

Report – Sustainable Apparel Coalition in Japan～Introduction to SAC and Higg Index 2.0～

Date	Tuesday, May 20, 2014 14:00-17:30 JST in Tokyo
Venue	Lambuth Hall, Kwansei Gakuin University, Tokyo Marunouchi Campus Sapia Tower 10th Floor, 1-7-12 Marunouchi Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
Organizer	Caux Round Table Japan
Supported by	ASICS Corporation Teijin Frontier Co., Ltd. Toray Industries, Inc.
Language	Japanese and English

On May 20th, 2014, Caux Round Table Japan with the support of other Japanese members of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (ASICS Corporation, Teijin Frontier Co., Ltd. and Toray Industries, Inc.) held a seminar to introduce the Sustainable Apparel Coalition in Japan and the Higg Index 2.0. 40 people from 29 organizations participated in this conference and received an overview of the apparel and shoes industry by Jason Kibbey, Executive Director of SAC. They also received the lectures from the experience of the Japanese members of SAC on the adoption and implementation of the Higg Index from ASICS Corporation, Teijin Frontier Co., Ltd. and Toray Industries, Inc.

The conference began with an introduction by Hiroshi Ishida, Executive Director of Caux Round Table Japan (CRT Japan) who briefly exposed CRT's background and some Human Right issues addressed by Japanese Companies in Southeast Asia, enhancing the need for transparency and accountability. Jason Kibbey, Executive Director of Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) mentioned some recent events that illustrated a systemic failure of the apparel and shoe industry, appointing the need for “meaningful results at a systemic level at both social and environmental impacts” and that's the aim of SAC on the development and promotion of the Higg Index as an open indicator-based tool which allows suppliers, manufacturers, brands and retailers to evaluate materials, products, facilities and processes.

At the end of his presentation Jason Kibbey summarized three treats to the apparel and shoes industry:

Activist anger, which is going to show up in unexpected and unfair places unless we actually address the whole system.

Increasing pressure from campaigns must maintain our focus on holistic solutions across the whole industry.

Stakeholders are demanding disclosure which can emerge from the Higg Index

Responding to some of the attendants to the seminar Jason Kibbey clarified that the Higg Index has a strong focus in long term social and environmental impacts across the whole apparel industry and do not intend to replace other levels of internal audit which address specific issues.

After the introduction of the Higg Index the Japanese SAC member companies, George Yoshimoto, CSR Sustainability department Manager from ASICS Corporation, Ricky Miyatake, General Manager of Information Strategy, Environmental Programs from Teijin Frontier Co., Ltd. and Koji Sasaki, General Manager, Fibers & Textiles Green Innovation and Life Innovation Business Planning Dept. from Toray Industries, Inc. offered an extended example on the way they implemented Higg Index

Finally after an active Q&A session there was a closing remark by Hiroshi Ishida Executive Director of CRT-Japan. He pointed out that the answer for the initial question on: How can companies achieve an effective supply chain management within limited budget and limited resources? Was that of common information platform such as Higg Index could support by gathering data into one platform and making it available for multiple users, enabling companies to monitor and evaluate their suppliers more effectively and efficiently.

Caux Round Table Japan will be working closely with the Sustainable Apparel Coalition to find new ways of collaboration and development of the open indicator-based tool and the activation of SAC in Japan, Ishida concluded.