



**Sustainable Leather Foundation
Standard for Raw Materials and Chemicals**

Reference: FSE8.1
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FSE8 RAW MATERIALS AND CHEMICALS STANDARD AND BENCHMARK

Summary: The SLF raw materials and chemicals standard provides the context, definitions, and methodology around proper management of raw materials and chemicals 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 Raw Materials and Chemicals Standard and Benchmark* specifies the definitions and requirements for the management of raw material and chemical inputs. The key areas include record keeping, inventory management, and minimisation/sustainable practices pertaining to incoming materials.

1.2 A Raw materials and chemicals procedure is an integral part of maintaining proper quality control ensuring safe working condition while minimising environmental impact to the employees, facility, and surrounding community/environment.

1.3 The *SLF Raw Materials and Chemicals Standard and Benchmark* is intended to ensure that SLF certified facilities are aware of and actively utilising the necessary procedures/mechanisms required to record and manage environmental inputs related to land use.

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 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems - Requirements¹

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

Král, I. and Niedźwiedz, N. (2021) Occupational safety and health aspects of leather manufacturing (2 ed.) United Nations Industry Development Organisation (UNIDO), Vienna, Austria³

3. Terms and definitions

3.1 Input Material: Any incoming material to the facility that is used for any direct or indirect processes involved in making of the semi-finished or final product(s).

3.2 Breakdown of Inputs / Inventory: A comprehensive list of items (supplies and materials on hand) meant for the manufacturing of products. Materials to include are: incoming raw/processed materials (e.g., raw hide, wet blue, dyed crust, finished hides), chemicals used for product (e.g., delineated by leather/product processing and/or MSDS category), chemicals used for processing (e.g., equipment/machinery, cleaning, effluent treatment, etc), other final-product materials (e.g., foam, thread, etc).

¹ <https://www.iso.org/standard/62085.html>

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

³ <https://leatherpanel.org/content/occupational-safety-and-health-aspects-leather-manufacture-2nd-edition-2021>



3.3 Input Material Minimisation: Process in which strategy and plan is built and implemented to reduce the number of incoming materials, reducing outgoing waste and scrap throughout the manufacturing process.

4. Principle

4.1 The principle of the *SLF Raw Materials and Chemicals Standard and Benchmark* is based upon the need for responsible organisations to control the raw material and chemical inputs into the facility to reduce waste, ensure safe working environment and minimise environmental impacts. The establishment of a Raw Materials and Chemicals procedure/mechanism is intended to provide a standard approach that:

- 4.1.1 Controls the flow, quantity, and turnover of incoming materials to the facility, reducing waste and ensuring safe and proper use
- 4.1.2 Monitors the designation and movement of incoming materials to ensure appropriate stock and on-time-delivery is maintained
- 4.1.3 Tracks usage over-time to identify critical products (and associated characteristics) requiring surrogate or back-up materials
- 4.1.4 Allows for trend analyses to be completed for evaluation of annual budget, waste minimisation and product development strategy

4.2 The raw materials and chemicals procedure is focused on the appropriate and detailed documentation and monitoring of incoming materials. To effectively implement a Raw materials and chemicals procedure, an organisation must review its quality control procedures and management system first and ensure that it is aligned with its inventory management system. Once a system is established, specific safety and environmental concerns pertaining to each incoming material must be reviewed and documented accordingly. Please reference SLF Standard and Benchmark FSG8.1 Chemical Control for more specifics on chemical handling.

4.3 The raw materials and chemicals procedure 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 Raw Materials and Chemicals Standard and Benchmark* provides an outline for the method of recording and monitoring incoming materials, however it is up to the organisation to apply a risk-based approach, seeking confirmation of its environmental obligations and requirements prior to audit and certification.

5. Procedure

5.1 The facility will provide data and documentation that demonstrates an effective management system to meet the requirements of the *SLF Raw Materials and Chemicals Standard and Benchmark* as follows:

- 5.1.1 Provide evidence of the recording and monitoring of input/incoming materials associated with the semi-finished and final products (reference definition 3.2 for list)
- 5.1.2 Provide a breakdown of raw material and chemical sources (i.e., an inventory)
- 5.1.3 Provide evidence of the recording and monitoring of input/incoming materials associated with the Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) if applicable



5.1.4 Provide evidence that the organisation practices input material minimisation

5.2 The measurement of raw materials and chemicals may differ throughout the leather industry based regional requirements, standards and type(s) of products produced. Please reference the following SLF Standards and Benchmarks and Sections of the Explanatory Notes & Templates for specifics on environmental performance metrics. 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 FSG8.1 Chemical Control
- 5.2.2 FSE11.1 Effluent and Water Quality
- 5.2.3 FSG7.1 Process Control and Quality
- 5.2.2 Explanatory Notes and Templates
 - a. GM7 Process Control and Quality Management, Efficiency and Productivity
 - b. GM8 Chemical Control
 - c. Template 6 – H₂S Risk Assessment

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