



# velbevare - Code of Conduct

## Introduction

Vel Bevare believes in social responsible business. Promoting decent working and environmental conditions in our supply chains is part of our company's efforts to act responsible. In pursuit of this aim we wish to cooperate closely with our suppliers and business partners.

The board of Vel Bevare has adopted this code of conduct to clarify what we expect and require of ourselves and our business partners. The code of conduct concerns conditions both in our own operations and in the supply chain, and sets out basic expectations and requirements relating to human rights, workers' rights and the environment as stated in international conventions and national legislation.

## Principles

Vel Bevare's suppliers are to supply goods and services that are produced in compliance with the code of conduct. Moreover, suppliers are to communicate the code to their sub-suppliers and to promote compliance by the sub-suppliers. Vel Bevare recognises that supply chains can be complex, and that this may make it difficult to gain insight into working and environmental conditions throughout the chain. However, Vel Bevare expects its suppliers and business partners to make systematic, targeted efforts to ensure compliance. We will support our suppliers and partners in this regard.

Vel Bevare recognises that suppliers may not currently be in compliance with the code of conduct. In cases of non-compliance, Vel Bevare or a party authorised by our company, and the supplier will jointly set up a corrective action plan. The plan will describe corrective actions, name of responsible person, and the implementation deadlines. The contract will only be terminated if the supplier remains unwilling to remedy non-compliances following repeated requests to do so. Vel Bevare will give emphasis to working and environmental conditions when selecting new suppliers.

At Vel Bevare's request, a supplier must be able to document compliance with the code of conduct, or that it is working to achieve compliance. Such documentation may be provided through self-declaration forms, surveys of working and environmental conditions or meetings with Vel Bevare. The supplier will be obliged to provide contact information for any sub-supplier that Vel Bevare wishes to inspect.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## Requirements relating to own business

Vel Bevare will continually seek to improve its policies and business practices to assist its suppliers in complying with the code of conduct.

Neither Vel Bevare nor any of its employees shall ever offer or accept illegal or unlawful monetary gifts or other forms of remuneration in order to secure business-related or private benefit, or benefit for customers, agents or suppliers.

Vel Bevare and Vel Bevare's suppliers shall avoid partners that operate in countries which are the subject of widespread international boycott pressure.

## Requirement relating to working and environmental conditions

This code of conduct is based on internationally acknowledged UN and ILO conventions, and sets out a minimum standard. The employment legislation applicable to the place of production must be respected. Where national laws and regulations cover a topic that is also dealt with in this code of conduct, the higher standard shall apply.

### **1. Freely Chosen Employment** (*ILO Conventions Nos. 29 and 105*)

1.1 There shall be no forced, bonded or involuntary prison labour

1.2 Workers shall not be required to lodge "deposits" or identity papers with their employer and shall be free to leave their employer after reasonable notice.

### **2. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining** (*ILO Conventions Nos. 87, 98, 135 and 154*)

2.1 Workers, without distinction, shall have the right to join or form trade unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively.

2.2 Workers representatives shall not be discriminated and shall have access to carry out their representative functions in the workplace.

2.3 Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under law, the employer shall facilitate, and not hinder, the development of parallel means for independent and free association and bargaining.

### **3. No Child Labour** (*UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ILO Conventions Nos. 138, 182 and 79, and ILO Recommendation No. 146*)

3.1 Children and young persons under the age of 18 shall not be engaged in labour that is hazardous to their health or safety, including night work.

3.2 Children under the age of 15 (14 or 16 in certain countries) shall not be engaged in labour that is detrimental to their education.

3.3 New recruitment of child labour in infringing of the above mentioned conventions is unacceptable. If child labour, as described above, is already in existence, sustained efforts shall be made to redress the situation as quickly as possible. However, the children

concerned shall be given the possibility of earning a livelihood, as well as acquiring an education until they are no longer of compulsory school age.

**4. No Discrimination** (*ILO Conventions Nos. 100 and 111 and the UN Convention on Discrimination Against Women*)

4.1 There shall be no discrimination at the work place based on ethnic background, religion, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.

4.2 Measures shall be established to protect workers from sexually intrusive, threatening, insulting or exploitative behaviour, and from discrimination or termination of employment on unjustifiable grounds, e.g. marriage, pregnancy, parenthood or HIV status.

**5. No Harsh or Inhumane Treatment**

5.1 Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation, shall be prohibited.

**6. Safe and Hygienic Working Conditions** (*ILO Convention No. 155 and ILO Recommendation No. 164*)

6.1 The working environment shall be safe and hygienic, bearing in mind the prevailing knowledge of the industry and of any specific hazards. Adequate steps shall be taken to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in, the course of work, by minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment.

6.2 Workers shall receive regular and documented health and safety training, and such training shall be repeated for new workers.

6.3 Access to clean toilet facilities and to potable water, and, if appropriate, sanitary facilities for food storage shall be provided.

6.4 Accommodation, where provided, shall be clean, safe and adequately ventilated, and shall have access to clean toilet facilities and potable water.

**7. Adequate Wages** (*ILO Convention No. 131*)

7.1 Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week shall meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standards, whichever is higher. Wages should always be enough to meet basic needs.

7.2 All workers shall be provided with a written and comprehensible contract outlining their wage conditions and method of payments before entering employment.

7.3 Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted.

**8. No Excessive Working Hours** (*ILO Convention No. 1 and 14*)

8.1 Working hours shall comply with national laws and benchmark industry standards, whichever affords greater protection. It is recommended that working hours do not exceed 48 hours per week (8 hours per day).

8.2 Workers shall be provided with at least one day off for every 7 day period.

8.3 Overtime shall be limited. Recommended maximum overtime is 12 hours per week.

8.4 Workers shall always receive overtime pay, minimum in accordance with current legislation.

## **9. Providing Regular Employment**

9.1 Obligations to employees under international conventions and social security laws, and regulations arising from the regular employment relationship, shall not be avoided through the use of short term contracting (such as contract labour, casual labour or day labour), sub-contractors or other labour relationships.

9.2 All workers are entitled to a contract of employment that shall be written in a language they understand.

9.3 The duration and content of apprenticeship programmes shall be clearly defined.

## **CONDITIONS OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE**

### **10. Consideration for Marginalized Populations**

10.1. Production and extraction of raw materials for production shall not contribute to the destruction of the resources and income base for marginalized populations, such as in claiming large land areas or other natural resources on which these populations are dependent.

### **11. Protection of the Environment**

11.1. Environmental measures shall be taken into consideration throughout the production and distribution chain ranging from the production of raw material to the consumer sale. Local, regional and global environmental aspects shall be considered. The local environment at the production site shall not be exploited or degraded by pollution.

11.2 National and international environmental legislation and regulations shall be respected.

11.3 Relevant discharge permits shall be obtained where required.

11.4 Hazardous chemicals and other substances shall be carefully managed.

### **12. Management systems of suppliers**

The management system is a key to the implementation of the code of conduct. Vel Bevare emphasises the importance of suppliers having systems that support such implementation. Vel Bevare's expectations in this regard are summed up in the following measures:

- The supplier should make a centrally placed employee responsible for the implementation of the code of conduct in the supplier's business.
- The supplier must make the code of conduct known in all relevant parts of its organisation.
- The supplier must obtain Vel Bevare's consent prior to outsourcing production or parts of production to a sub-supplier/contractor, if this has not been agreed in advance.
- The supplier must be able to give an account of where goods ordered by Vel Bevare are produced.

### **13. Animal welfare**

1. Ethical aspects such as traceability, sustainability, safety, animal welfare, and labour and farm conditions ought to be taken into account when choosing suppliers of animal fibres (e.g. wool, mohair, silk)

2. Only synthetic fur is to be used in the production of goods supplied to Vel Bevare.
3. Leather products ought to be manufactured using only the skins of utility animals such as pigs, sheep and cows, where the animals having been originally slaughtered for the meat market.
4. Vel Bevare shall not purchase leather, skins or animal fibres from areas known for bad farming practices or for transporting animals under inhumane conditions. The use of unethical and inhumane production processes such as mulesing is not in accordance with Vel Bevare's animal welfare policy.
5. Vel Bevare is against animal testing and encourages all business partners to follow our policy on this matter.

Oslo, 21.12.2011