



**Sustainable Leather Foundation
Standard for Environmental Health and Safety**

Reference: FSE3.1
Authored by: K Kutskill
Peer Reviewed by: XXX
Accredited by: XXX

Original Creation Date: 1 Nov 2022
Peer Reviewed Date: XXX 2022
Last Review Date: XXX
Next Review Date: Nov 2023

FSE3 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (EHS) STANDARD AND BENCHMARK

Summary: The SLF environmental health and safety (H&S) standard provides the context, definitions, and methodology around environmental H&S in the leather industry. This document gives the facility under audit the principles and general expectations, but it is not exhaustive and recognises that there will be differences within regions for national and local laws.

Where there are matters of interpretation in relation to the standard, applicable laws or organisational norms, the auditor will assess in favour of the employees in that facility.



1. Scope

1.1 The *SLF Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Standard and Benchmark* specifies the definitions and structure of the health and safety section of an environmental programme document or manual establishing the policy, plan, and environmental performance goals for a particular facility. The key areas include a health and safety aspects and impacts register, aspects screening, internal and external facility noise and odour monitoring and record keeping, preventative environmental pollution procedures, and risks assessments with particular focus on Hydrogen Sulfide (where applicable).

1.2 Environmental Health and Safety procedures are an integral part of ensuring a safe and comfortable working environment for the employees and surrounding communities.

1.3 The *SLF Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Standard and Benchmark* is intended to ensure that SLF certified facilities are aware of the necessary systems required to build, implement, and manage EHS aspects and are actively working to improve the health and safety impacts of their operations.

2. Normative references

The following referenced documents are useful in the understanding of this document and are provided for further guidance. In the case of dispute these references form the core of the evidence in support of the Standard used here:

ISO 45001:2018 Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements with guidance for use¹

ISO 14001:2015 Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use²

3. Terms and definitions

3.1 Environmental Health and Safety (EHS): A particular set of procedures, mechanisms or activities that apply to the well-being and security of the employees, environment, and surrounding communities.

3.2 EHS Aspects and Impacts Register: A documented list of an organisation's activities, products or services that interacts or can interact with the environment's health and safety and their actual or potential effect on the environment (e.g., noise and odour levels).

3.3 Environmental Pollution: The introduction of harmful materials to the environment. Environmental pollution that pertains to EHS would be those aspects that do or could affect the health and safety of the people in the facility and surrounding communities and the internal and external environment of the facility.

¹ <https://www.iso.org/standard/63787.html>

² <https://www.iso.org/standard/60857.html>



3.4 Aspect Screening: A process in which an organisation’s activities, products, or services are reviewed and monitored to determine the status and outline actual or potential impacts (with reference to environmental for this Standard and Benchmark).

3.5 Risk Assessment: A systematic process in which risks (potential exposure to danger, harm, or loss) are evaluated based upon a series of activities, outputs, and operations.

3.6 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Equipment worn by the employee to minimize exposure to hazards that can lead to workplace injury and illness.

4. Principle

4.1 The principle of the *SLF Environmental Health and Safety Standard and Benchmark* is based upon the need for responsible organisations to protect and maintain the health and safety of the internal and external environment (and people within). The establishment of an EHS procedure/mechanism is intended to provide a proactive approach to health and safety by:

- 4.1.1 Prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
- 4.1.2 Improve compliance with laws and regulations
- 4.1.3 Reduce costs, including significant reductions in workers’ compensation premiums
- 4.1.4 Engage workers
- 4.1.5 Increase productivity and enhance overall business operations
- 4.1.6 Support and respect the environment in which the surrounding community lives

4.2 As a function of the greater Environmental Management System, the EHS mechanisms may utilise the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model. The PDCA model is an iterative process aimed at achieving continual improvement. Each of the elements of an EHS procedure can utilise the PDCA model to establish a consistent, systematic approach.

The PDCA model can be described as the following:

- 4.2.1 Plan: Establish environmental objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the organisation’s environmental policy
- 4.2.2 Do: Implement the process as planned
- 4.2.3 Check: Monitor and measure processes against the environmental policy, including its commitments, environmental objectives, and operating criteria, and report the results
- 4.2.4 Act: Take actions to continually improve

4.3 The Environmental Health and Safety procedures will be most effective with alignment directly related to the conformities, obligations, and requirements of the organisation’s legal, regional and customer requirements for its facility, service, product, and operations. The *SLF Environmental Health and Safety Standard and Benchmark* provides an outline for the method of creating a mechanism, however it is up to the organisation to apply a risk-based approach, seeking confirmation of its environmental health and safety obligations and requirements prior to audit and certification.



5. Procedure

5.1 The facility will provide data and documentation that demonstrates an effective health and safety procedure to meet the requirements of the *SLF Environmental Health and Safety Standard and Benchmark* as follows:

- 5.1.1 Environmental health and safety aspects and impacts register and screening procedure
- 5.1.2 Evidence of monitoring and record keeping of noise levels meeting permitted limits internal and external to the facility
- 5.1.3 Evidence of monitoring and record keeping of odour levels meeting permitted limits internal and external to the facility
- 5.1.4 Evidence of control mechanisms in place to prevent environmental pollution to local community
- 5.1.5 Risk assessment with specific focus on Hydrogen Sulfide (H₂S, where applicable)
- 5.1.6 Protective measures outlined for exposure to H₂S (PPE and are identification, where applicable)

5.2 The measurement of total environmental health and safety performance may differ throughout the leather industry based upon which part of the leather-making process the facility takes part in. Please reference the following SLF Standards and Benchmarks and Sections of the Explanatory Notes & Templates for specifics on environmental performance metrics and measurement methods. These documents are located in the “Technical Library” within the Partner Only Resources area of the website and are designed to support either in preparation for audit or for improvement measures:

<https://sustainableleatherfoundation.com/partner-only-resources/technical-library>

- 5.2.1 FSE2.1 Environmental Management System (EMS)
- 5.2.2 FSG10.1 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)
- 5.2.3 Explanatory Notes and Templates
 - a. Template 2 – Environmental Aspects and Impacts Register
 - b. Template 4 – OHS Aspects and Impacts Register
 - b. Template 5 – Best Available Technique Register
 - c. Template 6 – H₂S Risk Assessment

Sustainable Leather Foundation
Standard for Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)

Reference: FSE3.1

Authored by: K Kutskill

Peer Reviewed by: XXX