

The need for a Textiles Implementation Programme that addresses the whole value chain, including cotton, under the Global Framework on Chemicals

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Key points

- The problem of chemicals of concern in the textile industry is well recognized.
- A GFC Textiles Sector Industry Implementation Programme has the capacity to drive positive impact through increased coherence that delivers multiple GFC targets and objectives at scale.
- Existing initiatives addressing chemical inputs at different stages of the textiles value chain are already highly aligned with the chemicals of concern phase out approach integral to GFC Target D6. But no single initiative or value chain segment can fully succeed alone.
- Any Textiles Implementation Programme must address chemicals of concern **across the whole value chain**, in line with Target D6. This not only includes chemicals in textiles manufacturing but also in the production of raw input materials, like cotton.
- Cotton provides around 25% of raw fiber input into the textiles sector but uses an exceptionally high volume of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) in production compared to most other crops.
- HHPs are chemicals of concern under the GFC, and key GFC Targets are particularly relevant to pesticide use in cotton production, including Target A7 to phase out use of HHPs in agriculture, and Target D5 to increase support to non-chemical alternatives.
- Solutions are available. PAN UK with GEF, national governments and stakeholders, UN agencies and major cotton sector supply chain actors are collaborating to scale up successful demonstration projects that eliminate HHPs from cotton production while enhancing farmers' livelihoods. Value chain linkages that help to connect farmers to suitable markets offer a vital route to growth and financial sustainability.
- Integrating key upstream and downstream initiatives and industry actors into a GFC Textiles Industry Sector Implementation Programme provides an historic opportunity to ensure the industry addresses chemicals of concern from farm to retail.
- Mobilising key stakeholders as soon as possible will make best use of their capacity to develop and support a comprehensive workplan aligned with Target D6 that can be adopted by the GFC.

For the above reasons, PAN-UK supports greater collaboration and coordinated action across the textiles value chain, from the production of raw materials including cotton, through to retail, and is working to support that.

Relevant GFC targets

'Implementation programmes' must support the achievement of the objectives and targets of the GFC.

In line with Target D6 it is important that private sector IPs take a **whole of value chain approach** and ensure chemicals of concern are addressed in workplans and terms of reference prior to any IP adoption or endorsement at the first GFC International Conference in 2026.

The textiles industry has repeatedly, and rightly, been identified as a suitable sector for a targeted implementation programme under the GFC. Including HHPs used in cotton production in a Textiles IP would help to bring a value chain approach, in line with Target D6, and to address other key

commitments, such as Target A7 to phase out use of HHPs in agriculture, and Target D5 to increase support to non-chemical alternatives.

Integrating existing but different approaches

A range of sustainability initiatives exist in the textiles sector which provide impact at scale and are already highly aligned with a chemicals of concern phase out approach. However, these initiatives often focus on defined parts of the textiles value chain and are not optimally integrated into an overall programme to address all critical chemicals of concern across the whole value chain.

ZDHC is bringing key actors together with a focus on the mid and downstream stages of the textiles and fashion product design, manufacturing, processing, and finishing value chain. Meanwhile, key sustainability standards working in cotton such as the Better Cotton Initiative, Textile Exchange, the Organic Cotton Accelerator and Cotton Made in Africa – with which PAN UK has long standing relationships - focus only on chemicals in raw fibre production.

Bringing key actors together into a working group to develop an integrated Textiles Industry Sector Programme that is capable of addressing chemicals of concern across the whole textiles value chain, including HHPs for cotton production, would be an enormously positive step that could drive significant progress towards the GFC’s environmental and health objectives. No single initiative can deliver the scope of action to meet the mandate of Target D6. Together, they can.

Timelines

The majority of GFC targets and goals including Target D6 set 2030 as the date by which actions should be achieved. The IOMC aspires to have its Global Programme, and Industry Sector Programmes, adopted or endorsed at the first GFC International Conference in the last quarter of 2026. Terms of reference and work plans aligned with Target D6 must be developed by the second half of 2026. Implementation of sectoral strategies and action plans should then occur by 2030.

With these timelines in mind, we propose the following:

Proposed Timeline for Textiles IP Development & Implementation											
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Stakeholder Identification	Q2-4										
Working Group Established	Q2 -4										
Workplan development	Q4	Q1-3									
Workplan Endorsement		Q4									
Implementation											
Conclusion on most CoCs											
Expanded window on HHPs											

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