

DECATHLON

Brands: Artengo, B'twin, Caperlan, Decathlon, Domyos, Equarea, Flx, Fouganza, Inesis, Kalenji, Kipsta, Nabaiji, Newfeel, Novadry, Oxelo, Quechua, Rockrider, Simond, Solognac, Stratermic, Tribord, Wed'ze

Please note: Decathlon is the main retail arm of the Oxlane network. Oxlane, which manages the buying for these brands, responded to this survey.



COMPANY POSITION ON THE LIVING WAGE:

“Our company approach on any compliance program is a step by step approach aiming at improving life and working conditions within our supply chain. We agree with the principle of payment of a living wage throughout our supply chain.”

WHAT WE SAY:

A large company such as Oxlane cannot afford not to have a defined position on the crucial issue of living wage – a human right that the UN guidelines mandate companies to uphold. Acknowledging the principle of a living wage is not enough. Oxlane must develop a responsible policy that will allow the payment of a living wage to workers making its products, including work on responsible purchasing practices.



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IN MORE DETAIL:

Has living-wage benchmarks?

No.

Worker empowerment:

Oxylane says: “During audits, we check that the workers are free to join any union or collective bargain activities, and that there is a H&S committee as per law, or if there is no law we ask our suppliers to implement such a committee between workers representative and the management to set up social dialogue within our supply chain”.

Oxylane also gave a few other specific examples of actions to promote freedom of association or worker empowerment – beyond auditing and provision of information for workers.

Commitment and practices:

Although Oxylane acknowledges the principle of a living wage, the company has not adopted any living-wage benchmarks to measure this.

Oxylane says it has checked the Fair Wage Approach and considers itself to be “in line” with the recommendations.

Collaborative approach:

Oxylane gave no indication of work on the living wage with any other stakeholders.

Oxylane signed a joint public statement sent to the prime minister of Bangladesh in June 2012, asking for a regular rise in the minimum wage.

Strategy:

Oxylane says that it has a programme, based on a step-by-step approach, to ensure that fair wages are paid to workers. This programme uses a system of ranking the company’s suppliers from E to A. No more specific information was given on the implementation of this, or how it has helped to improve wages.

Oxylane says it plans to launch a study in 2014 to “analyse the need to go further” on the wage issue. It hopes this will give definition to its living-wage commitment.

Oxylane also says it has decided to focus work on safety issues.

Production overview:

Number of suppliers: Oxylane has over 1,000 suppliers.

Main production countries listed as: Asia, Northern Africa, Europe

Oxylane does not publish a full public list of the names and addresses of its supplier factories.

COMMENTS:

With more than 1,000 shops and 53,000 employees all over the world, plus a chiffre d’affaires of more than €7billion in 2012, a large retailer such as Decathlon has a responsibility to develop stronger CSR policies.

Oxylane says it takes a “step by step” approach to achieving a living wage, but this evasive language and the lack of detail to its programme make us think that not a lot is happening in practice. Oxylane seems to base the core of its strategy on audit systems. We didn’t see much evidence of work on purchasing practices or pricing commitments that allow payment of a living wage. We hope that Oxylane can start to take a more proactive approach to its responsibility to uphold the right to a living wage, rather than wait for its suppliers or other actors to start to pay more.

Oxylane seems to have taken into account the need to work on wages as a priority, but it currently lacks any strategy as to how it could use its role as a major buyer to bring about change. A strong definition of what the living wage should be and a strong policy to ensure its payment must be developed as soon as possible.

We look forward to reading the results of Oxylane’s own study on wages, as soon as these are available, and hearing about the strategy that will be implemented.