

Singapore
Fashion
Council

Sectoral Plan for Sustainable Fashion Leadership in Singapore & ASEAN

Dive in



Acknowledgements

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This sectoral plan, amongst other sources, draws on the Centre for Impact Investing and Practices' (CIIP) survey of MSMEs in Southeast Asia, done in conjunction with its study "Transforming for Sustainability: Driving Impact and Value through Supply Chain Action". CIIP prepared a special pull-out for SFC based on responses from over 400 textiles and apparel MSMEs across Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. The data and insights were shared with SFC for the purposes of this project and remain the intellectual property of CIIP. CIIP is not responsible for the interpretations, findings, or recommendations in this report.



Foreword

A New Chapter for Singapore’s Fashion Leadership

At the Singapore Fashion Council (SFC), we recognise that sustainability is no longer a choice—it is the only way forward. Our mission is to position Singapore as a vital hub for innovation, bridging the gap between global ambition and regional implementation. We acknowledge that for many, especially the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that form the backbone of our industry, this sustainability transition is complex. It requires not just ambition, but access to knowledge, financing, and practical tools.

To meet this need, we have developed the Sectoral Plan for Sustainable Fashion Leadership in Singapore & ASEAN ('The Plan') to be a practical blueprint for action. It translates extensive regional research, technical

data, and stakeholder insights into a clear path forward for Singapore’s fashion enterprises — and the key regional players they work alongside. It moves beyond high-level theory to offer concrete steps that companies of all sizes can take today—whether you’re a Singapore brand redefining your materials or a Singapore manufacturer optimising your energy use — and looking to lead that shift across Singapore & ASEAN.

Singapore is uniquely positioned to drive this transformation. By acting as a Catalyst for policy alignment, an Enabler of innovation, a Convenor of diverse stakeholders, and a System Designer of capacity-building tools we aim to uplift Singapore’s fashion ecosystem and the partners it works with locally and across ASEAN.

What this Plan delivers:



Actionable solutions

We move beyond “why” to “how,” offering detailed interventions that empower businesses to take meaningful steps toward circularity and decarbonisation.



Real-world context

Every recommendation is grounded in the reality of the Singapore & ASEAN market, acknowledging the specific challenges of regional supply chains and the diverse maturity levels of our players



Inspiration for action

Through data visuals and case studies, we bring solutions to life, showcasing success stories that prove sustainability is both possible and profitable.



Our goal is to equip Singapore enterprises with the infrastructure of knowledge needed to thrive in a changing global market — and lead it. Together, we can turn the region’s challenges into opportunities, ensuring Singapore’s fashion enterprises thrive — and help lead the region — sustainably, responsibly, and competitively.

Why fashion players in Singapore must act now

The global fashion industry is facing an urgent mandate to transform.

Rising regulatory tides—such as the EU’s Green Deal and US supply chain transparency laws—are reshaping how fashion is sourced, produced, and consumed.

The current context

International brands and regulators are demanding higher standards for traceability, circularity, and emission reduction. Companies that fail to meet these standards risk being shut out of major markets.

Locally, Singapore & Southeast Asia are scaling production faster than they are scaling responsibility. While the region’s fashion sector is projected to exceed USD 50 billion in value, driven by a young, digital-native population, our baseline assessment reveals that sustainability practices lag behind this growth.

The critical gap

Currently, large export-oriented firms are pivoting to meet compliance, but the wider SME ecosystem lacks the resources and technical expertise to keep up. This creates a “two-speed” industry that threatens long-term resilience.

By closing this capability gap, Singapore enterprises can help lead Singapore & ASEAN’s transition from production hub to sustainability leader



How “**sustainability**” is defined in this document:

While acknowledging sustainability’s holistic nature (Environmental, Social and Governance), this Plan prioritises environmental sustainability.

This strategic focus addresses an urgent need: as global regulations and climate risks escalate, Singapore & Southeast Asia must rapidly transition to low-carbon, circular production to build the resilience required to ensure the sector’s long-term competitiveness.

Methodology: grounded in data, shaped by industry

To inform this Plan, the Singapore Fashion Council engaged South Pole, a globally recognised climate and sustainability advisory firm, to conduct an in-depth

assessment of sustainability practices, challenges, and opportunities across the Singapore & ASEAN fashion sector. This work draws on a rigorous, multi-stream research

methodology designed to identify the sector’s most pressing barriers and the highest-impact levers for change.

The 3-step approach:

1. **Industry-aligned metrics:**
The study reviewed leading global sustainability standards and frameworks (see [References](#)) to establish a harmonised metrics framework, ensuring the Plan aligns with recognised international best practices and emerging market expectations.

2. **Regional benchmarking:**
The study conducted a comparative assessment of key fashion hubs—Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia—analysing their regulatory maturity, waste infrastructure, and recycling capabilities to understand the regional landscape.

3. **Stakeholder engagement:**
Stakeholders across the fashion value chain—including brands, manufacturers, recyclers, NGOs, and SMEs—were engaged through 20+ in-depth interviews and more than 50 survey responses. This process provided practical insights into the real-world barriers businesses face, from fragmented data systems to the cost and accessibility of green technologies.

THE OUTCOME

A Sectoral Plan grounded in industry realities—designed to address the challenges businesses are facing today while identifying practical pathways for transition.

Research findings:

Six regional opportunities for Singapore to strengthen its position as ASEAN's hub for sustainable fashion leadership

1. **Policy alignment & incentives**
Harmonising regulations and unlocking financial incentives — such as green financing and tax rebates — to make sustainability commercially viable beyond just export compliance.
2. **Circularity hubs**
Establishing cross-border hubs that connect post-consumer waste collection in consumer markets directly with recycling infrastructure in production markets.
3. **Technology transfer & demonstration**
Accelerating the adoption of proven clean technologies through regional knowledge-transfer partnerships and shared demonstration projects.
4. **Sectoral frameworks & collective platforms**
Developing collective platforms for shared training, pooled certification, and “starter kits” to build capacity and reduce fragmentation among SMEs.
5. **Shared traceability & digital infrastructure**
Implementing shared digital platforms and standard traceability tools to lower reporting costs and align data requirements for smaller players.
6. **Public-private campaigns & retail partnerships**
Launching joint public-private campaigns and retail partnerships to raise consumer awareness and normalise sustainable purchasing choices.

Who can use this Plan?

This plan is designed to be inclusive, built for Singapore’s fashion ecosystem — and the partners you work with across Singapore, ASEAN and beyond.



Core users of the Plan:

SMEs and upstream producers (e.g. cotton farms, textile mills) can use this as a guidance tool to help them to take the next, sustainable step.

This Plan is built primarily for Singapore’s fashion ecosystem, with the following regional partners invited to co-design and collaborate:



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

Broader fashion ecosystem:

Partners and enablers are invited to co-design and collaborate on the Plan — helping to turn it from theory to practice.



Recyclers & solutions providers



NGOs & technology partners



Financiers & investors



Practical pathways

To help you navigate a complex landscape, this Plan was developed to be used as a practical guide to simplify and bring together the most effective sustainability tools, frameworks and resources.

We have structured this guidance around five practical pathways, each containing easy-to-implement ‘action areas’ to help Singapore enterprises drive sustainability forward — and use it as a springboard to lead and expand across Singapore & ASEAN.



Navigation tip:

This Plan is not a linear checklist. We encourage you to “dip in and dip out,” to your Singapore enterprise’s unique sustainability maturity and strategic goals.

1.

Define your circular ambition & strategy

Clarify your sustainability priorities and embed circularity into product design and business decisions.

2.

Measure & report with confidence

Build scalable systems for collecting and sharing sustainability data that meet rising transparency expectations.

3.

Engage the value chain

Collaborate with suppliers and partners to drive sustainability improvements while ensuring operational efficiency.

4.

Communicate with credibility

Engaging consumers with clear, verifiable messaging that builds trust and enhances brand value.

5.

Unlock enablers & finance

Accessing the tools, training, and green financing needed to accelerate your transition.

Choosing the actions under each pathway

Each pathway is split by **Foundational**, **Progressive**, and **Leading** action areas to provide flexible entry points for your business.

Wherever your Singapore enterprise sits on its sustainability journey, one of these three tiers will meet you there:

Foundational

(Achievable within **1–3 months**, minimal budget)

Actions are aimed at businesses at the beginning of their sustainability journey: collecting initial data, identifying key environmental hotspots, and preparing to meet regulations. These steps help SMEs build internal capacity and respond to growing global buyer demands.

Progressive

(Achievable within **3–6 months**, requires some internal resourcing & strategic shifts)

Actions are for businesses moving beyond basic compliance to active management. This involves setting clear baselines, establishing quantitative reduction targets, and implementing specific operational plans to drive efficiency and meet strict export market expectations.

Leading

(Achievable within **1–2 years**, requires some internal resourcing, strategic shifts, and external collaboration)

Actions are for pioneer businesses adopting aspirational practices. This includes investing in clean technologies, piloting circular business models, and formalising shared supplier engagement to uplift the entire Singapore & ASEAN fashion ecosystem.



Pathway One:

Define your circular ambition & strategy

Defining your circular ambition and strategy starts with setting clear goals and priorities for your business. By identifying key products, stakeholders, and impact areas, you can develop targeted action plans to drive circularity across your value chain.

Taking these measurable steps to meet market expectations will build a resilient strategy that turns sustainability into a competitive advantage.



Action areas

Together, these action areas outline concrete ways to activate your circular ambition, ranging from setting clear priorities and reducing waste to piloting circular business models.

Foundational

**Clarify your
circular focus**



**Identify
downstream
partners &
collaborators**



**Promote
durability &
educate
consumers**



Progressive

**Measure & reduce
production waste**



**Simplify one
product &
integrate circular
design guidelines**



Leading

**Develop a supplier
engagement
approach**

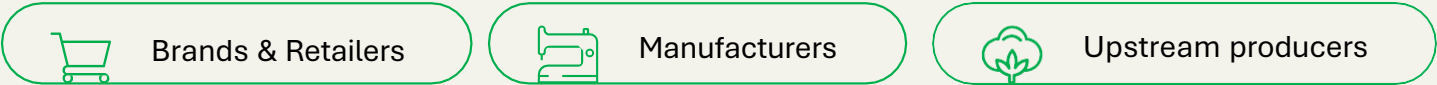


**Pilot circular
business models
& take-backs**



Foundational

Clarify your circular focus



By focusing your attention on a few key material issues, businesses can create a more resource-efficient and strong foundation for future progress.

- **Identify priority issues:**
Identify your top 3-5 sustainability concerns (e.g., waste, sourcing, energy) through engagement with production and manufacturing partners.
- **Narrow your focus:**
Select just one or two to focus on for the next 12 months.
- **Establish accountability:**
Publish a public commitment that demonstrates your progress and holds the business accountable.

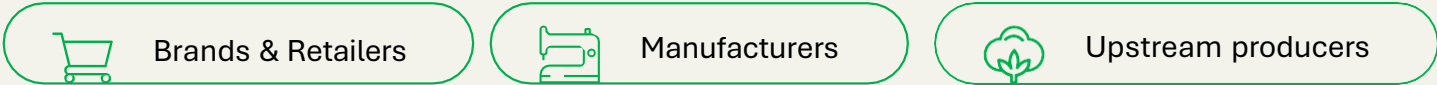
OUTCOME
Taking this step will provide your business with a clear sustainability direction, reduce fragmented initiatives, and help build trust with your customers.



SME tip:
Don't try to tackle everything at once. Build your internal capacity by starting with low-hanging fruit—such as tracking office energy use or basic factory waste—before attempting to address complex areas e.g. supply chain emissions.

Learn more:
ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework ‘priority-setting principles’; ISO 59000 Circular Economy Standards.

Identify downstream partners & collaborators



Understanding exactly where your products end up is the first critical step in preparing for future waste regulations (e.g. Extended Producer Responsibility) and identifying opportunities to extend the life of your garments.

- **Map your sales channels:**
List all the markets and physical/digital locations where your products are sold.
- **Evaluate retail partners:**
Identify whether any of your retail partners already have a clothing take-back scheme in place.
- **Guide your customers:**
Share this end-of-life information with your customers, or provide repair guidance if no scheme exists.
- **Establish aftercare services:**
Identify repair partners like a local tailor or seamstress to establish an aftercare service partnership.

Learn more:
ISO 59000 Circular Economy Standards; emerging national circular economy roadmaps (e.g., Indonesia’s Circular Economy Roadmap).

OUTCOME
Build internal awareness of your downstream responsibility, help extend the active life of your products, and ensure you are prepared early for emerging Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations.



SME tip:
You don't need your own take-back scheme to get started. Point customers to a trusted local tailor, swapping platforms or established textile collection points, and check what happens to the garments these partners collect.

Foundational

Promote durability & educate consumers



Brands & Retailers

Empowering your customers with the knowledge to care for their garments is a low-barrier way to keep products in use longer and out of landfills.

- **Build an emotional connection:**
Build “emotional durability” by sharing any information available about where your materials came from and who made the garments.
- **Provide care guidance:**
Go beyond the standard laundry tag by publishing practical tips for garment care on your website or social channels.
- **Offer aftercare services:**
Offer aftercare by directing your customers to a partnered local tailor or seamstress.
- **Implement gentle disincentives:**
Implement gentle disincentives in-store—for example, charging a small fee for single-use bags—or at online checkout for delivery packaging.

Learn more:
Circular Design for Fashion (Ellen MacArthur Foundation).

OUTCOME

Providing this guidance will ultimately lead to increased product lifespans, significantly reduced premature disposal, and stronger brand positioning in the market.



SME tip:
Consumers are often price-sensitive and may view sustainability as a “nice-to-have”. Use your platforms to actively educate them on the value of sustainable materials.



Pathway One: Define your circular ambition & strategy

Progressive

Measure & reduce production waste



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Transitioning from simply discussing waste to actively tracking and setting reduction targets unlocks operational efficiencies and potential financial gains (see [Pathway 2](#) for more detail on measurement and supporting resources).

- **Track and document waste:** Track and document the volume and material composition of waste from each production run.
- **Set reduction goals:** Use baseline data to set time-bound, quantitative reduction goals based on product output, such as lowering the amount of waste generated per garment.
- **Explore recycling partnerships:** Explore local recycling partnerships capable of processing your specific factory offcuts into new value.

OUTCOME

Establishing these metrics will enable data-driven waste management, lower costs, and potentially open up new revenue streams through the valorisation of your factory offcuts.



SME tip:

Focus your initial efforts on post-industrial waste (factory offcuts). Because the composition of factory waste is known and segregated, it is much easier to control, track, and recycle into value compared to mixed post-consumer waste.

Learn more:

UNIDO Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) in ASEAN; national circular economy action plans.

Simplify one product & integrate circular design guidelines



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Applying circularity to a single product or capsule collection is a practical, low-risk way to test and embed circular design principles before scaling across your business.

- **Simplify design:** Select one product and simplify its design by reducing unnecessary trims, hardware, and blended materials.
- **Apply circular criteria:** Define and apply basic circular design criteria, including material choices, durability, and construction methods that enable repair and disassembly.
- **Trial and implement:** Trial lower-impact materials and packaging, and implement these improvements in your next production run, refining for future scale.

OUTCOME

Embedding these guidelines will result in the systematic integration of circularity across your collections, improved material transparency, and reduced regulatory risks globally.



SME tip:

Commissioning sustainable materials often requires large minimum order quantities (MOQs) that SMEs cannot meet. A practical workaround is to source “deadstock” or leftover certified fabrics that are already available in the market.

Learn more:

Circular Design for Fashion (Ellen MacArthur Foundation); ISO 59000 Circular Economy Standards; Textile Exchange Materials Matter Standard.



Leading

Develop a supplier engagement approach



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

As a Singapore enterprise, embedding clear environmental expectations into your supplier relationships transitions your sustainability goals into actionable, trackable requirements — the same standards regional buyers increasingly require, making it easier to win new business across Singapore & ASEAN. See more on this in [Pathway 3 “Engage your value chain”](#).

- **Assess current practices:**
Engage with suppliers to understand current practices around material use, waste management, and circularity.
- **Identify capacity gaps:**
Identify gaps and capacity-building needs related to waste reduction, recycling, and use of preferred materials.
- **Develop an engagement strategy:**
Develop a supplier engagement approach focused on reducing waste, improving material efficiency, and aligning on circularity goals across the value chain.

OUTCOME

Improved supplier collaboration, reduced upstream waste, enhanced circularity across the supply chain, and a stronger foundation for scaling sustainable product practices.



SME tip:

Because individual SME brands often have limited leverage with large factories, try banding together with other local brands to pool demand. A collective voice can more effectively encourage shared suppliers to adopt sustainable practices or undergo formal certifications.

Learn more:
ISO 59020 measurement guidance; ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework.

Pilot circular business models & take-backs



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Testing services like repair or resale helps reduce textile waste and extend product life, while building understanding of take-back and reverse logistics.

- **Offer mending services:**
Offer basic in-house mending or partner with local tailors to help customers affordably extend the physical lifespan of their garments.
- **Launch resale channels:**
Launch a curated second-hand collection or collaborate with established third-party marketplaces to keep your existing products in circulation for longer.
- **Establish collection points:**
Set up collection points for used garments and consciously design customer rewards to encourage further circular choices rather than just fueling new linear purchases.

OUTCOME

Piloting these models will generate real-world commercial insights, strengthen downstream partnerships, and potentially open a new materials stream to powerfully enhance your brand’s differentiation.



SME tip:

When launching a clothing take-back scheme, ensure you have a clear, viable downstream recycling partner first. Consumers are increasingly sceptical; if they suspect donated clothes are just being exported or landfilled, it will severely damage brand trust.

Learn more:
Circular economy business model innovation principles (Ellen MacArthur Foundation).



Success stories from the floor



CASE STUDY - YKK

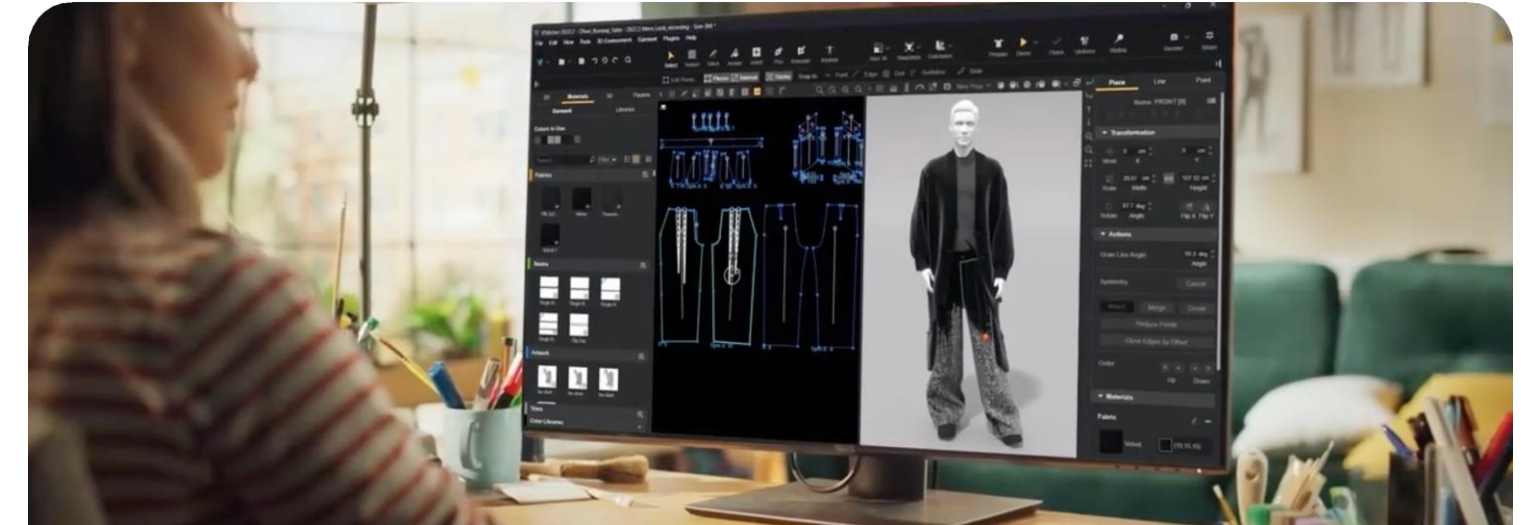
From Small Beginnings to Global Impact: YKK's “Cycle of Goodness”

Even global giants start small. Back in 1934, YKK was just a tiny zipper manufacturer in Tokyo. Today, they sell over 10 billion zippers a year—spanning more than 3 million kilometers!

How did they scale while tackling fashion's massive waste problem? By defining a clear circular strategy rooted in their founding ambition: the “Cycle of Goodness,” which insists a business only thrives by benefiting society and the environment. YKK proves that sustainability doesn't always require reinventing your entire product line—sometimes,

it's just about fixing a broken part. Instead of a broken zipper dooming a perfectly good jacket to the landfill, YKK designed the Revive series. This clever, resource-friendly tweak lets consumers easily replace a broken slider from the top stop, keeping garments in use much longer.

Coupled with Natulon Ocean Sourced zippers made from recycled plastic bottles, YKK shows how a simple, focused circular ambition can turn the smallest components into a massive sustainable impact.



CASE STUDY – BROWZWEAR

Designing Out Waste from the Start: A Digital-First Strategy

Designing Out Waste from the Start: A Singapore Innovation Going Global

Fashion accounts for 10% of global carbon emissions, heavily driven by wasteful physical sampling and overproduction. To tackle this massive footprint before a single garment is even made, Singapore-headquartered 3D design platform Browzwear is shifting the industry from “scissors to software.”

To prove this strategy works at massive scale, this Singapore-based innovator collaborated with retail giants Lidl and Kaufland. Seeking to provide cost-conscious consumers with trendy clothes without compromising environmental principles, Lidl integrated Browzwear's technology — built and headquartered right here in Singapore — to conduct 80% of all its product development entirely in 3D across all textile categories. Because the software simulates fabric properties like drape and stretch with mechanical precision, teams can completely bypass cutting, sewing, and shipping physical prototypes.

By designing out waste from the very beginning, Browzwear — a proud example of Singapore's fashion-tech leadership — proves that digitising the supply chain seamlessly merges circularity with high-speed, profitable retail, carrying Singapore innovation to the world's biggest retailers.



Pathway Two:

Measure & report with confidence

Given the limited operational and financial resources available to accelerate sustainability transformation, measuring your current state and impacts provides an effective starting point. Measurement helps identify key hotspots where limited resources can be optimised for the greatest impact, while strengthening your resilience to emerging environmental risks.

Publicly communicating these commitments enhances transparency, builds stakeholder trust, and demonstrates accountability against greenwashing claims (more on this in [Pathway 4](#)).



Action areas

Together, these action areas outline concrete ways to establish environmental baselines, set validated targets, and confidently report your product impacts.

Foundational

☒

Build internal capabilities

☒

Establish key metrics

Progressive

☒

Simple baseline measurement

☒

Target setting & validation

Leading

☒

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)

☒

Public reporting

Foundational

Build internal capabilities



-  Brands & Retailers
-  Manufacturers
-  Upstream producers

Building your internal capabilities is a non-negotiable foundation to keep progressing towards your sustainability goals. It enables regulatory compliance, informed decision-making, and effective risk management, while strengthening reputation, trust, and competitive advantage.

- Understand the standards:**
Familiarise your organisation with emissions-accounting guidance from regulatory requirements and recognised standards in the textile and apparel sector.
- Define your minimum dataset:**
Identify the common data required across these regulations and standards and use them as the minimum dataset your company must collect to measure environmental impact.
- Train dedicated data owners:**
Identify and train dedicated data owners across departments (like operations, HR, and finance) to secure their buy-in and ensure consistent data collection across the business.

Learn more:
Global sustainability standards and disclosure frameworks (e.g., ISO 14001, ZDHC, RE100, Higg FEM, CDP, GRI, ISSB/TCFD); relevant stock exchange requirements (e.g., SGX in Singapore and Bursa Malaysia).

OUTCOME
The company builds internal capability and systems to collect key data and measure environmental impacts in line with regulatory requirements and recognised standards.



SME tip:
Start estimating environmental impacts using spend or average data, progressing to volumetric and supplier-specific data as you gather operational metrics (e.g., energy, water, waste, production). This phased approach strengthens internal capabilities and aligns with regulatory standards.

Establishing key metrics



-  Brands & Retailers
-  Manufacturers
-  Upstream producers

Define tangible and measurable management indicators tailored to your role in the value chain to assess performance in minimising unintended environmental impacts.

- Attempt to collect the full dataset:**
Gather the complete data required by recognised standards (e.g., ISO 14001, GHG Protocol, Higg FEM) across all impact areas. Do this even if initial accuracy is low and relies heavily on estimates.
- Select 3–5 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Use your comprehensive dataset to identify 3 to 5 specific KPIs (such as waste per ton or energy per garment) to monitor your highest-impact areas.
- Align tracking organisation-wide:**
Standardise your data collection systems and KPI reporting across all departments and facilities to ensure consistency.

Learn more:
Alignment with recognised standards and frameworks, including ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems; ISSB (formerly TCFD) climate-related disclosures; and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB).

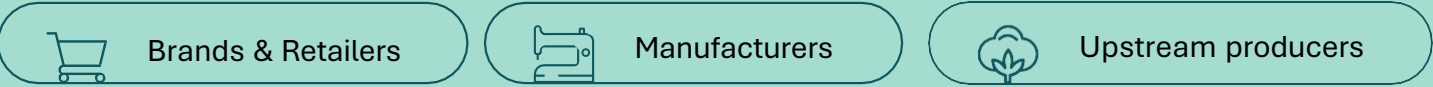
OUTCOME
Creates a reliable baseline and KPI tracking system to measure impacts, drive targeted reductions, and ensure compliance.



SME tip:
Begin with records you already have, such as electricity, water and waste collection bills, kept in one shared spreadsheet each month. Free tools like Greenprint and the Singapore Emission Factors Registry (SEFR) can help turn these into emissions data.

Progressive

Simple baseline measurement



Establish a starting point to quantitatively understand impacts, identify priorities, and track progress as milestones in the transformation process.

- Conduct a baseline assessment:**
Conduct a baseline assessment using the defined data points across the organisation and collaborate with relevant departments to collect the required data.
- Calculate initial GHG emissions:**
Start by calculating GHG emissions from key sources such as fuel use and electricity consumption, focusing on Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions from previous years.
- Engage external experts:**
Engage external consultants if additional technical support is needed for the calculations.
- Review and identify hotspots:**
Review the results to identify current environmental hotspots and priority areas for improvement.

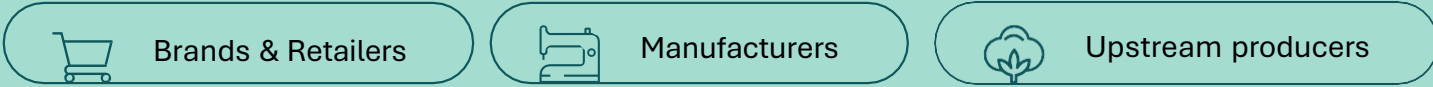
OUTCOME
Builds a foundation to measure progress, builds practical experience in impact measurement, and identifies gaps, improvement opportunities, and potential cost savings.



SME tip:
Start simply by following the SMART framework—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. For example, establish a baseline for waste generation using clear and measurable metrics.

Learn more:
Accounting guidance such as the GHG Protocol and Higg Facility Environmental Module (Higg FEM).

Target setting & validation



Build a competitive advantage by demonstrating commitment and transparency in responsible textile and apparel business management.

- Review relevant certifications:**
Review certifications that align with your role in the value chain, such as those related to chemical management, renewable energy use, or responsible manufacturing.
- Benchmark against peers:**
Use your impact measurement results alongside peer benchmarking to understand how others are advancing, to support certification requirements and to inform your early target setting.
- Set and validate targets:**
Set achievable targets based on your current impact profile and company goals, and consider validating these targets through voluntary initiatives such as the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

OUTCOME
Strengthens trust with suppliers and customers, supports regulatory compliance, and advances efforts to minimise environmental impacts from its operations.



SME tip:
Set realistic targets to reduce your environmental impact. Instead of doing it alone, leverage industry platforms for measurement support and use the streamlined SBTi SME guidance for simplified target validation.

Learn more:
Examples include ISO 14001, ZDHC, RE100, Higg FEM, OEKO-TEX, Bluesign®, carbon neutrality certifications, and target-setting frameworks such as SBTi.

Leading

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Take your sustainability efforts to the next level by revealing product-level impacts across the full life cycle. These insights extend beyond your operations, enabling smarter decisions and unlocking the conditions needed to drive meaningful transition.

• **Select a priority product:**

Start by selecting a specific, high-priority product to assess, potentially basing this decision on buyer demand or volume.

• **Conduct an LCA:**

Leverage your initial assessments to conduct an LCA for this product using primary and secondary data, working closely with suppliers (who may also benefit) and engaging external experts to collect accurate life cycle data.

• **Validate and report results:**

Engage a third-party to validate your LCA results, and consider extending these findings into official certifications and public reporting formats, such as Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

OUTCOME

Strengthens confidence in transparently communicating product-level impacts through data-driven assessments while improving data availability across the supply chain.



SME tip:

While LCAs are expensive, SMEs can make a huge impact just by sharing data. SME data is currently limited, yet essential—serving as a representative proxy to understand the true environmental impact of the broader fashion sector.

Learn more:

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) standards, primarily ISO 14040 and ISO 14044; Common LCA databases include the ecoinvent Association ecoinvent database; Sphera GaBi; the Quantis World Apparel and Footwear LCA Database; and the Higg MSI developed by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition.

Public reporting



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Share your commitment publicly to demonstrate leadership and set a positive example, encouraging others to take part in navigating the complex transition of the textile and apparel value chain.

• **Communicate your commitments:**

Share your commitment with investors, consumers, and suppliers using data-driven and evidence-based insights, and communicate progress publicly where possible.

• **Contextualise your reporting:**

Contextualise your reporting by building on the peer benchmarking conducted during your initial target-setting phase, using those baselines to publicly demonstrate how your ongoing progress compares to broader industry movements toward circularity.

• **Participate in knowledge sharing:**

Actively participate in knowledge sharing, dialogue, and industry reporting to exchange insights and help accelerate collective improvement.

Learn more:

Public disclosure frameworks such as CDP and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

OUTCOME

Public commitments supported by data-driven evidence strengthen transparency, accountability, and trust among investors, suppliers, and customers, while building competitive advantage and demonstrating leadership in sustainable action.



SME tip:

Use social media to communicate your public commitments to reducing environmental impacts. Share regular updates to increase visibility and engage suppliers to explore collaboration opportunities that can accelerate action.



Success stories from the floor



CASE STUDY - NAN YANG TEXTILE GROUP

Collaborating for Change: What Nan Yang’s Fight Against Microplastics Means for Singapore Partnerships

Every time we wash synthetic clothes, invisible microplastics shed into our waterways, lingering in the environment for over 450 years. Bangkok-based Nan Yang Textile Group recognised that true sustainability is a team effort, developing ReDeFi — a fabric made from recycled PET bottles that shrinks the breakdown period from 450 years down to just 4.5.

But Nan Yang knows a great material only makes an impact if brands actually adopt it. They actively engage with fashion designers and clothing brands — including

Singapore enterprises sourcing regionally — to integrate these eco-friendly fabrics into varied product lines.

By combining collaborative brand partnerships with green operations — like generating 70% of daytime electricity from solar panels — Nan Yang shows exactly the kind of manufacturing partner Singapore enterprises can plug into as they scale sustainably across the region.



CASE STUDY - OLAM AGRI

From the Ground Up: A Singapore Enterprise Engaging the Global Cotton Value Chain

Today’s consumers are demanding greater environmental responsibility, but delivering on that promise requires action long before a garment hits the store. Singapore-headquartered global cotton merchant Olam Agri knows this, which is why they have spent over 15 years actively partnering across their entire supply chain — connecting directly with brands and retailers to drive meaningful change right at the farm production level.

From its Singapore base, Olam Agri empowers farmers worldwide to adopt smarter, more resilient practices. In Australia, ground moisture monitoring has slashed water use by up to 50%, while converting cotton trash into natural fertiliser has boosted crop yields by up to 30%. In Ivory Coast, they provide farmers with expert sustainability training, soil analysis, and a dedicated call centre for rainfall data.

By supporting both the brands buying the materials and the farmers growing them, Singapore-headquartered Olam Agri creates a fully traceable, sustainable loop — proof that a Singapore enterprise can coordinate sustainability at true global scale.

Pathway Three: Engage the value chain

For Singapore enterprises, circularity and sustainability in the fashion supply chain cannot be addressed at a single stage — due in part to fragmented compliance systems and multi-layered processes.

The sector involves diverse actors—designers, manufacturers, retailers, consumers, and policymakers—each shaping system outcomes. A value-chain approach that examines management strategies and behaviours can help navigate these complexities, clarify shared responsibilities, and guide investment.



Action areas

Together, these action areas outline concrete ways to map your supply chain, align supplier incentives, and co-create sustainable solutions with your partners.

Foundational

Identify hotspots & assess levers for circularity & sustainability



Map suppliers & the value chain



Progressive

Drive stronger engagement through effective incentives



Engage your suppliers



Leading

Co-create with suppliers through design thinking pilots



Ready yourself for implementation & synchronise actions

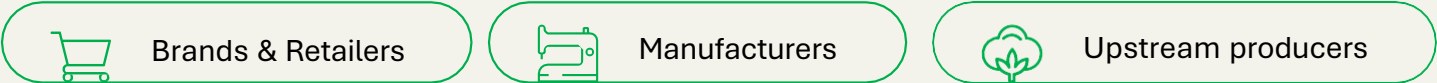


Engage beyond the value chain



Foundational

Identify hotspots & assess levers for circularity & sustainability



Effective engagement begins with clearly defining needs. Identifying key hotspots and prioritising low-cost, high-impact levers for circularity and sustainability enables more targeted and impactful collaboration.

- **Identify environmental hotspots:**
Leverage insights from your measurement (see Pathway 2) to identify key environmental hotspots.
- **Map value chain opportunities:**
Identify opportunities across the value chain—from design and material sourcing to manufacturing, retail, use, and end-of-life.
- **Prioritise impactful actions:**
Prioritise low-cost, high-impact, and feasible opportunities, focusing on strategic points where collaboration is most needed.

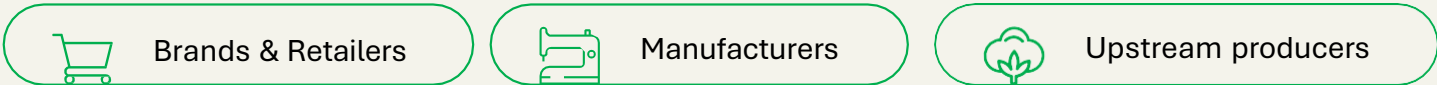
Learn more:
Align assessments with existing industry guidance, such as circularity indicators from WBCSD, the Higg FEM, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, or comprehensive LCA frameworks (ISO 14040).

OUTCOME
This initial step helps focus on the most impactful areas and supports progress in engagement. More detailed assessment methods are outlined in [Pathway 2](#).



SME tip:
Start with an easy-to-use checklist. Measure waste generation and disposal methods, as well as unsold or returned products, to identify common hotspots. SMEs can also leverage online tools and tutorials provided by industry associations.

Map suppliers & the value chain



Move from reactive to proactive supply chain mapping to better understand the value chain and identify collaboration opportunities:

- **Prioritise key hotspots:**
Prioritise your key hotspots and identify potential opportunities to mitigate them.
- **Map existing suppliers:**
Map existing suppliers who can help address the hotspots identified in the previous step.
- **Gather insights and segment:**
Gather detailed insights into suppliers’ circularity and sustainability journeys, and segment them according to maturity and accessibility levels.
- **Develop an engagement plan:**
Develop a clear plan outlining your objectives and the support required from suppliers before initiating engagement.

Learn more:
The EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles places strong emphasis on value chain mapping and Ecosystem Category Definitions for Textile and Apparel (UNECE).

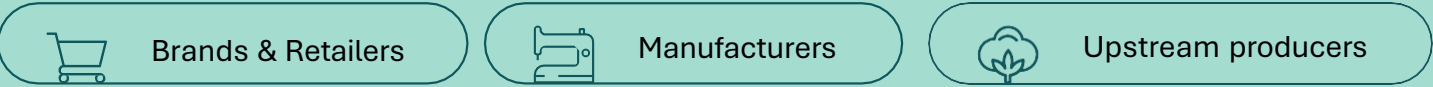
OUTCOME
Having a clear and transparent engagement plan with achievable targets enables greater progress.



SME tip:
Start by mapping your value chain—where raw materials are sourced, where products are sold, how materials flow through production, and where waste goes. As a Singapore enterprise, leverage existing relationships to initiate action where strong partnerships already exist.

Progressive

Drive stronger engagement through effective incentives



Prioritise collaborative, incentive-based levers—such as joint projects and partnerships—as these are most effective in strengthening engagement and enabling supplier participation.

- **Assess internal capabilities:**
Identify your organisation’s capabilities to provide supplier incentive programmes, including supplier contracting, public recognition, financial incentives or support, capability building, and access to technical resources.
- **Target key suppliers:**
Using supplier mapping insights, identify and target suppliers for tailored incentive programmes.
- **Measure effectiveness**
Establish clear KPIs to assess the effectiveness of these programmes in addressing priority hotspots and enabling circularity and sustainability levers.

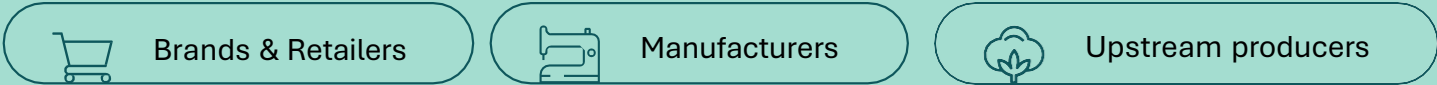
Learn more:
Align programme/s with existing industry guidance, such as circularity indicators from WBCSD, the Higg FEM, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

OUTCOME
Develop an incentive programme aligned with organisational capabilities, while ensuring measurable progress in mitigating key hotspots across the value chain.



SME tip:
Explore collaborative incentive programmes with direct suppliers. Instead of providing financial incentives, SMEs can contribute through active participation, resource sharing, and a willingness to engage in joint initiatives with suppliers.

Engage your suppliers



Translate plans into action by engaging suppliers with a clear, targeted approach aimed at achieving shared goals and mutual benefits.

- **Define an engagement framework:**
Define a targeted engagement framework (e.g. one-on-one consultation, mass communication, project-specific discussions) based on supplier maturity and strategic importance.
- **Highlight mutual value:**
Craft a clear, compelling narrative that highlights mutual value for collaborative action.
- **Support capacity building:**
Support suppliers to act on circularity and sustainability levers through tailored capacity building (online or in-person).

OUTCOME
Targeted supplier engagement that drives action on circularity and sustainability, delivering measurable progress on priority hotspots and mutual value.



SME tip:
Focus on practical, achievable actions with closest or long-term suppliers where trust and communication already exist.

Learn more:
Engaging Supply Chains on the Decarbonisation Journey (SBTi).

Leading

Co-create with suppliers through design-thinking pilots



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

Leverage partnerships from the design stage, where design decisions can contribute up to 80% of a product’s impact. In a circular economy, co-creation minimises waste and circulates materials, creating greater value through system-wide collaboration.

- **Secure company commitment:**
Secure a whole-of-company commitment to explore co-creation with suppliers on circular design.
- **Launch an RFP:**
Develop and launch a Request for Proposals (RFP) to enable suppliers to submit project proposals.
- **Assess project proposals:**
Assess project proposals against defined KPIs, such as alignment with your circular design objectives.

OUTCOME

Selection of the most impactful initiatives aligned with priority hotspots and key circularity and sustainability levers.



SME tip:

Focus on one product line or key material (e.g., a specific fabric or garment). Promote co-design with suppliers using existing resources, such as reusing cutting scraps and adjusting pattern layouts to minimise waste.

Learn more:

Align initiatives with existing industry guidance, such as circularity indicators from WBCSD, the Higg FEM, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

Ready yourself for implementation & synchronise actions



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Deliver structured, actionable projects with clear ownership, measurable impact, supplier engagement, and financing pathways to enable effective transformation at scale.

- **Define projects and targets:**
To prepare for implementation, define clear projects and impact targets, including key hotspots and investment needs.
- **Align stakeholders:**
Align stakeholders and establish accountability by engaging suppliers with clear roles, commitments, and incentives, while ensuring strong internal governance through defined responsibilities and integration with business processes.
- **Enable execution and tracking:**
Enable execution and track progress by setting KPIs, using implementation tools, and securing funding for delivery and measurable impact.

Learn more:

UNEP Global Roadmap for Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain.

OUTCOME

Transition from transactional relationships to long-term strategic partnerships that optimise costs and drive measurable progress toward circularity and sustainability.



SME tip:

SMEs can support synchronised action by proactively sharing feedback on challenges and support needs, enabling larger companies such as manufacturers and brands to allocate resources and strengthen ecosystem collaboration.



Leading

Engage beyond the value chain



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

Growth models extend beyond the traditional linear value chain, mobilising resources and generating positive societal benefits across stakeholders—from policymakers to consumers.

- **Join industry bodies:**
Join industry bodies (such as SFC) and sector alliances, and collaborate with research institutes to generate data-driven, evidence-based insights that support policy recommendations.
- **Engage diverse stakeholders:**
Engage beyond environmental authorities with customs administrations, consumer associations, and financial institutions to shape policy agendas and support the implementation of responsible business conduct.

- **Support infrastructure investment:**
Support the mobilisation of government investment in infrastructure through pilot projects and testing.

OUTCOME

Facilitate policymakers, researchers, industry players, governing bodies and the wider business ecosystem to design and implement coordinated strategies for circularity and sustainability.



SME tip:

Build awareness and capacity on circularity and sustainability. Begin by collecting operational data at the SME level to generate evidence that can inform policy and roadmaps.

Learn more:

UNECE framework on roles beyond the value chain, the ASEAN SME Policy Index, and the ILO report on sustainable industrial policies and strategies in the textiles and clothing sector.



Pathway Three: Engage the value chain



Success stories from the floor



CASE STUDY - Q COLLECTION

From Good Intentions to Hard Data: Tracking the Truth

Many businesses start their sustainability journey simply wanting to “do good”. That was exactly the case for Q Collection, a family-run fashion business from Singapore. But as clients began asking about their specific practices, they realised that good intentions aren’t enough—you have to clearly disclose your impact.

To move from informal values to formal transparency, Q Collection implemented digital tools like SATVA to track their environmental and social impact in real

time. This precise measurement allows them to confidently manage and report on ambitious initiatives, like a Zero Liquid Discharge system that ensures not a single drop of industrial wastewater returns to the environment.

By actively measuring their current operations, they can publicly disclose concrete targets for 2030: cutting their water footprint by 30% and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 56%. It proves that quantifying your efforts turns a vague desire to “do good” into a verifiable, future-ready strategy.

CASE STUDY - ORITAIN

Forensic Fashion: The Science of Supply Chain Truth

Did you know a 2019 survey found that over 40% of garment composition labels were fraudulent? From counterfeit materials to the hidden risks of forced labor, verifying where our clothes actually come from is a massive industry challenge. After all, you can’t honestly disclose what you can’t accurately measure.

To tackle this, Oritain is turning to forensic science. Instead of relying on easily forged paper trails, they analyze the actual chemical data hidden inside raw materials like cotton. Because plants absorb unique chemical signatures from their local soil and climate, Oritain can match a fabric’s “fingerprint” to a database covering over 95% of the world’s cotton origins.

Major textile producers like Ramatex use this groundbreaking technology to scientifically authenticate their materials, generating definitive reports on their cotton’s true origin. By meticulously measuring these natural fingerprints, businesses can confidently disclose their sourcing, comply with strict global regulations, and prove to customers that their labels are finally telling the honest truth.



Pathway Four:

Communicate with credibility

As sustainability becomes a key expectation in global fashion markets, companies face growing pressure to communicate their efforts clearly and responsibly across products, websites, and social media.

Regulators and consumers are increasingly scrutinising unsubstantiated claims, so credible communication—transparent, accurate, and evidence-backed—helps build trust with customers, retail partners, and regulators while avoiding greenwashing risks.



Action areas

Together, these action areas outline concrete ways to provide credible evidence, align with global frameworks, and implement product-level transparency tools.

Foundational

☒

Be transparent about your progress

☒

Provide credible evidence

Progressive

☒

Develop internal guidelines for sustainability claims

☒

Align reporting with global frameworks & local requirements

Leading

☒

Use product-level transparency & traceability tools

☒

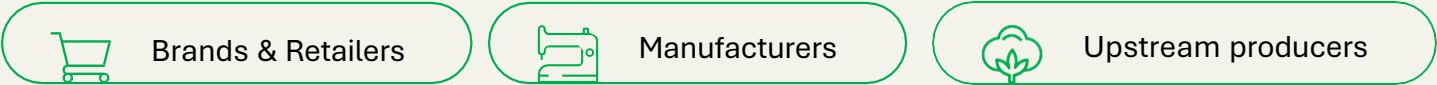
Identification & achievement of certifications

☒

Communicate for leadership & impact

Foundational

Be transparent about your progress



Start by clearly communicating the exact scope and verifiable details of the sustainability actions your business has taken, rather than relying on broad generalisations. This credibility is often the deciding factor for buyers and regulators when Singapore enterprises pursue partnerships or market entry locally or elsewhere in ASEAN.

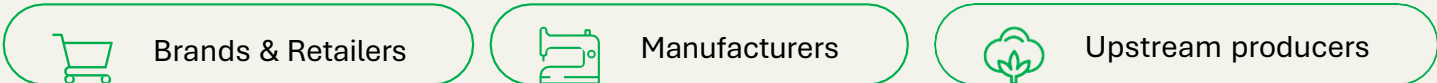
- **Eliminate vague terms:**
Start by eliminating vague, umbrella terms like “sustainable,” “green,” “eco-friendly,” or “conscious” from your marketing materials.
- **Clarify specific benefits:**
Clearly state whether an environmental benefit applies to a whole garment, a specific component, or just the packaging to avoid misleading consumers.
- **Quantify your claims:**
Replace broad statements with quantifiable details (e.g., “50% recycled polyester”) and honestly acknowledge the areas where your business still needs to improve.

Learn more:
Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (CCS Guide on Quality-related Claims); International Chamber of Commerce (ICC Framework for Responsible Environmental Marketing Communications).



SME tip:
Be honest about phasing your goals. Your Singapore enterprise can successfully build trust by transparently communicating a phased ambition—such as starting with quick wins in packaging before tackling the longer lead times of sourcing sustainable fabrics. Consumers respect realistic progress over impossible perfection.

Provide credible evidence



Strengthen the credibility of your sustainability claims by backing them up with verifiable data, transparent material traceability, and direct links to recognised certifications.

- **Share evidence:**
Support your statements with credible supplier information or basic environmental data (see [Pathway 2: Measure & Report with Confidence](#)).
- **Explain material sources:**
Share traceability information of the materials used in your products.
- **Link to certifications:**
Provide direct links to the specific, recognised certification standards your business follows.

Learn more:
Textile Exchange certification standards; Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS).

OUTCOME

Sustainability claims become clearer and more verifiable. By transparently disclosing the underlying assumptions, methodologies, and estimation techniques used, you improve credibility and build stronger trust with customers and retail partners.



SME tip:
You don’t need a massive sustainability report to provide evidence. You can bridge the gap through direct, simple education on your website, teaching customers exactly what materials are in your ranges and the verifiable reasons why they were chosen.

Progressive

Develop internal guidelines for sustainability claims



Brands & Retailers

Establish internal guidelines that outline how sustainability claims should be communicated across marketing, product descriptions, and corporate messaging.

- **Establish clear rules:**
Establish clear rules to guarantee your sustainability communications are uniform across all marketing, product, and corporate channels.
- **Set up review processes:**
Set up internal review processes to prevent exaggerated, ambiguous, or misleading environmental statements.
- **Require verifiable data:**
Require all proposed claims to be backed by verifiable data, certifications, or scientific proof, and specify an internal reviewer or cross-functional reviewing board to provide inputs and approve these disclosures before they are made publicly available.

OUTCOME

Marketing and communications teams can confidently share sustainability information while significantly reducing the risk of inconsistent or misleading messaging.

Learn more:
International Organization for Standardization (ISO 14021 Environmental Labels and Declarations).

Align reporting with global frameworks & local requirements



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

As regulations tighten globally and locally, transition your sustainability disclosures to align with both internationally recognised reporting standards and specific regional mandates to ensure your data is robust, compliant, and comparable — the same standard Singapore enterprises need to meet when exporting to or partnering with buyers locally or in new ASEAN markets.

- **Identify applicable frameworks:**
Determine which global frameworks (such as GRI or ISSB) and local regulations (like the EU’s CSRD, India’s SEBI BRSR, or Singapore’s SGX requirements) apply to your specific operations and export markets.
- **Streamline your reporting:**
Streamline your reporting by leveraging interoperability—such as the alignment between GRI and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)—to gather standardised ESG data that satisfies multiple frameworks and reduces duplication.

Learn more:
Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB); Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD); country-level requirements e.g. Bursa Malaysia sustainability reporting for listed entities.

- **Verify public claims:**
Verify that your public claims and reports meet the strict evidence rules of local consumer protection laws and directives (e.g., the EU Green Claims Directive or Singapore’s CCS Guide) to avoid legal risks and greenwashing penalties.

OUTCOME

Sustainability reporting becomes efficient and legally compliant, minimising duplicated efforts while satisfying the highest level of scrutiny from international regulators, global investors, and B2B buyers.

Leading

Use product-level transparency & traceability tools



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Advanced companies may implement traceability platforms or digital product information systems that allow stakeholders to access verified product information.

- **Map the supply chain:**
Use digital platforms to accurately trace the journey of your products from raw material to finished good.
- **Track materials:**
Securely record specific material compositions at the individual product level.
- **Enable stakeholder access:**
Share verified supply chain details directly with consumers and partners using digital product passports or similar tools.

Learn more:
Ellen MacArthur Foundation circular economy transparency guidance and GS1’s Digital Product Passport and product data standards.

OUTCOME
Consumers and partners gain greater visibility into product sustainability credentials, strengthening trust and transparency.



SME tip:
Prepare for export market demands now by actively building the capacity to report with confidence to the EU market. Mature SMEs are introducing digital passports that capture material specifications, environmental impact data, and social traceability information.

Identification & achievement of certifications



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

To substantiate your sustainability claims and build trust, identify and achieve reputable, independent third-party certifications.

- **Select reputable schemes:**
Identify and adopt recognised, independent third-party certifications based on robust and transparent methodologies for your key impact areas e.g. chemical management.
- **Maintain strict compliance:**
Keep all audits, scope certificates, and supporting data completely up-to-date to prove ongoing compliance.
- **Communicate transparently:**
Clearly state the source and criteria of any environmental labels, avoiding any false implications of official approval.

Learn more:
International Chamber of Commerce (ICC Framework for Responsible Environmental Marketing Communications); Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (CCS Guide on Quality-related Claims).

OUTCOME
Independent verification builds consumer trust, validates environmental benefits, and ensures compliance with marketing guidelines.



SME tip:
Use the certification process as a roadmap for improvement. Rather than just aiming for the final badge, approach certification journeys (like B Corp) as a structured learning process to identify gaps, build internal capacity, and progressively improve your sustainability practices.

Leading

Communicate for leadership & impact



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

Beyond basic compliance, you have a powerful opportunity to enhance your brand’s reputation by sharing your ambition, telling an interconnected story, and uplifting the industry.

• **Communicate targets transparently:**

Build credibility by openly sharing your goals, strategic focus areas, action plans, and challenges. Tailor your messaging for specific audiences. For example, using formal reports for investors, and inspiring calls-to-action for customers.

• **Tell an interconnected story:**

Shift from isolated metrics to holistic storytelling by communicating how your efforts address interdependent areas—connecting climate action, biodiversity, water stewardship, and human livelihoods.

• **Partner to elevate the industry:**

Participate in collective action by sharing success stories and issuing joint communications with buyers or technology partners. Communicate your contribution to shared milestones, setting an example that inspires the broader fashion ecosystem to transform.

OUTCOME

Turns your sustainability journey into a powerful competitive advantage by building stakeholder trust and inspiring industry-wide transformation.



SME tip:

Leverage your agility as an SME for a storytelling advantage. Transparently sharing your real-time progress, goals, and even your setbacks showcases an authenticity that builds a highly credible brand reputation and sets a powerful example for the industry.

Learn more:

ICC Framework for Responsible Environmental Marketing Communications (Aspirational claims and commitments);
UNEP Sustainable Fashion Communication Playbook.



Success stories from the floor



CASE STUDY - SABRINAGOH

Going the Extra Mile: SABRINAGOH’s Approach to Transparent Communication

For small and medium fashion brands, proving that sustainability claims are true can be tough. They often lack the massive buying power needed to force overseas factories to undergo strict environmental audits. When the independent label SABRINAGOH purchased supposedly certified fabrics from overseas suppliers, they discovered that some of the materials were not actually legitimate.

To avoid accidental greenwashing and ensure their messaging is completely honest, they now take the extra step of manually tracking specific serial numbers to verify credentials like OEKO-TEX. This shows that even without a big corporate compliance team, SMEs

can use practical steps to verify their raw materials. But checking the facts is only half the job; the other half is communication. SABRINAGOH actively educates their customers so they understand the value behind these efforts. They use their website, newsletters, social media, and store staff to clearly explain the specific materials they use and their real environmental impact.

For SMEs wanting to build trust, this offers a simple roadmap: manually verify your supply chain to avoid greenwashing, and proactively educate your buyers so they understand the true value of their clothes.

CASE STUDY – CIRCULAR FASHION HUB

One Hub, Bigger Impact:

It’s easy to think that a meaningful circular economy needs deep-pocketed global retailers to lead the way. But Singapore’s Circular Fashion Hub proves that circular ambition can start with a single shared space. Opened at Allenby House on Jalan Besar and spearheaded by The Fashion Pulpit’s founder Raye Padit, the Hub brings together a collective of like-minded, circularity-focused brands — including Syne Studio, Re-store, muta. wear, Talking Toes, Rentadella and Playdate — all operating from the same physical space. Rather than one business tackling waste alone, the model pools clothing swaps, resale, rental and upcycling under one roof, multiplying each individual brand’s impact far beyond what it could achieve on its own.

The ultimate proof of the strategy? As Singapore’s first initiative of its kind, the Hub has become a go-to destination for consumers looking to extend the life of their wardrobe — through swaps, thrifting, rental and upcycling workshops — while giving each participating brand access to foot traffic, community and visibility it wouldn’t have alone. If a shared hub of small, circular-first brands can build this much collective momentum in central Singapore, any growing business can find its own way to weave circular ambition into its foundation — no global retail footprint required.



Pathway Five:

Unlock enablers & finance

Navigating the transition to a sustainable fashion model requires more than just ambition; it requires access to the right resources.

This pathway focuses on equipping Singapore enterprises—especially SMEs—with the shared tools, training, and green financing needed to accelerate their sustainability transition, reduce implementation costs, and strengthen their position when entering or scaling locally or in new ASEAN markets.



Action areas

Together, these action areas outline concrete ways to leverage ESG toolkits, negotiate supportive partnerships, and secure green transition financing.

Foundational

Leverage simplified ESG toolkits & resources



Identify existing grants & incentives



Progressive

Negotiate win-win buyer-supplier partnerships



Leverage digital ESG data to secure green financing



Leading

Access sustainable & transition finance



Join regional & industry forums to shape policy & unlock capital



Foundational

Leverage simplified ESG toolkits & resources



-  Brands & Retailers
-  Manufacturers
-  Upstream producers

Use ESG toolkits and sector specific guidance resources available to enhance your understanding of complex ESG compliance regulations and also showcase commercial benefits of adopting sustainability measures.

- Leverage online ESG resources and guidance:**
Use online tools and resources to improve your sustainability performance and increase your ability to meet compliance requirements (e.g., the [SME Sustainability Hub](#) launched by the Singapore Government).
- Use guidance resources from industry associations:**
Access industry-specific guidance documents and toolkits that connect sustainable practices to sector priorities and commercial viability. Including resources provided by Singapore Fashion Council and guidance publications (e.g. [Towards Zero Fashion Waste Market Study](#)) and publications by Textile Exchange, and the Global Fashion Agenda [Upstream Circularity Playbook](#).

OUTCOME
SMEs can achieve cost-effective sustainability integration by leveraging digital tools and resources, sector specific guidance and established industry programs to build internal expertise.

Learn more:
SME Sustainability Hub (SG Government); Singapore Fashion Council Resources and Publications; Textile Exchange Publications, Global Fashion Agenda Upstream Circularity Playbook. Environmental Marketing Communications).

Identify existing grants & incentives



-  Manufacturers
-  Upstream producers

Leverage regional and sector-wide financing solutions and grants which can enable SMEs to access the capital needed for green technology transitions. See [Resources and References](#) for a list of financial resources relevant for your country.

- Secure direct subsidies:**
Apply for free technical assistance and government grants to cover initial environmental audits.
- Utilise tax privileges:**
Take advantage of financial incentives, such as exemptions on import duties for green manufacturing equipment. For example, Malaysia’s Green Investment Tax Allowance.
- Access green loans:**
Seek out public schemes providing low-interest loans specifically designated for sustainable investments.

Learn more:
SMEs should ensure funding proposals meet sector-specific standards and Technical Screening Criteria of the ASEAN taxonomy, as most financial institutions and funding agencies might consider these.

OUTCOME
These financial mechanisms reduce the total cost of ownership for green technologies, transforming sustainability from a capital expense into a financially viable operational upgrade.



SME tip:
Since public funding can be highly competitive, target free initial consultancy services or assessment grants first. This gives you a clear, professional roadmap of the most cost-effective upgrades to make before you ever have to spend your own capital.

Progressive

Negotiate win-win buyer-supplier partnerships



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

New sustainability regulations require global fashion brands to rapidly transform their supply chains. SMEs can leverage this dependency by negotiating joint agreements with multinational buyers to share the financial burden of adopting sustainable practices — turning compliance into a lever Singapore enterprises can use to open doors with new regional buyers.

- **Join supply chain programs:**
Collaborate with large buyers on environmental management programs that transfer knowledge and lower compliance barriers.
- **Seek joint financing:**
Partner with brands to co-fund factory upgrades through mechanisms like matching funds. For instance, buyers adhering to the UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action often offer direct transition support or collaborative funding.
- **Negotiate favourable terms:**
Work with buyers to secure longer-term contracts or premium pricing for sustainable garments to offset your transition costs.

Learn more:
Partnerships should reflect the UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action. Suppliers must align with SBTi targets and prepare for EU circularity mandates.

OUTCOME

Build a foundation to navigate evolving regulations, gain practical experience in impact measurement, and identify gaps, improvement opportunities, and potential cost savings.



SME tip:

Engage your customers to understand their sustainability priorities and align your own goals to be in line with their long term sustainability vision. A collective voice makes it much easier to negotiate shared sustainability targets or secure financial and technical support.

Leverage digital ESG data to secure green financing



Manufacturers

Standardised data is essential for proving compliance to global buyers and securing transition finance. Shared digital platforms allow SMEs to transparently track their environmental baselines and align with global reporting frameworks at a lower cost.

- **Align with industry standards and benchmarks:**
Use recognised assessments, such as the Higg Index, to standardise the measurement of your value chain sustainability.
- **Adopt digital tools to report:** Utilise software solutions and online traceability tools to streamline sustainability reporting and supply chain management.
- **Provide verifiable data:**
Supply clear, quantitative metrics to help financial institutions assess goals and customise green loan terms for your business.

Learn more:
SMEs can use the Higg Facility Environmental Module to benchmark water, energy, and waste data. ISO 59020 circularity assessment standards can be referred for reporting on circularity.

OUTCOME

Build effective business cases to secure finance for your decarbonisation initiatives by providing potential partners with standardised information based on empirical data.



SME tip:

Clear, traceable and easily verifiable data builds trust with financial institutions and grant agencies. It makes it more feasible for them to approve your request for green or sustainability linked loans and also offer you better funding terms.



Leading

Access sustainable & transition finance



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers

Move beyond standard bank loans by applying for funding from other sources such as impact funds and venture capital.

- **Secure collaborative green loans & impact funds:**
Look beyond traditional finance options including specialised impact investments, such as the Good Fashion Fund. Alternatively, leverage collaborative finance tools like the joint initiative between H&M Group and DBS, which offers highly favourable green loans to suppliers to fund Scope 3 decarbonisation upgrades.
- **Utilise blended finance & innovative instruments:**
Explore regional funding structures that mix different capital sources to lower your investment risk. This includes blended finance (e.g., combinations of public, private, CSR) or emerging models like Circular Economy (CE) Impact Bonds.

OUTCOME

By utilising specialised green funding, SMEs can overcome high capital costs to implement long-term projects, including those that may require significant investment in technology or infrastructure.

Learn more:
Country-specific resources and networks on impact investment:

Singapore: **Centre for Impact Investing & Practices**
Indonesia: **Indonesia Impact Alliance**
Vietnam: **Vietnam Impact Investing Network**



SME tip:

Proactively look for impact investors or venture capital firms that pair “fit-for-purpose” funding with practical, personalised guidance and early-stage backing specifically designed for SME business models.

Join regional & industry forums to shape policy & unlock capital



Brands & Retailers



Manufacturers



Upstream producers

Joining regional consortiums helps Singapore pool resources and shape policy, making advanced circular models affordable and highly bankable for green investors — while building the regional relationships Singapore enterprises need to expand locally or into new ASEAN markets.

- **Shape policy by regional alliances:**
Join networks like the ASEAN Circular Economy Business Alliance (ACEBA). Beyond sharing resources, participation helps generate the collective data needed to advocate for supportive regional policies and improve industry-wide access to green financing.
- **Leverage industry platforms:**
Participate in targeted platforms like the Circular Fashion Partnership (CFP) Indonesia. Such initiatives directly link garment factories with recyclers, they also provide the real-world data

Learn more:
Structure alliances around the UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action to drive systemic change through collaborative working groups and shared tools. Consider cross-sectoral platforms such as **ASEAN Circular Economy Business Alliance, Sustainable Energy for All.**

necessary to advocate for national EPR policies and financial incentives.

- **Tap into ecosystem funding networks:**
Apply for cross-sector support like the Amplifier Mentorship Programme. This programme helps fashion SMEs scale innovative supply chain solutions while directly engaging financial institutions to secure transition capital.



SME tip:

SMEs can drive synchronised industry action by actively sharing feedback on their specific challenges and support needs within these consortiums, enabling cross-industry collaboration and enhanced resource allocation.



Success stories from the floor



CASE STUDY - GHIM LI

Data as a Key: Unlocking Green Finance with Ghim Li

Transitioning to sustainable operations takes capital, but securing green financing often requires complex ESG data that many businesses struggle to collect. How do you bridge that gap?

Apparel manufacturer Ghim Li found the answer by embracing digital enablers. They utilised ESGpedia's streamlined platform, taking advantage of free ESG starter tools that include the ESN Asia-Pacific Green Deal digital assessment and an automatic carbon calculator. This simplified, guided program allowed

them to easily report broad ESG and operational metrics, which were then independently verified by Bureau Veritas.

Using these tools provided Ghim Li with greater insights into their overall ESG profile and helped them better understand their current GHG emissions, which is a crucial step in gaining greater access to sustainable financing. Supported by this transparent and verified data assessment, Ghim Li successfully secured a S\$16 million Sustainability Linked Loan (SLL) from OCBC Bank.

By working with the bank to link their loan terms to ongoing sustainability performance targets, Ghim Li demonstrates a powerful lesson. Adopting the right digital assessment tools doesn't just simplify the reporting process—it provides the structure and accountability needed to actively unlock the critical funding required to scale impactful, sustainable change.



Beyond the factory & retail floor: How Singapore enterprises can help lead ASEAN's sustainability transition

SFC can help you strengthen your
impact beyond your own operations.

Depending on your role in the fashion ecosystem and your
relevant pathways, you can partner or collaborate by:

Contributing

to technology demonstrations,
pilot projects, and circularity-
focused workshops

Partnering

with SFC on retail or public
campaigns to promote
sustainability and circular
practices among consumers

Sharing

your circularity success stories,
learnings, and practical insights
with the wider industry

Exploring

additional collaboration
opportunities with SFC tailored
to your organisation's strengths
and interests

Reach out to the sustainability team at Singapore Fashion Council
via [LinkedIn](#) or [email](#) to get involved!



Key resources to get you started

SFC tools & resources to help you on your sustainability journey

Tools & Resources

Digital Resources

Essential global resources that will help develop your design, grow your business, and scale internationally.

SRI

A digital platform that enables fashion businesses to assess their sustainability readiness, benchmark their performance, and develop a practical roadmap to improve their environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices.

Membership

Become a [member](#) of SFC.

Newsletter Subscription

Subscribe to the [newsletter](#) for event updates, the latest tools, and industry updates.

Disclaimer: While not an exhaustive list, these resources are intended to be a starting point to help you navigate your financing options. Please be aware that external links and funding criteria are valid as of this document’s publication, but may be updated in the future.

Programmes

The Bridge Fashion Innovator

Asia’s pioneering incubator advancing innovation at the crossroads of fashion, technology, and sustainability.

Yearly Events Calendar

Check out the industry events that SFC is running throughout the year.

Learning & Development

SFC developed resources covering individual learning to capability-building for businesses.

Publicly available resources by Singapore Government and Enterprise SG

Greenprint is an online Sustainability reporting [platform](#).

SEFR is Singapore Emission Factors [Registry](#) which provides localised emissions factor data.

Key resources to get you started

Financial partners & loan opportunities for scaling sustainable & circular business models locally

Section	Programme / Scheme	Support	Eligibility	Key Exclusions	Recurrence
1. Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG) Programs	Enterprise Sustainability Programme (ESP)	• Subsidised sustainability training • Capability-building support • Product development assistance • Sustainability reporting frameworks	• Singapore-registered business • Operating in Singapore • ≥30% local shareholding	PLC-guaranteed non-profits and foreign branch/rep offices.	Ongoing; project-based timelines apply to sub-grants.
1. Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG) Programs	Enterprise Financing Scheme – Green (EFS-Green)	• Green financing for eligible projects • Development Capital: up to S\$3M • Trade Loan: up to S\$10M • Fixed Assets Loan: up to S\$30M • Project Loan: up to S\$50M	• ACRA-registered business in Singapore • ≥30% local equity (direct/indirect SG Citizen/PR ownership) • Group turnover ≤ S\$500M • Eligible green sectors & activities	Not specified.	Open until 31 March 2031.
2. Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS)	Sustainable Loan Grant Scheme (SLGS)	• Covers 100% of eligible validation costs • Up to S\$100K–125K per borrower • Supports sustainability loan verification	• Corporates & financial institutions • Singapore-based operations/revenue • Minimum 3-year loan tenure • Minimum S\$20M loan size	Sovereigns excluded.	Open until 31 December 2028; apply within 3 months of loan issuance.
3. Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment (MSE)	SG Eco Fund	• Grants for community environmental projects	• Singapore Citizens/PRs • Groups with at least one Citizen/PR • Singapore-registered organisations	No other government funding for the project.	Grant-call based; next deadline 31 August 2027.
4. Commercial Banking Partners (DBS , UOB , OCBC , HSBC , SMBC , MUFG)	Sustainability Financing & Green Loans for SMEs	• Government-backed EFS-Green financing such as • DBS ESG Ready Programme • UOB SAGE Programme • OCBC SME Start-ESG Programme • Preferential financing & sustainability transition support	• EFS-Green: ≥30% local equity • Foreign-owned SG entities may still qualify for bank-specific products	Not specified.	Proprietary commercial bank loan products operate on an ongoing basis with no fixed deadlines, while the government-partnered EFS-Green components are tied to the *31 March 2031* structural cutoff.

Key resources to get you started

Financial partners & loan opportunities for scaling sustainable & circular business models regionally

Country	Programme / Initiative
Malaysia	Green Technology Financing Scheme (GTFS) Green Investment Tax Allowance (GITA)
Indonesia	BIDUK – Investing in Business for Progress YCAB Ventures
Thailand	EXIM Green Start Loan Bualuang Green Financing for Transition to Environmental Sustainability Loan
Vietnam	Vietnam Development Bank – Green Credit
Philippines	Development Bank of the Philippines – SEED Programme Energy Efficiency Savings (E2SAVE) Programme
Cambodia	Khmer Enterprise SME Funding
Laos	Laos Green Growth Fund
Myanmar	SMED Bank Green Financing
Brunei	DARe Enterprise Development Grants
ASEAN (Regional)	ASEAN Social Enterprise Development Programme ASEAN-Australia Council Grants

References

The globally recognised standards, frameworks, and industry papers that underpin this Plan.

[ASEAN Circular Economy Business Alliance \(ACEBA\)](#)

[ASEAN SME Policy](#)

[ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework](#)

[ASEAN Taxonomy for Sustainable Finance \(Version 4\)](#)

[ASEAN Transition Finance Guidance \(ATFG\)](#)

[B Corp Certification](#)

[bluesign®](#)

[Circularity Indicators \(WBCSD\)](#)

[Circular Design for Fashion \(Ellen MacArthur Foundation\)](#)

[Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore \(CCS\) Guide](#)

[Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive \(CSRD\)](#)

[Ecosystem Category Definitions for Textile and Apparel \(UNECE\)](#)

[Engaging Supply Chains on the Decarbonisation Journey \(SBTi\)](#)

[Environmental Product Declarations \(EPDs\)](#)

[European Sustainability Reporting Standards \(ESRS\)](#)

[EU Green Claims Directive](#)

[EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles](#)

[Global Fashion Agenda](#)

[Global Organic Textile Standard \(GOTS\)](#)

[Global Reporting Initiative \(GRI\)](#)

[Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Protocol](#)

[GS1 Digital Product Passport and Product Data Standards](#)

[Higg Facility Environmental Module \(Higg FEM\)](#)

[India's SEBI BRSR \(Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report\)](#)

[Indonesia’s Circular Economy Roadmap](#)

[International Chamber of Commerce \(ICC\) Framework for Environmental Claims](#)

[International Sustainability Standards Board \(ISSB\) / formerly TCFD](#)

[ISO 14001: Environmental Management Systems](#)

[ISO 14021: Environmental Labels and Declarations](#)

[ISO 14040 and ISO 14044: Life Cycle Assessment \(LCA\)](#)



References

ISO 59000: Circular Economy Standards

ISO 59020: Circularity Assessment Standards

OEKO-TEX

RE100

Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) & SME Guidance

Singapore Exchange (SGX) Sustainability Reporting Requirements

Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB)

Textile Exchange Certification Standards

The Fashion Pact

Towards Zero Fashion Waste Market Study (Singapore Fashion Council)

UNECE Framework on Roles Beyond the Value Chain

UNEP Global Roadmap for Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain

UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action

UNIDO Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) in ASEAN

Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC)



Your next steps

This plan provides a playbook of pathways, action areas and resources to guide and inspire Singapore's fashion enterprises — and their regional partners — to build a more sustainable fashion sector across Singapore & ASEAN.

Implementing this plan calls for companies to be ambitious and collaborative, by leveraging existing resources and adding your own experiences to the region's pool of expertise and success stories.



**Singapore Fashion Council
looks forward to supporting
you on this journey.**

For more information and to participate in the conversation, reach out to us at sustainability@sgfashioncouncil.org.sg

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