

## **Italian Wool Textile Association (IWTA) endorses the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (AWSS)**

The Italian Wool Textile Association (IWTA), representing the entire Italian and International wool textile value chain—from fibre traders and spinners to weavers, finishers, and leading luxury brands, including members from Australia, China, Japan and South Africa — expresses its full endorsement of the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (AWSS) developed by AWEX.

For over a century, IWTA members have proudly sourced Australian wool, a fibre globally recognised for its quality, performance, and versatility. Today, as sustainability, transparency, and animal welfare become essential priorities for consumers, brands, and supply chains, IWTA welcomes the AWSS as a credible, practical, and forward-looking framework that meets these expectations while strengthening the global reputation of Australian wool.

IWTA particularly values that the AWSS SustainaWOOL program sets clear and measurable sustainability standards covering environmental care, animal welfare, and social responsibility. The scheme ensures independent on-farm verification, providing robust and credible results, while integrating digital traceability tools for certified bales through innovative technologies. Through this comprehensive approach, the AWSS helps strengthen trust and integrity across the entire global wool supply chain.

Beyond these core strengths, IWTA highlights three key elements that make the AWSS distinctive within the landscape of wool certification:

1. **Industry ownership:** unlike other private schemes, AWSS is owned and managed by the Australian wool industry itself, ensuring alignment with the realities of production, transparency in governance, and long-term commitment to continuous improvement.
2. **Quality integration:** AWSS uniquely incorporates the professional oversight of Australian wool classers, directly linking sustainability assurance to the intrinsic quality standards of Australian wool — an aspect not addressed by other programs.
3. **Next-generation traceability:** through the introduction of the e-Bale system, featuring a QR code on each wool pack, AWSS enables the implementation of blockchain-based traceability. This innovation moves beyond the traditional and often unreliable “chain of custody” approach, offering a far more efficient, transparent, and tamper-proof traceability solution.



IWTA believes that these features make AWSS a critical platform for scaling the availability of certified Australian wool that meets the highest expectations of brands and consumers in terms of sustainability, provenance, and product excellence.

While IWTA supports a competitive landscape among certification schemes, it also encourages collaboration and interoperability between AWSS and other international standards where practical — to increase the volume of certified wool available and to simplify compliance for both Italian and Australian supply chain participants.

IWTA will continue to actively promote and support the AWSS within its network of companies, brands, and stakeholders, reaffirming its commitment to advancing sustainability, quality, and digital innovation across the global wool industry.

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