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BETTER WORLD

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With Christian Horn, Chief of Product and Supply Chain and Andrea Barrett, VP of Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

Q: Why has RS Group created the Better World products range?

Christian: Our research shows that customers want to buy more sustainable products to reduce their impact on the environment and meet their sustainability goals, but they find it difficult. They want more choice and clearer claims, supported by evidence they can trust.

Likewise, suppliers tell us they want a clear and standardised framework to focus their efforts and communicate their claims with confidence. Essentially, both want a partner like RS who is making it easy and clear to achieve their sustainable product objectives, while adding additional brand and commercial value to their partnership. That's exactly what we're focused on at RS. With no clear industry framework to date, we're ideally positioned to define and lead the agenda, given our commitment to advancing sustainability and our central position in the value chain.

Q: How did you develop the framework?

Andrea: It's important that we created a robust framework, aligned to the latest best-practice guidelines, with clear claims supported by strong evidence and transparently communicated. This enables our customers to make informed decisions with confidence, knowing our product claims are authentic.

We developed the framework in line with the ISO 14021 standard for sustainable products and the developing requirements of the new European Union (EU) Green Claims Directive. We've also collaborated with third-party sustainability consultants, Anthesis, to develop and verify the framework.

With the framework in place, we're working closely with our suppliers to understand their sustainability improvements and assess each product claim against our rigorous criteria and governance process.

Q: How is the Better World product framework structured?

Andrea: Our framework is structured into three types of claims: **made more sustainably**, **sustainable solution** and **supports circularity**. Each of these claim types has a set of relevant claims, linked to the specific stage of the product lifecycle. Additionally, each claim has a set of criteria which can vary depending on the product type. This structured approach offers a clear line of sight into the sustainability attributes being addressed and the benefits customers can expect from each product.



Claim type	Claim	Criteria
<p>Our range is split into three types of impact reduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made more sustainably • Sustainable solution • Supports circularity 	<p>Each claim type has a list of claims that are material to the product lifecycle and its sustainability features or performance, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made more sustainably – contains recycled material • Sustainable solution - saves energy • Supports circularity - extends product life 	<p>Each claim has a set of criteria which defines the specific requirements for that claim and the minimum thresholds for the product type e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variable speed drive that can reduce energy consumption by up to 50% • Workwear manufactured from a minimum of 50% recycled content

Q: Where can I purchase Better World products?

Christian: We've made it easy to identify the range on our website through the [Better World products hub](#) and a Better World badge on each product. When customers select a product, they will see a new attribute which lists the Better World product claim statement(s) which apply. This is supplemented by a product factsheet and details on the specific sustainability benefit(s) of the product. Over time, more products will be added to the Better World range on our website, as our suppliers continue to make sustainability improvements and we assess and confirm these.

Q: What is RS Group doing beyond products to address things like packaging and carbon reduction of product shipments?

Andrea: We are working hard to make sustainability improvements throughout our own operations and value chain. We've set four science-based targets covering the most material areas of our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, including our operations, products, logistics and suppliers, which have been approved by the Science-Based Targets initiative. We're decarbonising our distribution centres by switching to green energy and heat pumps; we're also reducing our packaging and switching to materials with higher recycled content and recyclability features. Finally, we're moving our product distribution to road and sea where possible and sourcing more products closer to our suppliers and customers.

These initiatives are creating positive change and helping to reduce the carbon footprint of our business, as well as our customers' and suppliers'.

DID YOU KNOW?

90% of buyers said they would buy products certified to sustainability standards if it was easier

