

Apparel Impact Institute Launches to Accelerate Environmental Impacts in Apparel and Footwear Industry

- *The Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH), Target, PVH Corp., Gap Inc. and HSBC Holdings plc and others join to advance projects with significant environmental and social promise -*

San Francisco, CA -- (October 24, 2017) In an effort to galvanize around collective action in the apparel and footwear industry, a group of industry leaders today launched the Apparel Impact Institute (AII), which is designed to work with brands and manufacturers to select, fund, and scale projects that dramatically improve the sustainability impact of the apparel and footwear industry.

Despite widespread awareness of the environmental hazards within the apparel and footwear industry, few of the pilot projects designed to reduce impacts are operating at the scale needed to meet the critical environmental and social outcomes brands and consumers are seeking. The AII will identify promising projects that are working in limited geography, for example, or are targeting a narrow problem yet show potential for broader application. By applying the appropriate resources, the AII will help bring them to scale more quickly.

“Through the Higg Index, we’ve seen incredible industry collaboration when it comes to standardizing sustainability measurements,” said Jason Kibbey, CEO of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition. “It’s critical that we also take collective action to put that data to work. The Apparel Impact Institute allows us to act jointly on scaling practices that have a positive impact on people, planet, and the whole industry, while simultaneously helping brands and manufacturers improve their Higg Index scores.”

The AII’s first project will focus on Mill Improvement, one of the most environmentally impactful segments of clothing production. Specifically, the AII has selected the Natural Resources Defense Council’s Clean by Design program, which reduces energy, water and chemical use to scale mill improvement across the industry and across geographies. Later this year, the AII will focus on how to support and expand mill improvement initiatives globally.

“IDH strongly believes that the time has come for the apparel sector to join forces to have an impact at scale,” Ted van der Put, Executive Representative, IDH said. “By working as a sector initiative with a wide representation of leaders in the apparel sector, and by aligning with existing initiatives, we can accelerate implementation, and avoid fragmentation and duplication of similar initiatives. This will scale the impact on Sustainable Development Goals related to environment and social conditions.”

“At Target, we know that our decisions have the potential to impact millions of people around the globe, from the people who create our products to the families they support and the communities where they live, and we’re committed to leveraging Target’s scale for good,” said Ivanka Mamic, senior director of responsible sourcing, Target. “Industry collaboration is vital to driving change and ensuring a sustainable apparel industry. We support the Apparel Impact Institute’s analytical approach to collaboration and think it will provide a solid foundation for tracking progress and measuring outcomes, which will help propel the apparel industry forward.”

The AII came together using seed funding from the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) and Target, and with additional financial support from PVH Corp., Gap Inc. and HSBC Holdings plc. The Sustainable Apparel

Coalition (SAC) is providing industry support and access to Higg Index data. The parties have engaged San Francisco management consultancy Schaffer&Combs for project management support of the Apparel Impact Institute's early stage activities.

Future projects will include closed-loop recycling and worker well-being, for example, and will expand to include additional brands and manufacturers in the apparel and footwear industry.

###

About the Sustainable Apparel Coalition

The Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) is an industry-wide group of more than 200 leading apparel, footwear, and textile, brands, retailers, suppliers, service providers, trade associations, nonprofits/NGOs, and academic institutions working to reduce the environmental and social impacts of products around the world. Through multi-stakeholder engagement, the SAC seeks to lead the industry toward a shared vision of sustainability built upon a common approach for measuring and evaluating apparel, footwear, and textile product sustainability performance that spotlights priorities for action and opportunities for technological innovation. The SAC was incorporated as a 501c(6) nonprofit organization and launched the groundbreaking Higg Index suite of tools in 2011. For more information, visit www.apparelcoalition.org.

About IDH

IDH pursues global public good impact at scale in areas of inclusive business models and farmers' livelihoods, mitigation of deforestation, living wages and improved working conditions, responsible agrochemicals management, and gender. The objective is to improve the economic, social and environmental sustainability of production systems in developing countries through sector systemic change. IDH works together with a large variety of partners, including supply chain partners, governments and NGOs in 11 sectors and 11 landscapes in over 50 countries worldwide. We focus on improving public and private sector governance, improving field level sustainability for farmers, workers and the environment and changing business practices towards more sustainable production and sourcing methods. IDH is supported by multiple European governments, including our institutional donors: BUZA, DANIDA, NICFI and SECO.

For more information:

Jason Kibbey, SAC
jason@apparelcoalition.org

Jenna Reck, Target
jenna.reck@target.com

Ted van der Put, IDH
vanderput@idhtrade.org