



# Global Stakeholder Roundtable on ‘Responsible Down and Animal Welfare’

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## What is the “Global Stakeholder Roundtable on Responsible Down and Animal Welfare”?

The *Global Stakeholder Roundtable on Responsible Down and Animal Welfare* is an initiative, facilitated by the EU and US outdoor industry, to bring all relevant players – such as brands from various industries; suppliers, slaughterhouses, and meat producers; as well as relevant Animal Welfare groups - together to improve the transparency, traceability and animal welfare across the down supply chain and promote best practice.

## Overview

In recent years, many outdoor product brands and retailers have recognized the need for complete traceability information with regards to the chain of custody (traceability) of their down supply chains, and have begun implementing their own solutions to try to acquire this information to the best of their possibilities. This need has been further intensified by pressure from NGO groups such as Four Paws and PETA, particularly against brands active in the European outdoor market.

To this end, outdoor brands have been working to address the issue of ethical sourcing of down, including via the Down Task Force: a collaborative effort of the US-based Outdoor Industry Association, European Outdoor Group, and German Sporting Goods Federation member companies, and in partnership with materials traceability organization Textile Exchange.

The course of our industry-wide efforts have resulted in three global standards to be developed in the course of two (2) short years:

- the Responsible Down Standard, developed by The North Face and now owned by Textile Exchange<sup>1</sup> (late 2013):
- the Global Traceable Down Standard, developed by Patagonia and now owned by NSF international<sup>2</sup> (early 2014)

A third standard has since been launched:

- the Downpass, developed by the European Down and Feather Association.<sup>3</sup> (late 2015)

In addition, several other brands have developed and implemented their own in-house standards, examples of which would be Fjällräven (Sweden), or Mountain Equipment (UK).

The outdoor/apparel industry has also held a series of stakeholder roundtable meetings, with the aim to come together and establish and share reference “best practice” and understanding around ethical sourcing of down, in principles, implementation as well as assurance practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Responsible Down Standard: <http://www.responsibledown.org>

<sup>2</sup> Global Traceable Down Standard: <http://www.nsf.org/services/by-industry/sustainability-environment/global-traceable-down-standard/>

<sup>3</sup> Downpass: <http://www.downpass.com/en/downpass.html>



However, our industries cannot achieve our goals stand-alone. We therefore work to combine our forces with other industries that are significant users of down, such as:

- the home textiles industry,
- the hospitality industry, and
- the food/meat industry,

to scale the best practices, to protect our collective businesses and industries from reputational damage and, more importantly still, to ensure that the animals we depend on for our products are treated in an ethical and throughout responsible manner.

### Roundtable Objectives

- Facilitate a collaborative dialogue and discourse throughout the landscape of stakeholders in down-using resp. producing industries (outdoor, fashion, bedding, home textiles, food/meat) and their respective roles, constraints, expectations, and goals.
- Investigate the remaining hurdles to responsible and transparent down sourcing practices, and the common challenges brands are facing when implementing best practice standards for Animal Welfare along the down supply chain.
- Exchange experiences across brands, and how ‘best practice’ is being rolled out and implemented.
- Establish collective needs and mutually support tangible next steps to scale best practices within the global down supply chain across multiple industries and geographies.
- Continue to drive, and engage with, the ongoing developments with regards to down traceability in the outdoor industry, including the different animal welfare standards that have become the new state of art in down sourcing.

### Interested in learning more?

To learn more about the *Global Stakeholder Roundtable on Responsible Down and Animal Welfare*, and how your engagement may be beneficial to your company, contact the European Outdoor Group’s CSR & Sustainability Manager Pamela Ravasio directly on:

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