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Implementation Programme

"Industry Engagement and Action along Value Chains"

Textile Industry Sector Programme (TISP)
Draft Terms of Reference

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About this document:
The document refers to the Draft Terms of Reference of the Textile Industry Sector Programme (TISP)

Draft Terms of Reference
Textile Industry Sector Programme (TISP)
Under the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC)

1. Programme Rationale

The Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), adopted in 2023, establishes a multilateral and multistakeholder commitment to the sound management of chemicals and waste across all sectors of the economy.

This Textile Industry Sector Programme (hereafter referred to as "TISP") brings together stakeholders committed to implementing the GFC and advancing the achievement of Strategic Objective D which aspires that "*Safer alternatives and innovative and sustainable solutions in product value chains are in place so that benefits to human health and the environment are maximized and risks are prevented or, where prevention is not feasible, minimised*."

Recognizing the textile sector as a chemical-intensive industry, the GFC invites the development of a sectoral industry programme to operationalize strategic objectives under the GFC within the textile sector. The TISP aims to support GFC Target D6,[1] which stipulates that "*by 2030, sustainable chemical and waste management strategies have been developed and implemented for major economic and industry sectors, which identify priority chemicals of concern and standards and measures, such as the chemical footprint approach, to reduce their impact and, where feasible, their input, along the value chain*". Other relevant GFC targets include: A3, A4, A7, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, D1, D4, D7, E2, E3, and E6.

2. Objectives of the Textile Industry Sector Programme (TISP)

Taking into account target D6 and other industry relevant targets of the GFC, the following overall objectives of the textile industry engagement are:

- Data and information on chemicals along the textile value chain from fibre to final product is transparent and publicly available.
- Harm to workers, the public, and the environment from chemical pollution is prevented and reduced.
- Compliance with national and international obligations, including Stockholm, Basel, and Rotterdam Conventions is met, and ideally, exceeded.
- Chemicals of concern (CoCs), including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC are identified and replaced with safer alternatives.
- Safer alternatives, including green and sustainable chemistries, are financially incentivized and made available.

The process of achieving these objectives will include: upholding a commitment to performance improvement and transparent reporting; having a clear process in place for all stakeholders along the value chain to be involved in this implementation programme; developing and revising as needed a timeline for implementing the TISP with milestones for reviewing and updating targets and objectives;

[1] Target D6 "Safer alternatives and innovative and sustainable solutions in product value chains are in place so that benefits to human health and the environment are maximized and risks are prevented or, where prevention is not feasible, minimized."

and working with stakeholders to test waste outputs to ensure input and process measures have the expected result of lowering overall impacts to people and the planet.

3. Scope of the TISP under the GFC

Stakeholder focus areas in the textile sector to achieve the objectives include:

- Sustainable chemical and waste management strategies
- Transparency and traceability along value chains
- Occupational and community health and safety
- Knowledge sharing on priority chemicals of concern
- Chemical footprinting approaches
- Green and Sustainable Chemistry Development and Implementation
- Reporting standards and frameworks
- Private Sector Financing and Investment
- Guidance and Capacity Building
- Implementation, Monitoring and Review (cross-cutting)

The TISP recognises that the textile value chain encompasses the full sequence of activities that transform raw fibres into finished products—spanning fiber production (including natural fibres such as cotton and synthetic fibres such as polyester), yarn and fabric manufacturing, dyeing and finishing, garment assembly, and distribution to retail and end consumers. Transitioning to safer and more sustainable alternatives will require addressing structural challenges, including costs, availability of inputs, access to knowledge and extension services, and economic risks across the value chain. Proposed actions under the TISP seek to integrate considerations and inclusivity across the value chain, from farmers to retailers.

Summarized below are the types of actions relevant to each of the ten stakeholder focus areas listed above. Annex 1 identifies potential actions that could be undertaken in this implementation programme for each focus area, which are indicative of mandates and implementation capacities of actors representing different segments of the textile value chain.

3.1. Sustainable Chemical and Waste Management Strategies

Sustainable chemical and waste management strategies will emphasize developing lifecycle-based, GFC-aligned business policies with clear benchmarks and time-bound plans to phase out priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC, and reduce waste, while scaling implementation through pilots, incentives, and performance monitoring. These strategies can also address upstream constraints—such as costs, access to safer alternatives, and structural barriers—to enable transitions away from priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC, across supply chains, including at the farm level.

3.2. Transparency and Traceability along Value Chains

Transparency and traceability actions will aim to establish harmonised systems and minimum disclosure requirements to share reliable chemical information across the textile value chain, supported by digital tools (e.g., product passports), verification mechanisms, and strengthened inventory systems. These actions will also seek to integrate farm-level data, supporting SMEs, addressing confidentiality challenges, and leveraging policy incentives to enable interoperability, circularity, and informed decision-making.

3.3. Occupational and Community Health and Safety

Occupational and community health and safety actions will apply hazard-based approaches that prioritize eliminating priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC, followed by exposure control measures and strengthening workplace protections through standards, training, monitoring, and performance indicators. These actions can also address risks in informal sectors and vulnerable worker groups by promoting inclusive, gender-responsive measures and aligning practices with global standards to reduce exposure across the value chain.

3.4. Knowledge Sharing on Priority Chemicals of Concern (CoCs)

Knowledge-sharing initiatives on CoCs, including chemicals classified as issues of concern under the GFC, will identify and prioritize key hazardous substances across the textile value chain using existing global and textile sector-related lists and criteria, while promoting alignment and interoperability among standards to support consistent hazard and risk reduction. This work will also aim to improve transparency and decision-making through consolidated resources, classification frameworks, and accessible tools that link chemicals to their uses and impacts within the textile value chain.

3.5. Chemical Footprinting Approaches

Chemical footprinting approaches will develop harmonized tools, metrics, and indicators to quantify chemical use, hazards, exposures, and/or impacts across the textile value chain, including agricultural-stage data and aligning with GFC monitoring and reporting. They will emphasize piloting and scaling accessible methods, including for SMEs.

3.6. Green and Sustainable Chemistry Development and Implementation

Green and sustainable chemistry efforts will define and scale safer chemical alternatives, processes, and materials across the textile value chain, supported by shared criteria, inventories, research, and innovation. These initiatives will promote substitution of priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC, enable broader adoption through knowledge-sharing and policy measures, and integrate with circular economy strategies such as textile recycling.

3.7. Reporting Standards and Frameworks

Reporting standards and frameworks will promote consistent disclosure systems to track chemical use and progress toward safer alternatives in the textile sector, while aligning and integrating existing standards across the value chain. They will emphasize mapping best practices, strengthening alignment with GFC targets, expanding upstream (including farm-level) indicators, and addressing gaps—particularly for recycled textiles—to improve transparency and comparability.

3.8. Private Sector Financing and Investment

Financing and investment actions will be directed to mobilizing public and private capital to support safer chemicals and waste management in the textile sector, including investments in substitution, cleaner production, pollution control, and circularity. They will emphasize integrating chemical risk into ESG and investment decisions while expanding access to finance—particularly for SMEs and farmers—through technical assistance, incentives, and risk-sharing mechanisms to enable the transition to safer alternatives.

3.9. Guidance and Capacity Building

Guidance and capacity-building efforts will orient to developing and scaling practical tools, training, and support programs tailored to actors across the textile value chain—especially in major production regions and among SMEs—while promoting peer learning and coordination with existing initiatives. These strategies will emphasize continuous evaluation to identify gaps and improve effectiveness, ensuring sustained uptake and impact.

3.10. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Implementation, monitoring, and review efforts will establish clear governance, roles, and responsibilities, alongside defined key performance indicators (KPIs) and milestones aligned with GFC targets to track progress. They will emphasize regular monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive updates to priorities, while promoting coordination and collaboration across stakeholders, sectors, and regions.

4. Measurement of progress

The TISP aspires to feed into indicators aligned with the overall indicators developed for Implementation Programme (IP) 2 (once it is finalised), as well as relevant indicators for strategic objectives and targets adopted into the GFC Measurability Structure. The TISP may also consider developing or adopting other indicators of use to its participants. See Section 3.10 above.

5. Stakeholder Participation

The TISP is open to all relevant stakeholders, including:

- Textile industry actors along the entire value chain
- Finance and investment sectors
- Governments and regulators
- Labour and union representatives
- NGOs and civil society organizations
- International organizations and UN bodies
- Academic institutions and technical platforms
- Sustainability standards and initiatives

Means of participation:

- Stakeholders may join the TISP by submitting an expression of interest form outlining their commitment to GFC objectives and intended contributions. Participants will be expected to report on progress and share relevant experiences.
- Forming or participating with other stakeholders in working groups, pilots, or other initiatives.
- Reporting participation in the GFC through specific channels.

6. Governance and Coordination

This TISP is a stakeholder initiative seeking to contribute to GFC Implementation Programme 2 (IP 2) – *Industry Engagement along Value Chains* – that is proposed by the IOMC for adoption at the first GFC International Conference of (IC-1).

Initial development of the TISP

- The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), ZDHC, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK), and the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) have been the initial conveners of the Interim TISP and developed these terms of reference.

Refinement and Validation of the TISP

The IOMC proposes that IC-1 mandates an overarching multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder body to oversee GFC Implementation Programmes, which would review and validate the draft terms of reference and detailed operational work plans for specific Industry Sector Programmes.

Once the IOMC's overarching IP 2 has been endorsed at IC-1, a permanent multi-stakeholder TISP governance structure will be put in place, possibly consisting of:

- A multistakeholder TISP Coordination Group**,** responsible for: coordinating overall programme refinement, roll out, and implementation; establishing any subsidiary Advisory or Working Groups; and liaising with and reporting to the overarching body mandated by IC-1 to oversee IP 2.
- A brand/corporate advisory group, consisting of a voluntary group of companies and brands representing relevant sections of the value chain (from feedstock production through textile manufacturing to retail), which will help ensure industry relevance and expand industry participation at a global scale.

A number of specialist Ad-Hoc Textile Sector Working Groups, as deemed necessary, to develop and help drive implementation of more detailed plans and actions on specific yet distinct sections of the value chain, chemicals groupings, best practice guidance, and/or delivery initiatives, as required. The creation and work of these Working Groups will be coordinated by the aforementioned TISP Coordination Group in partnership with programme participants.

7. Communication and Outreach

- Develop an outreach strategy and timeline.
- Identify relevant industry events across the globe for awareness raising and stakeholder mobilization.
- Communicate through channels (e.g., newsletters, events, etc.) with core partners and along the value chain.

Annex 1: Potential Actions relevant to the TISP

Note: The below potential actions are indicative. Once established, the TISP will develop a Work Plan outlining concrete actions facilitating GFC outcomes for different actors across each stage of the value chain.

3.1. Sustainable Chemical and Waste Management Strategies

- Identify and promote the development and implementation of comprehensive business strategies and policies for **sustainable chemical and waste management strategies** aligned with GFC Target D6 and other relevant GFC targets, and relevant international agreements. Include examples of policies that address the triple planetary crises of pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss.
- Establish **minimum criteria and benchmarks** for such strategies, including lifecycle approaches covering production, use, and end-of-life management.
- Promote **time-bound plans** for the phase-out or reduction of priority chemicals of concern and the prevention of hazardous waste generation.
- Scale up implementation through **pilot projects, industry commitments, and policy incentives**, and regularly evaluate outcomes (e.g. discharge, emissions, waste flows).
- **Address farm-level challenges** related to input costs, access to safer alternatives, and structural barriers to transition away from priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC.

3.2. Transparency and Traceability along Value Chains

- Develop and scale **harmonized tools and systems**, to ensure chemical information is shared transparently across the textile value chain to enable accountability, informed decision making, and public access to information.
- Define and promote **minimum data sets and disclosure requirements** for chemical information, including CoCs.
- Pilot and implement **digital traceability solutions** (e.g., product-level information system or digital product passports), enabling interoperability and accessibility
- Ensure traceability systems **incorporate farm-level data** for natural fibres, including chemical input use, with appropriate safeguards and support for large family farms and smallholders.
- Strengthen chemical inventory systems across all stages of the value chain, with tailored support for small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).
- Curate tools and resources for managing chemical inventories. To be linked with an annex listing existing tools and resources for managing CoCs.
- Promote existing **verification mechanisms**, including third-party certification and auditing, to ensure data credibility.
- Address **confidential business information challenges** while ensuring meaningful access to relevant information.
- Identify and promote **policy incentives and regulatory approaches** supporting traceability, including links to recycled materials and circularity, especially in regions that are piloting or mandating tools such as digital product information systems and voluntary pilots from private sector.

3.3. Occupational and Community Health and Safety

- Promote and implement **hazard-based approaches to chemical safety**, prioritizing elimination and substitution of priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC, followed by exposure control measures.
- Identify and scale **good practices, standards and frameworks** for preventing and managing chemical exposure risks in workplaces that protect the health and safety of workers and communities across the value chain. Focus on alignment with global standards and policies, both textile specific and industry agnostic, as well as national laws.
- Strengthen **occupational health and safety systems**, including training, monitoring, and safety culture development.
- Establish and promote **performance indicators** (e.g., chemical exposure limits, incident reporting, and discharge quality).
- Address specific risks in **informal sectors and second-hand textile trade value chains**, including waste handling and recycling.
- Incorporate **gender-responsive and inclusive approaches**, recognizing the vulnerability of certain worker groups (e.g., pregnant/breastfeeding women).

3.4. Knowledge Sharing on Priority Chemicals of Concern (CoCs)

- Identify priority **CoCs across the textile value chain**, including chemicals classified as issues of concern under the GFC, building on existing international and voluntary CoC lists and the criteria used to create those lists, ensuring alignment with CoCs relevant to other GFC targets (e.g., A3, A7, D1, and D4). These include but may not be limited to: Stockholm Convention POPs list; REACH SVHCs; ZDHC MRSL; certification standards such as Oeko-Tex, Bluesign, Cradle to Cradle, GOTS, GreenScreen, and Better Cotton Initiative; AFIRM RSL; PAN International Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) and pesticides meeting criteria 1-8 of the 2016 FAO/WHO definition of HHPs as recognized by the Joint Meeting on Pesticides Management (JMPM) International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management; ChemSec SIN List; and Chemical Footprint Project Chemicals of High Concern Reference List.
- **Include criteria and methodologies for prioritisation tiers** between ban/phase-out substances, restriction, mitigation measures based on hazard, exposure, risk, regulatory compliance, and availability of alternatives.
- Promote **alignment and interoperability** among existing CoC lists and standards across regions and initiatives to boost sustainable supply chain policies and practices that stimulate chemical risk reduction and aim to replace priority CoCs in textile supply chains.
- Compile a **consolidated list** of existing CoC lists relevant to each chemically dependent stage in the value chain for the dominant textile materials; and including functional uses of the chemicals in the list. Improve **access to information** through, for example, open access databases and tools, including linking CoCs to function uses in textile applications Link to existing measures of impacts of chemicals used through chemical footprinting approaches.

3.5. Chemical Footprinting Approaches

- Identify, harmonize and promote **tools and methodologies** to measure chemical use, hazard, exposure, and impacts on health, ecosystems and economies across textile value chains.
- Develop and apply **common indicators and metrics** for chemical footprinting aligned with GFC monitoring and reporting.
- Pilot and scale **chemical footprinting approaches** in different segments of the textile sector, improving accessibility of tools, including for SMEs.

- Integrate methodologies to **account for agricultural-stage chemical use** in natural fibre production, including data gaps and estimation where primary data is limited.
- Ensure alignment with **transparency, traceability and financial disclosure initiatives**. Identify and address **technical, financial and knowledge gaps** that hinder the application of chemical footprinting tools in the textile sector.

3.6. Green and Sustainable Chemistry Development and Implementation

- **Define and promote criteria** for green and sustainable chemistries, solutions, and practices used and needed along the entire textile value chain.
- **Identify, document and disseminate** solutions for safe and sustainable alternatives, processes and materials across the value chain and promote innovations where safer alternatives for chemicals of concern are not yet available.
- **Develop and maintain inventories** of low hazard/green chemicals, formulations, and processes, as well as regulatory actions and enabling measures (e.g. procurement initiatives and standards) to support the phase-out of priority chemicals of concern.
- **Promote research and information-sharing** on safer, green and sustainable chemistry innovations, including agricultural bio-inputs, to support the substitution of chemicals of concern in the textile sector – and **promote their development, availability and affordability.**
- **Share good practices and case studies** from across the textile sector to support the scaling of safer materials and alternative chemicals.
- **Support the integration of green and sustainable chemistry** into circular economy approaches, including through the scaling of textile recycling and related innovations.

3.7. Reporting Standards and Frameworks

- **Promote the use of disclosure and reporting standards and frameworks** relevant for tracking and reporting progress in the sound management of chemicals and waste in the textile sector, including the reduction of chemicals of concern and the uptake of safer alternatives.
- **Identify and promote synergies** among existing standards and frameworks used to measure chemical use in the textile sector.
- **Map and promote best-practice standards, frameworks and voluntary initiatives** across all stages of the textile value chain, and encourage collaboration to expand their uptake.
- **Assess alignment of existing standards and frameworks** with GFC objectives and targets, and identify activities to strengthen alignment where needed.
- **Encourage inclusion of upstream indicators**, including farm-level chemical used and transition progress, while accounting for data availability challenges.
- **Consolidate and maintain an overview of existing standards** that address chemical use and management in the textile sector.
- **Identify gaps in current standards and frameworks** related to recycled textiles, and support their development where feasible.

3.8. Private Sector Financing and Investment

- Identify and mobilize **private and public finance mechanisms** to support implementation of sustainable chemical and waste management in the textile sector.
- Promote integration of **chemical hazard, risk, and sustainability criteria** into ESG frameworks, due diligence, and investment decisions.
- Support financing for

    - Substitution of priority chemicals of concern, including those classified as Issues of Concern under the GFC
    - Cleaner production technologies
    - Wastewater and emission control systems
    - Circularity and recycling infrastructure
- Facilitate **access to finance for SMEs**, including technical assistance and risk-sharing mechanisms Facilitate access to **finance and incentives for farmers** – especially large family farms and smallholders – to transition to safer alternatives, including support for upfront costs, capacity building, and risk-sharing mechanisms.

3.9. Guidance and Capacity Building

- Develop and disseminate practical guidance, tools and training materials tailored to different actors across the textile value chain.
- Establish and implement **capacity-building programmes**, particularly in major textile-producing regions and for SMEs.
- Promote **train-the-trainer approaches**, peer learning, and knowledge exchange platforms
- Align efforts with **existing initiatives and partnerships**, including awareness raising campaigns, to avoid duplication and enhance impact.
- Monitor and evaluate **capacity-building effectiveness**, identifying gaps and continuously improving support.

3.10. Implementation, Monitoring and Review (cross-cutting)

- Establish **clear governance arrangements**, roles and responsibilities for stakeholders participating in the TISP.
- Define **key performance indicators (KPIs)** and milestones aligned with GFC targets.
- Implement **regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes** to track progress and impact.
- Facilitate **periodic review and updating** of priorities, actions, and targets based on evolving science, policy and market developments.
- Promote **coordination and collaboration** across sectors, regions, and stakeholder groups.