



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Higg Index Adds Scoring Functionality to Facility Social & Labor Tool**

*Global brands now have the ability to assess social and labor performance of facilities with a standard scoring system.*

SAN FRANCISCO -- October 21, 2020 -- Technology company Higg Co and the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) today announced, in partnership with the Social Labor Convergence Program (SLCP), that they have launched a scored version of the Higg Facility Social & Labor Module (Higg FSLM) on Higg.org. This is an opportunity for brands to retire independent proprietary tools and be part of an industry-wide effort to standardize facility auditing for social and labor issues at global scale. In turn, the standardized assessment frees up time and financial resources for facilities. They can eliminate audit fatigue and instead focus on making lasting sustainability improvements.

The Higg FSLM leverages the existing [SLCP](#) Converged Assessment Framework as the foundation of the tool. With the new addition of scoring, the Higg FSLM now provides judgement information, eliminating the need for brands to conduct individual audits to assess facilities' performance, and Higg Index scoring enables comparability of the data. The score is out of 100 and covers issues like handling grievances, respectful treatment of workers, and child labor practices (full list found [here](#)). As a performance assessment, rather than a compliance exercise, the Higg FSLM provides an opportunity for facilities to improve year over year. Standardizing the measurement of social and labor practices has long eluded the fashion industry. The Higg FSLM reflects the leading example of the industry coming together to commit to one system of assessment to measure social impacts.

The Higg FSLM is part of the Higg Index, a holistic suite of sustainability tools and services to assess the social and environmental impacts of global value chains and enable performance improvement. From materials selection to manufacturing, logistics, retail, and product use, the Higg Index offers the most comprehensive and credible sustainability assessment framework for the industry. The SAC works with industry stakeholders, including SLCP, to develop the methodology for assessments within the tools, and Higg Co delivers the technology and services to support implementation.

Amina Razvi, Executive Director of the SAC, says, "The launch of Higg FSLM scoring presents an opportunity for brands to retire independent proprietary tools and move towards performance improvement and increased collaboration to address social and labor issues across the value chain. This has been a key goal of the SAC since its inception, and with this launch we get one step closer to reducing audit fatigue and shifting resources towards improvement and collective action. This is a game changer for the industry and a critical tool right now to achieve true industry transformation."



Higg Co, the technology company and service provider behind the digitalization of the Higg Index, calls the addition of scored data an important step forward for the industry.

“Organizations need meaningful end-to-end data to inform management decisions around sustainability investment,” says Higg Co CEO Jason Kibbey. “Availability of accurate data and comparability and consistency of data are critical to enabling the scale up of sustainable business practices,” he adds.

Facilities can prioritize making improvements rather than spend time and money on duplicative assessments. “The scored Higg Facility Social & Labor Module frees up time and financial resources that our facilities would typically spend on individual audits,” says Vijay N. Suvarna, Head of Compliance at Asiatan. “By using the Higg Index, we can redirect resources to better support employees instead. Through the digital Higg platform, we can more easily connect with our business partners around the world and more effectively collaborate on improving the industry.”

The tool also empowers brands and manufacturers to jointly achieve global value chain improvements. “At Target we recognize that the actions that we take can make a big impact,” says Bill Foudy, Target SVP & President Owned Brand Sourcing and Development. “We believe that to drive sustainable, systemic improvements in any sector, collaboration is necessary to enable the tipping point to drive lasting change. This includes supporting the development and adoption of industry tools such as the Higg FSLM as part of an ecosystem that is rooted in equal partnership and driving continuous improvement.”

“Industry tools, like SLCP and Higg FSLM, not only provide a standardization of social and labor metrics, but promote improved ways of working across the apparel sector,” Marissa Pagnani McGowan, Senior Vice President, Corporate Responsibility, PVH Corp. says. “The adoption of a collaborative and consistent industry-wide approach frees up valuable time and resources for our suppliers, enabling us to work more productively together to scale positive impacts across the supply chain.”

“The collaboration the Higg FSLM promotes is transformative for the apparel industry,” Simone Colombo, Head of Corporate Sustainability, OVS Spa says. “The Higg FSLM supports the facilities and communities that manufacture apparel globally and enables brands and retailers to better support them, so we can all work on sustainability together. This scored tool assesses social and labor performance and encourages businesses to better communicate with one another to drive lasting sustainability change.”

The Higg FSLM offers comprehensiveness, data quality, and the ability to reduce audit fatigue.

- Comprehensiveness of the tool
  - Set of social and labor data that covers all most important categories
  - SLCP’s diverse signatory base developed the tool



- Covers 97% of all data points when compared to 21 traditional audit schemes
- Data quality
  - Robust verification methodology and verification oversight
  - Automated data quality checks
  - High-quality, credible data set
- Reduction in audit fatigue
  - Ability to share data beyond the Higg platform if using the Higg vFSLM
  - Industry convergence around a single data collection and verification methodology
  - Enables widespread sharing of a single verified data set (creating efficiency: reducing time and money spent on social audits)

Today's announcement represents another important step toward full supply chain transparency.

### **About Sustainable Apparel Coalition**

The Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) is an industry-wide group of more than 250 leading apparel, footwear and textile, brands, retailers, suppliers, service providers, trade associations, nonprofits, NGOs and academic institutions working to promote social justice throughout the global value chain and reduce the environmental impacts of products. 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 sustainability performance that spotlights priorities for action and opportunities for technological innovation. The SAC was incorporated as a 501(c)6 nonprofit organization and launched the groundbreaking Higg Index suite of tools in 2011. For more information, visit [www.apparelcoalition.org](http://www.apparelcoalition.org).

### **About Higg Co**

Higg Co is a technology company formed in 2019 to deliver, implement and support implementation of unified sustainability measurement tools for consumer goods industries, beginning with the apparel, footwear and textile sector. It is an Accredited Host of SLCP. The Higg Index is a suite of tools that enables brands, retailers and facilities of all sizes — at every stage in their sustainability journey — to accurately measure and score a company or product's sustainability performance. The Higg Index delivers the only end-to-end value chain sustainability performance framework available, enabling businesses to make meaningful improvements that protect the environment, people and communities. Higg Co is incorporated as a Public Benefit LLC. For more information visit [www.higg.com](http://www.higg.com).

### **About SLCP**

The Social & Labor Convergence Program (SLCP) is a multi-stakeholder initiative of over 200 signatories including leading brands, manufacturers, standard holders and civil society. SLCP



signatories have developed a Converged Assessment Framework (CAF) to eliminate duplicative and repetitive proprietary social and labor audits with a single verified assessment that can be used by all stakeholders. The SLCP assessment and verification process results in a verified data set with no scoring (standard-agnostic). SLCP partners with a network of Accredited Hosts that provide value-added services (such as scoring) to meet the needs of end-users. SLCP signatories have pledged to redirect the savings made through implementation of the CAF towards improving social and labor conditions within their supply chain. For more information visit [www.slconvergence.org](http://www.slconvergence.org).

### **Media Contacts**

Laura Wilkinson  
SAC Marketing & Communications  
[press@apparelcoalition.org](mailto:press@apparelcoalition.org)

Alexandra Rosas  
Higg Co, Senior Manager Marketing & Communications  
[media@higg.com](mailto:media@higg.com)

Holly Menezes  
SLCP, Senior Manager, Communications & Stakeholder Engagement  
[info@slconvergence.org](mailto:info@slconvergence.org)