# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Committees</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWTO Executive, Contracts &amp; Specifications, Wool Retail Forum, Market Intelligence &amp; Grower Forum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working Groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Practices • Product Wellness • Wool Interiors • Wool Trade Biosecurity • Wool Sheep Welfare</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Events</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91st IWTO Congress</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool Round Table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publications</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Information Ed. 17 • Red, White and Blue Blue Books • Specifications for Wool Sheep Welfare • Wool Traceability Systems &amp; Recycled Wool Suppliers Lists</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Real Wool News</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwto.org • Social Media • Wool Policy Report • The Ticker Newsletter • IWTO Focus</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make The Label Count Campaign</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Year 2022 Results</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IWTO</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels Office &amp; Team</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Committees

IWTO Executive

We owe members of our Executive Committee a great deal for their support during the past year. The global pandemic and subsequent financial upheaval caused havoc in all parts of the wool pipeline, demanding their constant attention. Members of the Executive are nominated by their peers for their commitment to IWTO and they certainly were tested during the pandemic. The IWTO Executive Committee is responsible for implementing the strategies put forward by IWTO’s Committees and Working Groups, and for overall administration of the organisation. We welcomed Mr. Matthew Rowe as Special Advisor for Canadian Wool in 2022. We thank Mr. Craig Smith and Wolf Edmayr for their tenure, as they complete their terms in May 2023.
Committees

Contracts & Specifications

The Contracts & Specifications Committee is the approving body for all IWTO Draft Test Methods and for amendments to existing IWTO Test Methods. The members actively initiate the formal adoption of Specifications as IWTO Test Methods, pertaining to the trade of wool in all its forms. The Licensing Panel and Technical Groups (Raw Material Group, Product Group and Wool Innovation & Technology Forum) report to the C&S Committee.

Wool Retail Forum

Members appreciate the retail trends shared by this forum, reflecting the latest consumer purchasing patterns. During 2022 we saw work-from-home transform professional wardrobes. Looking forward we anticipate positive change in formalwear and suiting, while athleisure maximises wool's performance attributes.

Market Intelligence

The entire wool pipeline depends on clear messaging from consumers for the ultimate alignment of wool business strategies. Wool textile trade data remains a cornerstone of the IWTO Market Information Report, one of the benefits of IWTO membership.

Grower Forum

Wool growers offer country specific reports during the annual congress, keeping farmers connected across borders and sharing best practices to the benefit of all. We thank Guillau du Toit for his service and welcome Jo Hall as Chair in 2022.
## Working Groups

### Sustainable Practices

The Sustainable Practices Working Group (SPWG) originated in 2012 to quantify wool’s weighting in textile rating schemes. Members of this group have invested more than 700,000 euro to substantiate wool’s sustainability. The SPWG is currently chaired by Geoff Kingwill with Angus Ireland as vice-chair.

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) offers peer-reviewed science that supports wool’s environmental claims, sponsored by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI). TAG Chair Dr. Stephen Wiedemann also represents IWTO in the European Commission’s Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) project.

### Current TAG Research Projects

- Change Modelling - two papers
- Impacts of system boundaries for natural fibres - one paper
- Recycling’s role in reducing environmental impacts for wool
- Best Practice Care - this study will identify the number of daily ‘wear and air’ cycles that wool, cotton, and polyester garments can take before washing is required
- Biodegradation of wool and other fabrics in marine and terrestrial environments
- Assessing the environmental impact of contemporary wool production

### Trade Press Funded (Amounts in Euro)

| 1. | Suston magazine (2,640; includes no.2 below): Wool Recycling |
| 2. | Suston magazine (included in amount above): Chemical residues in wool |
| 3. | Twist magazine (2,760): Chemical residues in wool |
| 5. | Suston magazine (1,000): Wool Farm Case Studies |

### Sustainable Practices TAG Publications in 2022

| 1. | Chemical Toxicity ([Scientific Reports](https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/scientific-reports)) |
| 2. | Wool Recycling ([Sustainability](https://www.sustainability.com)) |
| 3. | Environmental Impacts of Best Practice Care for Wool ([Springer](https://link.springer.com)) |
| 4. | Critical Review of PEF ([Clothing Research, Oslo Met](https://www.clothingresearchoslomet.com)) |
The Product Wellness Working Group (PWWG) originated in 2013 and provides a strategic forum for industry thought, planning and the establishment of strategies to build and validate the health and wellness credentials of wool textiles. The current Chair is Angus Ireland. (Wellness)

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG), chaired by Trevor Mahar, generates the science which supports wool's benefits for health and wellness. The scientific output of this group is entirely sponsored by AWI.

Current Projects

- A study to establish wool’s credentials in the skin health sector and patients suffering from eczema

- The impact of sleepwear fibre types on sleep quality in older adults

- Study to determine the effect of wool and cotton sleepwear on the sleep quality of menopausal women experiencing hot flushes

- Dynamic Breathability Method - ongoing

- Clothing impact on Post-Exercise Comfort: Skin-Clothing Physiology in Transient Environment – submitted for publication

- A study to assess the influence of fibre type on cognitive performance in stressful situations - underway

Product Wellness TAG Publications in 2022

1. The impact of sleepwear fibre type on sleep quality in order adults under warm, ambient conditions (NIH)
The Wool Interiors Working Group (WIWG) was activated in May 2022 and its Terms of Reference approved by the Executive Committee.

A list of wool science sources for the interiors market is now available on the IWTO website. The WIWG’s Chair is Carol Sebert.

Current Projects

Members will focus on determining the current roadblocks preventing interior design and textile businesses from selling more wool, find solutions for these, and determine the opportunities for new innovative uses of strong wool.
The Wool Trade Biosecurity Working Group (WTBWG) was established in 2014 and strives to ensure positive animal health outcomes for the global wool industry, including freedom from emergency animal diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth (FMD).

Current Projects

Members share information and research between countries and organisations, such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

The Wool Trade Biosecurity Working Group is Chaired by Dr. George De Kock.
The Wool Sheep Welfare Working Group (WSWWG) was established in 2017 with the purpose of supporting and communicating best practices in global animal welfare. Members partner and collaborate with relevant organisations, such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

The Wool Sheep Welfare Working Group is Chaired by Peter Ackroyd.

Current Projects

The IWTO Wool Sheep Welfare Specifications offers a summary of animal welfare legislation and was updated during 2022. Members will approve the final version for distribution in 2023. This project is kindly sponsored by the American Wool Council.
Events

91st IWTO Congress

This was a Congress of two parts.


In Part II, on 24 & 25 October, IWTO and China Wool Textile Association (CWTA) offered the first hybrid Congress for members and guests in the beautiful ancient town of Puyuan.

There, international speakers and 500+ delegates joined the event on Webex and Tencent. Chinese industry members offered presentations on the current economic climate and industry milestones. On the last day, representatives of IWTO, CWTA and Puyuan-Tongxiang Municipalities signed the historic Puyuan Declaration for Sustainable Development of the Wool Textile Industry.

The event included industry visits to the knitwear design-and trade centre of Tongxiang, pictured right.

Video presentations were shared on the IWTO Channel after the event, and these can be viewed at: www.youtube.com/c/IWTOCHANNEL/videos

The Congress Media Release is available here.

We thank the Chinese Wool Textile Association and their partners for hosting a very successful hybrid Congress under difficult circumstances.

The 91st IWTO Congress was sponsored by wool industry members, and we thank them for this generous support.
Events

IWTO members finally got to celebrate wool in Nuremberg, Germany, after many delays.

Supported by the German Wool Federation and Südwolle Group, more than 80 delegates and guests attended the Wool Round Table, 1-2 December.

Programme sessions were also offered online, with international speakers and delegates joining from around the world.

All event videos are available on the IWTOChannel: www.youtube.com/c/IWTOCHANNEL/videos.

A Round Table Media Release is available here.

IWTO Wool Round Table

The 2022 Wool Round Table was again sponsored by loyal supporters of IWTO. We thank them for their contributions.
1. Market Information - Edition 17
This summary of wool trade statistics is compiled by Chris Wilcox and the Poimena team. One of the benefits of IWTO membership, members can access their copies on the IWTO Member Area under Member Resources.

Learn more about IWTO’s wool trade statistics on iwto.org.

2. Red Book
The collection of voluntary standards for the testing of raw wool. Available to IWTO Members free of charge. The publication is available from the Member Area – Member Resources.

3. White Book
IWTO Regulations define the sampling and certification procedures and explain the procedures for resolving disputes relating to test results. Available to members, on the Member Area – Member Resources.

4. Blue Book
The publication contains the International Wool Textile Arbitration and trade agreements, available free to IWTO members on the Member Area and under Resources.

We thank American Wool for sponsoring Edition 17 of the Market Information

5. IWTO Specifications for Wool Sheep Welfare
Published by members of the Wool Sheep Welfare Working Group and available free of charge on the IWTO website.

6. Wool Traceability List
A traceable and transparent wool pipeline has become much revered by fashion and textile representatives. IWTO Members have innovated their businesses to reflect the demand from the market and we summarised their efforts in this list of Wool Traceability Systems.

7. Recycled Wool List
The drive for a circular economy has been enforced by the recent pandemic and renewable sources for textiles have become a much-desired topic for retail sustainability managers. To assist in sourcing recycled wool yarn and fabrics, IWTO offers this list of members supplying recycled wool.

The Red, Blue and White Books can be purchased by non-members from IWTO’s online store.
Real Wool News

1. Website: iwto.org

The IWTO website remains our most used communication tool and visitor numbers continue to rise. Recent additions include a Wool Science section for Wool Interiors and a Young Professionals page.

The website averages around 5,000 visitors per month. A Google or other search brings 65% of these visitors to the site. The top search keywords for 2022 were “history of wool,” “recycled wool,” and “organic wool.”

More than 50% of iwto.org’s audience is younger than 35 years old. Slightly more visitors identify as female than male.

Wool Blogs and News facilitate the increased reach of iwto.org. We deliver fresh content every two weeks, sharing the research outputs of our working groups, showcasing Members, and the best of Real Wool News.

2. Social Media

IWTO promotes wool news and member activities through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Be sure to follow our accounts and share our posts!


The IWTO Wool Policy Report is published monthly, 10x each year, directly to Member subscribers. Compiled by KREAB, the Report is a compilation of global economic, trade, biosecurity and sustainability news.

We thank American Wool for its generous sponsorship of this publication.

4. Ticker Newsletter

IWTO’s flagship newsletter informs the wider wool community on IWTO activities, member news, product innovation and more. Published every two months to an audience of 1,200+, if you are not already receiving this newsletter, sign up on iwto.org.

5. IWTO Focus

Members of the Executive Committee offer Heads of Delegation the opportunity to have their say through the annual IWTO Focus document. A summary is discussed during the annual Congress and at the HOD meeting.
Campaign

Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)

As part of its work around the circular economy and protecting consumers from greenwashing, the EU is proposing companies substantiate the environmental claims they make on clothing using harmonised methodology.

While its aims are laudable, the methodology currently being proposed – the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) – is narrowly drawn and fails to take account of key sustainability considerations including the benefits of using circular fibres that are renewable and biodegradable, the adverse impacts of microplastic pollution, and the full environmental footprint of fossil fuel fibres that create plastic waste.

The PEF risks misleading consumers about the impacts of their products, and ultimately undermining the EU’s sustainability objectives.

PEF Technical Secretariat

The PEF methodology was initiated by the European Commission more than 10 years ago to design a tool capable of measuring the environmental impacts of products in the EU market. The Commission established a Technical Secretariat to draft rules for how the PEF would apply to apparel and footwear.

IWTO members are represented at this PEF Technical Secretariat through the Sustainable Practices Working Group, and Dr. Steve Wiedemann and Angus Ireland are actively engaged, with the support of the LCA Technical Advisors.

Make the Label Count

Improving Methodology for All Fibres

IWTO’s concerns with the limitations of the PEF and the Commission’s plans to use this methodology to substantiate environmental claims on apparel and footwear were shared by other organisations active in the natural fibre industry. Together, we launched the Make the Label Count Campaign in October 2021 to bring awareness to the issue.

Make the Label Count is an international coalition aiming to ensure that sustainability claims made about textiles in the EU are credible and empower consumers to make informed choices about the clothes they buy and wear. We do this through targeted stakeholder engagement in Brussels, meeting with Commission officials, Members of the European Parliament, media, and industry stakeholders to share information about the natural fibre industry and support the EU’s planned legislative direction for clothing and textiles.
Campaign

Make The Label Count

Campaign updates

- Published the MTLC White Paper “Delivering EU environmental policy through fair comparisons of natural and synthetic fibre textiles in PEF” providing detailed analysis of the issues with the current PEF methodology and practical recommendations for improvements.

- Delivered an Open Letter to the President and Members of the European Commission urging them to ensure that the PEF, or any alternative tool used to regulate ecodesign requirements and the substantiation of green claims, includes the necessary indicators to address the most critical environmental impacts of the fashion industry, and successfully deliver the EU’s circular economy strategies.

- Published an Opinion Editorial in the leading EU publication Politico, encouraging the EU to undertake a course correction to put fast fashion out of fashion.

- Coordinated a visit to The Knitwit Stable wool and mohair farm for European Parliament MEPs and staffers to see first-hand the important role sustainable textiles play in delivering the EU’s Circular Economy Package and engage directly with the MTLC coalition.

- Created a film to highlight the coalition’s desire for a fair and equitable approach to the Substantiating Green Claims initiative. Watch the film here: https://youtu.be/lka3AdexN6U

Acknowledgements

We thank the supporters of the MTLC campaign for their financial contributions; Australian Wool Innovation, Cape Wools SA, the Cashmere and Camel Hair Manufacturers Institute, the International Sericultural Commission, The Sourcery, Discover Natural Fibers Initiative and the IWTO Sustainable Practices and Product Wellness Working Groups.
Looking Ahead

IWTO heads to Japan for the 2023 Congress. The event will be held in the Hotel Okura Kyoto, located in the heart of the city. Online participation will be available for all sessions. We hope to see you there!

Programme highlights:
Sleep Better with Wool • Wool’s Health & Wellbeing Benefits • Wool Denim • EU Legislation and Implications for Wool • Wool & Carbon • Wool vs. Fossil Fuels
The IWTO Secretariat is located near Place Luxembourg, in the heart of Brussels’ European district. Brussels’ South Station and the Eurostar are a short metro or taxi ride away. Zaventum airport is accessable by train, bus, and taxi.

If you should find yourself in Belgium, please let us know, we would love to see you.

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