

Now ideas for wellness

meiji

DATE : 22 December 2023

TO : Mr. Beatriz Balbin
Chief
Special Procedures Branch
OHCHR

E-MAIL : ohchr-registry@un.org

FORM : Shinji Matsuoka
Executive Officer
Sustainable Management Dept.
Meiji Holdings Co., Ltd.

E-MAIL : yasushi.sakamoto@meiji.com

PAGE : 7 (Including this page)

SUBJECT : Reply regarding AL OTH 121/2023

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.

- In 2022, we created and published a mill list based on mill information obtained from the official website of Nisshin OilliO Group, Ltd., a supplier.
- In response to the OHCHR inquiry, we reconfirmed with Nisshin OilliO Group that raw materials delivered to us by Nisshin OilliO Group to date do not include any products from Ocho Sur P.SAC (see the file “Response to Meiji Holdings from The Nisshin OilliO Group 12-13-2023.pdf”).
- Therefore, our position is that we have not purchased any products from Ocho Sur P.SAC.

2. Please provide information on the human rights due diligence policies and processes established by your company to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their human rights impacts of their activities, including in its supply chain, in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Please clarify how your company requires suppliers to conduct human rights due diligence in order to respect human rights and the environment, including those of Indigenous Peoples and human rights defenders.

- In 2019, we began identifying human rights risks in the value chain based on advice from outside experts, formulating the Meiji Group Policy on Human Rights. As part of this process, we conducted assessments from the perspective of severity and likelihood of occurrence affecting human rights, identifying prominent human rights issues in our operations and supply chain.
- Meiji Group human rights due diligence reflects our commitment to human rights based on the Meiji Group Policy on Human Rights. Human rights due diligence is an ongoing process to assess the negative impact of Meiji Group corporate activities on human rights. We identify

issues, provide feedback of assessment results to internal processes, implement appropriate measures, track and evaluate whether actions taken are appropriate, disclose appropriate information, and communicate with external stakeholders. We cycle through this process to ensure respect for human rights and sustainable operations across the Meiji Group.

*Meiji Group Policy on Human Rights

[Meiji Group Policy on Human Rights](#)

*human rights due diligence website

[Human Rights | Meiji Group](#)

*Meiji Group Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement

[Meiji Group Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement FY2022](#)

- The Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct clearly states the following regarding human rights, which we explain to suppliers to ensure that they are well informed.
 - (i) Suppliers shall respect international standards on human rights and labor based on the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
 - (ii) Suppliers shall respect the land rights of indigenous and local peoples when using or expanding land. These rights include obtaining the consent of impacted parties through prior, informed, and unconstrained decision-making.

*Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct

[Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct](#)

- We conduct regular sustainable procurement surveys (EcoVadis, Meiji original questionnaire) for suppliers to confirm the status of their efforts in respecting human rights, requesting improvements as necessary. Survey results and improvement measures are reported at a meeting attended by the director responsible for human rights measures and who serves as chief sustainability officer (CSO).

3. Please provide information on any steps taken by your company or any steps that it is considering to ensure the protection of human rights defenders, journalists, and groups that may be in situations of vulnerability, such as Indigenous Peoples.

- The Palm Oil Procurement Guideline, the Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct, and other documents clearly state requirements for respecting the ownership or land use rights of indigenous and local peoples. At the same time, we provide explanations to suppliers and engage with suppliers in socially responsible procurement activities.

* Palm Oil Procurement Guideline

[Palm Oil Procurement Guideline \(meiji.com\)](#)

*Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct

[Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct](#)

4. Please provide information on the measures that your company has taken or is planning to take to address the concerns mentioned and to provide remedial measures to address the negative human rights impacts caused by its activities. Also, provide information about measures implemented against deforestation occurred across your company's business relationships.

- As stated in 1. above, we purchased no product from Ocho Sur. If we become aware of such a situation in the future, we will approach the supplier to take remedial action and make improvements.
- We scrutinize palm oil supplier mill list information as it relates to our palm oil procurement.
- Based on requests arising during a dialogue conducted with an NGO in 2021, we added the NDPE policy (No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation) to our Palm Oil Procurement Guideline, engaging with suppliers in socially responsible procurement activities.

* Palm Oil Procurement Guideline

[Palm Oil Procurement Guideline \(meiji.com\)](#)

- We clearly state our support for zero deforestation in the Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct and explain our position to suppliers directly to encourage collaboration and cooperation.

*Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct

[Meiji Group Supplier Code of Conduct](#)

5. Please describe the measures that your company has taken or is planning to take to prevent the recurrence of such situations in the future.

- We publish a palm oil mill list and continue to collect mill information on a regular basis to update this list.
- We obtain information regularly from the RSPO, Business & Human Rights Resource Center, and other sources, taking action as required.
- We intend to develop No-deforestation policy in 2024 to formalize our commitment to no deforestation.

6. Please provide information on whether your company publicly discloses how it is addressing human rights risks and impacts connected with its supply chain.

- We pursue the following initiatives to address human rights issues and resolutions related to the procurement of major raw materials.

A) Raw Milk

The Meiji Group conducts unique dairy farmer management support activities that we call Meiji Dairy Advisory (MDA). This program supports sustainable dairy farm management and creates environments in which every person works fairly and derives satisfaction from their work. In the fiscal year 2021, we defined a new KPI to conduct MDA at least 400 times per year for a cumulative 2,150 times by the fiscal year 2023. During the consolidated fiscal year 2022, we conducted MDA 477 times, bringing the cumulative total to 1,900 times. We also conducted fact-finding surveys regarding foreign trainees, focusing on farmers engaged in MDA initiatives. In addition, the Meiji Group participates in information exchanges on topics that include human rights issues in the dairy industry in cooperation with industry associations in Japan and other dairy industry manufacturers. In this way, we support industry-wide efforts to contribute to the SDGs and consider human rights.

B) Cocoa

In 2006, the Meiji Group began Meiji Cacao Support, a unique support program for cocoa farmers. We aim to achieve 100% procurement of Meiji Sustainable Cocoa Beans by the fiscal year 2026. Meiji Sustainable Cocoa Beans are cocoa beans produced in regions where we provide farmer support through this program. In the consolidated fiscal year 2022, we procured 62% of our beans from these farmers. In Ghana, the risk of child labor is high. Here, we introduced the Child Labour Monitoring and Remediation System (CLMRS), which is a child labor monitoring and remediation system developed by the International Cocoa Initiative, a non-profit organization that aims to eradicate child labor and forced labor in cocoa-producing regions.

C) Palm Oil

The Meiji Group supports the No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation (NDPE) policy in addressing social issues such as deforestation, peatland destruction and forced labor in palm oil production areas. In 2016, we joined the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO),

which requires respect for human rights. We aim to achieve 100% procurement of RSPO-certified palm oil by the fiscal year 2023. By October 2022, all Meiji Group factories involved in palm oil procurement (18 domestic and five overseas plants) completed the acquisition of RSPO supply chain certification. Our certified palm oil procurement ratio reached 90% in the consolidated fiscal year 2022.

D) Paper

The Meiji Group is shifting to environmentally friendly paper for packaging materials used in products, publications, and office supplies. In the fiscal year 2023, we aim to use 100% forest-certified paper (FSC, PEFC) and recycled paper. FSC and PEFC require respect for human rights for certification. By the end of the consolidated fiscal year 2022, we had switched to 98% forest-certified paper.

E) Soybeans

Through research on soybean procurement volumes and supplier procurement areas, the Meiji Group identified social issues, including deforestation and forced labor in soybean production areas. In March 2023, we established the Soybean Procurement Guidelines. Based on these guidelines, we work with suppliers on socially responsible soybean procurement activities.

*Meiji Group Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement

[Meiji Group Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement FY2022](#)

*Integrated Report

[Integrated Report 2023 \(meiji.com\)](#)