HIGG MSI Integration Guide

How to integrate MSI data into PLM/PIM safely, with governance and claims readiness

What you will get in this guide

- What Higg MSI is used for
- Integration patterns (library sync, mapping, calculations)
- Version control and data governance
- Guidance for external claims and responsible use

Disclaimer: This document is an informational overview and does not constitute legal advice. Always verify obligations against the latest EU texts and sector-specific delegated/implementing acts.

1. Executive overview

Higg MSI (Materials Sustainability Index) is used by product teams to compare the environmental impact of different materials within the Higg Index toolset. In practice, brands often want MSI values to flow into PLM/PIM to support material selection and reporting.

> Integration is not just a technical API exercise: governance, licensing/terms, and claims substantiation rules (especially for consumer-facing marketing) matter.

2. Common integration patterns

Pattern	What it enables	Notes
Reference library sync	Bring MSI material library into PLM	Versioning is critical (e.g., MSI v3.x updates)
Material mapping	Link internal material IDs to MSI IDs	Avoid duplicates; maintain a mapping table and stewardship
Scenario calculation	Compute product material impact rollups	Define methodology boundaries and auditability
Export for reporting	Feed analytics dashboards and sustainability reports	Maintain trace to source version and date

3. Data governance and version control

To keep PLM and reporting consistent, treat MSI values as versioned reference data:

- Store: MSI dataset version, last updated date, and source record ID alongside each value.
- Lock: product development milestones to a specific MSI version for reproducibility.
- Audit: keep a change log when materials or factors update (e.g., cotton dataset updates).

4. Compliance note: how you communicate MSI outputs

Regulators and consumer protection authorities can scrutinize sustainability claims. The Dutch ACM published sector guidelines specifically about using Higg MSI in communications. If MSI-driven numbers are shown externally, ensure wording, context, and substantiation align with local rules and the latest guidance.

5. Implementation blueprint (PLM + MSI)

Component	Recommendation	Why it matters
Connector	Scheduled sync + delta updates	Keeps reference library current and reduces manual work
Mapping UI	Stewardship workflow for material matching	Prevents wrong IDs and duplicated materials

Component	Recommendation	Why it matters
Calculation service	API service for rollups and product footprints	Centralizes logic; makes audits easier
Permissions	Role-based visibility for MSI values	Avoids mis-use and protects licensed data

Nexo recommendation: integrate MSI as a governed reference dataset with strong versioning, rather than copying values into spreadsheets.

References

- Cascale (HowToHigg), 'Higg MSI' overview — https://howtohigg.cascale.org/higg-index-tools/higg-product-tools/higg-msi/ (accessed 2026-02-13).
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