

SDEX Retailer Recommendations for Brands

How to Align with Retailer Expectations on Relevant Product Sustainability Data

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Created by the Outdoor Retail Climate Commitment Group (ORCC)

Learn more about [ORCC](#). Read the [ORCC 2024 Report](#).

SDEX Overview

The SDEX Standard is a defined framework of agreed data points, structures, and definitions for exchanging sustainability information between brands and retailers. The standard was developed in response to increasing retailer questionnaires and evolving European compliance requirements, identifying and attempting to reduce overlap and duplication. SDEX establishes a harmonized data structure to support consistent, comparable, and verifiable product and brand-level sustainability information.

Retailer Guidance Overview

SDEX brings brand and product sustainability data into a shared standardized framework which aims to reduce administrative burden, improve data quality, and strengthen information readiness across the value.

To maximize potential, it is helpful if outdoor retailers and brands align with an agreed upon SDEX procedure, regarding the collection and processing of data. This guide has been created to provide brands with further insights into the timing of data transfer, and which data points are most essential for retailers.

This guidance was created in a cross-industry exchange between outdoor brands and retailers. Internal Data, IT, Sustainability and Compliance teams can use this document to align expectations on sharing product sustainability data.

Disclaimer: This document is general guidance to support operational data exchange. This document does not contain any legal obligations. Brands and retailers should work together on an individual basis to determine the preferred data transfer process. Each retailer independently determines its commercial strategy, data needs, and timelines.

Retailer Guidance Objective

The objective of this guide is to improve the clarity, quality, and timely availability of relevant information across the value chain. This document outlines the minimum requirements for key data points when completing the SDEX questionnaire. These essential data points will enable retailers to make informed and compliant buying and

listing decisions, set up products accurately in their systems, and advertise products in a legally compliant way

Why Product Data Matters

Retailers rely on structured product data to enable legal robustness, sales readiness, system integration, and consumer decision making.

1. **Legal Robustness**
Regulatory frameworks (e.g. PFAS content information (France, in effect since 01/26), EU Empowering Consumers Directive (in effect 09/26), Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (expected for 2027)) require consistent and verifiable information.
2. **Sales Readiness**
Product pages require accurate and compliant information before publication. Only information that is provided in a complete, and verifiable format can be used in sales communication.
3. **System Integration**
ERP and PIM systems operate efficiently when data is structured and complete.
4. **Consumer Decision Making**
We know from market research data that most consumers consider sustainability factors such as labels during their purchasing decisions. This shapes brand and product image.

General Data Provision Requirements

All data provided through SDEX should be:

1. *Structured and Complete*
Data should be submitted in the SDEX format, with all essential data points completed.
2. *Verifiable*
Information, particularly compliance and chemical-related data, must be supported by appropriate documentation.
3. *Legally compliant*
Data and claims must comply with applicable regulations, particularly those relating to sustainability and environmental claims (e.g. Empowering Consumers Directive, ESPR, etc.)
4. *Consistent*
Product sustainability data in SDEX should use standardized definitions to enable comparable and high-quality data exchange.

Recommended Data Structure and Frequency

To create transparency and predictability, retailers generally distinguish between four data categories and collection frequencies. There are two key stages to note: Before Order (Sell-In) and Before Sale (Sell-Out).

Data Category	Purpose	Update Frequency	Stage
Sell-In Data	Supports listing decisions and system setup	Required each season	Before order
Sell-Out Data	Supports product publication and sales	Required each season	Before sale or after order
Company Data	Supports company-level transparency, including initiative memberships, certifications, and compliance status	Required annually or when relevant changes occur	Ongoing company-level reporting
Climate Targets	Supports transparency on climate commitments and progress	Required annually and when significant updates occur	Annual sustainability reporting

Priority Data Points by Category

Sell-In Data

- Product master data commonly exchanged before ordering, such as EAN, COO, customs code, weight, and prices.
- Relevant compliance and transparency data, including basic material composition, recycled content percentage, certifications, PFAS status where relevant, and evidence-supported chemical information.

Sell-Out Data

- Material Composition on Component Level: Respective material certification (if available) with certification number and verification body in case the certifying institution requires it to be displayed
- Total recycled content percentage.
- Country of origin for cutting and sewing, knitting or weaving, dyeing, and printing.
- Product-level chemical information.
- Facility sustainability certification.

Additionally, Sell-Out data is composed of extended regulatory and consumer-facing data. E.g. Extended material composition, GPSR, certificates with references, product images,

description and key features, care instructions. This is to be delivered individually as per known channel to the retailer and not part of this guidance.

Company Data

- Brand-level initiative memberships.
- Company certifications and member certifications.
- Compliance status and supporting documentation.

Climate Targets

- Validated climate targets.
- Progress updates against stated commitments.
- Supporting evidence, such as science-based target validation, where available.

Shared Understanding and Moving Forward

This guidance establishes the foundation for brands and retailers to work effectively together. It reflects aligned retailer expectations and aims to provide a clear orientation and greater transparency in data quality and exchange – ensuring efficient use of resources on both sides and supporting collaboration across the value chain. Thank you for shaping the path towards a more efficient and transparent future.