

Development of an Intrinsic Hazard Screening Methodology

G-Star RAW - March 2013

G-Star is committed to eliminate industrial releases of hazardous chemicals into the environment, and set the target to reach zero discharge of hazardous chemicals (ZDHC) from all our products and production processes by 2020.

G-Star's commitment is in line with the goal of the ZDHC Joint Roadmap; a joint initiative of the brands adidas Group, C&A, Esprit, G-Star Raw, H&M, Inditex, Jack Wolfskin, Levi Strauss & Co., Li Ning, NIKE, Inc., and PUMA SE to collectively work towards zero discharge by 2020. The roadmap includes specific actions and timelines to realise this shared commitment and to set the right standard of environmental performance for the global apparel and footwear industry. G-Star supports and puts effort in the group's activities to collectively find safer substitutions for hazardous chemicals used in the apparel industry (ZDHC Joint Roadmap)¹.

In line with the above, we recognise the textile industry needs to develop a screening methodology to identify and prioritise chemical substances of concern and substitute their use with safer alternatives. We are working through the ZDHC Joint Roadmap to develop this methodology.

As a first step, the inventory of textile chemicals, which is a comprehensive list of chemicals that are used in the textile industry, has been created based on several existing chemical databases.

In collaboration with the Chemicals Management Working Group (CMWG) of the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), the ZDHC Joint Roadmap has developed a guidance document titled Using Chemical Hazard Assessment for Alternative Chemical Assessment and Prioritisation.

The guidance document describes an approach to alternative chemical assessment and prioritisation. It was designed to be flexible with many paths leading to the same endpoint, so that companies can use different screening tools and customise those tools to their specific business needs.

The guidance document can be used to screen the inventory of textile chemicals and prioritise them for further review or elimination. The alternatives will be assessed by the screening methodology to make sure that a regrettable substitution is not chosen. A regrettable substitution is a substitution that is as unsafe as the original chemical it was supposed to substitute.

Once the chemicals have been screened for potential hazards, risk and use, it is envisioned that they will be organised by the following categories:

- Avoid or phase-out, chemical of high concern - black list;
- Use but search for safer chemicals and/or processes - manage list;
- Preferred, safer chemical - positive list.

¹ More information about G-Star's work on sustainability can be found on g-star.com/rawresponsibility and about the joint (ZDHC) roadmap on roadmaptozero.com.

Next steps

We will continue to work, through our work in the ZDHC Joint Roadmap, on the development of this screening methodology by:

- a plan to evaluate the inventory of textile chemicals by intrinsic hazard and establish a sector wide list of hazardous chemicals;
- working with industry experts (including NGO stakeholders) and use existing studies to identify key chemicals to examine. For chemicals that are identified to have high risk and hazard profiles, we will develop immediate action plans. Other chemicals may be identified for further research and analysis;
- using our inventory and guidance document and collaborate with industry partners to develop an ongoing assessment framework. This will link to other efforts of chemical analysis in the industry and policy arena.