

RELEASE 5

UPDATE AND PROGRESS OF THE RAS IN PERU

Peru has a population of more than 5 million alpacas, equivalent to 75% of the world's population; Likewise, the Peruvian Breeder Textile Cluster is made up of an innovative and highly competitive processing and clothing industry, vertically integrated and with an international presence.

Alpaca fiber, throughout its value chain, involves more than 150 thousand families, in the stages of breeding, transformation, clothing and textile crafts. The links of breeding and crafts are coincidentally concentrated in the poorest areas of the country; these activities being vital for the subsistence of these populations. This supports the social and economic impact of alpaca livestock and the textile cluster that has developed on it.

In recent years, animal fibers have been questioned for the apparent impact of livestock activity on the environment; as well as the alleged animal abuse that could occur in the breeding processes and specifically in the shearing of its fiber. In June 2020, an NGO released on its social networks a video, evidently manipulated and taken out of context, which denounced animal abuse in the process of shearing alpacas, and encouraged the public not to consume garments made with its fiber.

That same month Textil Exchange (TE) activated the International Working Group (IWG) of the Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS) and the International Alpaca Association (AIA); as well as its technical ally the Alpaca Civil Association of Peru (ASCALPE), joined forces to bring the contributions and opinions of Peruvian Alpaca Breeders and professionals to the IWG of the RAS. In this way we had a leading participation in the work tables and technical meetings convened by TE; managing to present a proposal to implement the RAS in 3,000 alpaca farms nationwide, in a span of 5 years (2022 – 2027).

Two years have passed since RAS 1.0 was published by Textile Exchange and the results of the implementation and progress of RAS in Peru are interesting:

- Implementation and RAS Certification in more than 400 production units (alpaca breeding). The group certification modality has been mainly used, forming internal control systems in each group.
- In the 2021-2022 shearing campaign, approximately 250 thousand kilos of alpaca fiber certified with RAS have been marketed.
- In the 2022-2022 shearing campaign, approximately 350 thousand kilos of alpaca fiber3 certified with RAS have been marketed.
- In the next shearing campaign (2023-2024) we could reach 500 thousand kilos of certified alpaca fiber.
- 05 fiber processing companies have RAS certification: 02 styling plants, 02 spinners and a garment plant.
- We have two certifying entities operating in Peru; with Accredited Peruvian inspectors.
- A training program for RAS implementers led by the AIA and ASCALPE is being developed, which has the endorsement and sponsorship of Textil Exchange. In March, the first RAS Implementers course was held in Peru, in which 48 professionals and field technicians (many of them breeders) participated.
- We can affirm that it has been a challenge to achieve the implementation and certification of groups of small alpaca breeders of medium technological level, thanks to an arduous work of technical assistance and accompaniment of internal control systems.



- The RAS generates continuous improvement processes in the alpaca production centers. There is also evidence of an "Intangible Added Value" in the certified fiber lots; This will be maintained as long as the market recognizes differentiated prices.
- In the following years, the support of State Entities, Universities and NGOs, at the level of promotion, guidance, implementation, etc., will be indispensable to improve and expand the scope of the implementation of the RAS in Peru.

In relation to the environmental impact and carbon footprint of alpaca fiber, the claims of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) regarding various textile materials, cataloged in the Higg Index, has been harshly questioned by experts and the global textile community; ending with the removal of public information from the Higg Index in June 2022.

However, it has become clear to us the need to have objective studies and primary source that allow to reveal the true environmental impact of the Alpaca textile industry, particularly in the high Andean ecosystems, natural habitat of alpacas.

We are aware that despite having interesting results of the Alpaca Life Cycle Analysis Studies sponsored by Promperu and carried out by the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú and the Comparative Study carried out by SCS Global Service and sponsored by Incalpaca TPX; it is mandatory to have LCA studies carried out by experts of recognized international trajectory, with approved methodologies and that have the sponsorship and endorsement of neutral entities and referents.

For this reason, since September 2022 we have started conversations with Textile Exchange to have their endorsement and sponsorship in the realization of an LCA by an international expert with extensive experience and trajectory in this type of studies. We hope to start the LCA in the second half of 2023 and the Peruvian alpaca textile industry, as well as the Peruvian Government through Promperu are committed to its prompt realization.

We are sure that the results obtained will allow us to demonstrate the true impact of alpaca farming and the textile industry on the environment and in particular in the Peruvian Andes.

Arequipa, May 25, 2023

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