answered 'Yes' to question 7, should the standard also allow recycled fibre blends containing other types of fibres?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

11. If recycled blends are included, which blends should be covered? *

- Animal fibre blended with natural plant and animal fibres (e.g., cotton, flax, angora wool)
- Animal fibre blended with regenerated cellulosic fibres (e.g., viscose, lyocell)
- Animal fibre blended with synthetic fibres (e.g., polyester, nylon)
- All fibre blends containing animal fibres only
- Other

12. What is the maximum percentage of blended other non-animal fibre material that should be permitted? *

- Maximum 5%
- Up to 15% maximum
- Up to 30% maximum (in line with Annex 3 of the Standard)

13. Criteria for Small Businesses: During this revision, it is the intent to explore criteria for small businesses to lighten their compliance burden along the supply chain. However, a globally adopted standard definition is not available, and instead, variable criteria are adopted in different global settings (see annex 4). The revision therefore stipulates that those wishing to make a claim as a small business provide the basis and accordingly justify the applicable criteria to their CAB at the point of assessment. *

- SFA should clearly prescribe a standard set of criteria to identify a small business to avoid confusion, variation, and ambiguity in interpretation.

☐ SFA should leave the criteria open as described in the draft, as this approach is suited to a global standard.

14. Please tell us a bit more about yourself. Do you identify with any of the following?

☐ Academic/Research/Teaching

☐ Brand/Trade/Retail/Transport

☐ Cooperative/processor/manufacturer

☐ CAB/CAB oversight Body

☐ NGO/charity sector

☐ Professional/Trade Association

☐ Government/Local Government/Regulatory

☐ Standards setting body

☐ Based within UK

☐ Based external to the UK

☐ Based in Mongolia/China/Nepal/Other Asian

☐ Based in Europe

15. Do you use any other Sustainability Standards in your operations / Business / Industry

○ Yes

○ No

16. If you answered 'Yes' to Question 14, would you mind telling us which Standards you use?

17. We would love to have your feedback. Do you have any other comments / recommendations for us? Especially if you answered 'Other' to any of the previous questions please provide your views here.