



Chris Packham's new outdoor clothing range is manufactured in a factory monitored by the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF). This is a non-profit organisation that works with brands, factories, trade unions, NGOs and sometimes governments to verify and improve workplace conditions in 11 production countries in Asia, Europe and Africa. FWF publicly reports on the progress of member companies towards the implementation of the Code.



The manufacturer is signed up to the 8-point FWF Code of Labour Practices, which are based on UN and ILO principles, in all production facilities and so meets the highest standards for socially equitable working conditions. These include, amongst others:

- the payment of living wages
- reasonable working hours
- safe and healthy working conditions
- prevention of child labour and many more.

There are regularly scheduled audits and the FWF monitors working conditions and social standards in individual production facilities. During the audit, employees are questioned both inside and outside of the manufacturing plant without the presence of management. Where standards are found to be below FWF requirements a "Corrective Action Plan" is produced which sets out what must be done by the brand, within a clear timeframe.

## **Regulation of hazardous substances**

Our manufacturer had produced a Restricted Substances List (RSL) protocol as a guidance document for material suppliers and product manufacturers in the supply chain. This RSL protocol includes the wide range of chemical substances that are being regulated by governments of different countries around the world. Aside from government regulations, there are also chemical substances which are potentially used in the outdoor goods industry but which are regarded to have potential harmful effects to consumer health and therefore are included in the RSL.



As well as having its own RSL protocol the supply chain is compliant with EU REACH regulation (Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals). EU REACH regulation was published in December 2006 and came into force in June 2007. REACH was introduced to have a proper instrument in place to protect human health & the environment, to enforce better competitiveness in the Chemicals Industry and to increase transparency. The REACH requirements are to make sure that the use of a chemical substance does not adversely affect either human health and/or the environment by providing documented safety information on the substance in question and to ensure all risks for potentially causing injury and/or health concerns to both humans and the environment by the chemical itself are identified and managed.

## **Durable Water Repellent Finishes.**

Durable water repellent (DWR) finishes are used on many products to help the surface shed water and to resist staining and contamination by oils. Outdoor gear has used DWR finishes on waterproofs and soft shells. They are also used extensively in furnishing and carpets for stain repellence. In the last ten years research has shown that the chemicals used in these DWR treatments

accumulate in the environment and can cause harm. These are per fluorinated chemicals (PFC's). In particular C8 technology or long chain fluorochemicals were shown to be the most harmful. The first stage in the reduction of use of these compounds was to stop using C8 technology which most outdoor companies did by 2014/15. Initially a simple switch was made to C6 technology, which is less harmful and does not accumulate in the environment.



It is possible to go further and there are now an increasing number of PFC free options available. In terms of effectiveness, none of the replacement technologies are as effective as the old C8 technology. C6 is close but does not last quite as long and the PFC free options do wear off the garment a little quicker, so reproofing is required more often.

Our manufacturers are now looking at introducing a number of PFC free DWR technologies. For winter 2018 they will introduce PFC free DWR into their GORE-TEX range of waterproofs. Things are changing fast and when we can we will switch to treatments that have no impact on the environment.