

**Country (Insert country of origin of your company / organization or its headquarters' location)**

Switzerland

**Submitting Organization/Company**

Better Cotton

**If Organization or Company, please indicate the approximate number of employees**

< 250

**Please indicate the number of employees**

190

**Title of the action**

Better Cotton's Traceability Solution

**Upload your logo or an image**



**Relevant Website**

<https://bettercotton.org/field-level-results-impact/better-cottons-traceability-solution/>

**Main Partners**

Retailers and Brands on Better Cotton's Traceability Panel

**Type of initiative**

Civil Society

**Description of action**

There is a growing demand for traceability as stakeholders worldwide seek more clarity over the social and environmental challenges associated with textile supply chains, and policymakers increasingly require businesses to demonstrate greater transparency.

Better Cotton's Traceability Solution is an ambitious industry-leading initiative to meet the industry demand and demonstrate the origin of Better Cotton by providing greater supply chain visibility. The solution will be launched in late-2023, providing the opportunity for our Members to source Better Cotton with visibility of its country of origin.

Today, Better Cotton is grown in 26 countries around the world and accounts for 20% of global cotton production, making us the world's leading sustainability initiative for cotton. This makes us uniquely well-placed to develop a scalable solution for improving the traceability of cotton supply chains globally.

The Traceability Solution is being developed as part of Better Cotton's 2030 Strategy, supporting our

mission of helping cotton communities survive and thrive while protecting and restoring the environment. It will offer our Retailer and Brand Members the opportunity to verify the country of origin of the Physical Better Cotton in their products and enable our Farmers and Suppliers to continue accessing increasingly regulated international value chains. All this will support our work in improving lives and safeguarding livelihoods in cotton farming communities.

The development of our Traceability Solution has been based on extensive consultation with over 1,500 stakeholders including suppliers, Better Cotton Members, and industry consultants.

At the end of 2023, we will begin training and onboarding suppliers from different geographies onto our new Chain of Custody Standard and an updated traceability platform. We will gradually build engagement with our global Better Cotton community to make it possible for all suppliers to engage in the solution.

When the Traceability Solution is established, we will continue to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness to ensure service quality and continuous improvement.

**Type of action**

Traceability

**Please select the specific area/s of the action**

Norms and standards

Research and Development of Innovative Solutions

Awareness and Education

Collaborative Initiatives

Business Management Systems or Instruments

**Scope of the action, including a description of the value chain processes that are covered**

Objective (max 200 words): To make Better Cotton physically traceable, giving our Members the ability to trade and source Physical Better Cotton, and ensuring Better Cotton Farmers have access to increasingly regulated markets.

Commitments (max 200 words): To make Better Cotton traceable to the country of origin for selected suppliers by the end of 2023 in direct-sourcing countries. From 2024 onwards, we will continue with a phased roll-out to ensure physical traceability is available at scale and increase the origin granularity, where possible.

Value Chain Scope: Better Cotton Farmers, Ginners, Traders, Spinners, Fabric Mills, End Manufacturers, Sourcing Agents, and Brands/Retailers.

**Timeframe and/or milestones for the action**

Better Cotton's Traceability Solution will be launched at the end of 2023, followed by a phased roll-out over multiple years to all Better Cotton supply chains that are interested in sourcing/supplying Physical Better Cotton.

**Reference instruments and sources used**

Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard v1.0 (<https://bettercotton.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Better-Cotton-Chain-of-Custody-Standard-v.1.0.pdf> )

**Expected benefits and impact for the stakeholders involved**

Enhanced visibility of compliance with sustainability

requirements by industry actors/partners along the entire value chain

Enhanced traceability of the social/environmental/ethical attributes of product(s)/materials along the value chain; for example, for origin, quality, sustainability performance, and compliance with health and safety requirements for consumers and workers

## Stakeholders involved

Business and industry associations

Cotton supply chains, Standard-setting Organisations

## Key performance indicators for the action

- 1) Number of sites/suppliers conforming with the Chain of Custody Standard v1.0
- 2) Volume of Better Cotton sourced as Physical
- 3) Physical chain of custody conversion rate

## Good practices

The chain of custody requirements for organisations that are buying or selling Physical Better Cotton are described further on our website (<https://bettercotton.org/chain-of-custody-standard-transitioning-to-the-standard/>).

Better Cotton has conducted several pilots to identify the most effective digital and physical traceability solutions. A press release about our India pilot is available on our website (<https://bettercotton.org/better-cotton-trials-innovative-traceability-solutions-in-india/>).

More information about the development process of Better Cotton' Traceability Solution can be found in the following press releases:

- "Understanding Better Cotton's Traceability Journey", 2021 (<https://bettercotton.org/understanding-bcis-traceability-journey/>)
- "Developing a Traceability Solution for Better Cotton", 2022 (<https://bettercotton.org/developing-a-traceability-solution-for-better-cotton/>)

## How has this UNECE-UN/CEFACT Call to Action contributed to strategic engagement and/or public awareness in support of your commitment?

The UNECE-UN/CEFACT Call to Action has helped shed light on the need for traceability and enhanced transparency in cotton supply chains and subsequently helped build a community of practice to drive this forward in collaboration with other industry experts.

## Link to relevant goal(s) and specific target(s) of the United Nations

