53.05 - Coconut, abaca (Manila hemp or *Musa textilis Nee*), ramie and other vegetable textile fibres, not elsewhere specified or included, raw or processed but not spun; tow, noils and waste of these fibres (including yarn waste and garnetted stock).

This heading covers vegetable textile fibres obtained from the leaves or fruit of certain monocotyledonous plants (e.g., coconut, abaca or sisal) or, in the case of ramie, obtained from the stems of dicotyledonous plants of the family *urticaceae*, and not specified or included in any other heading.

These fibres are in most cases coarser and thicker than the textile bast fibres of heading 53.03.

Generally they are classified here whether raw, prepared for spinning (e.g., carded or combed into slivers), or in the form of tow or fibrous waste (obtained mainly during combing), yarn waste (obtained mainly during spinning or weaving) or garnetted stock (obtained from rags or scrap rope or cordage, etc.).

However, fibres obtained from vegetable materials which, when raw or in certain other forms, fall in Chapter 14 (in particular kapok), are classified here **only** when they have undergone treatment indicating their use as textile materials, e.g., when they have been crushed, carded or combed in preparation for spinning.

The vegetable textile fibres classified here include :

Coconut. Coconut fibres (coir) are obtained from the external covering of the nut and are coarse, brittle and brown in colour. They are classified here whether in the mass or in bundles.

Abaca. Abaca (or Manila hemp) fibres are obtained from the sheathing leaf stalks of a certain type of banana tree (the *Musa textilis Nee*) cultivated mainly in the Philippine Islands. The fibres are obtained by scraping away the non-fibrous matter with knives or mechanically, and are classified here whether or not combed or otherwise prepared for spinning (e.g., in the form of slivers or rovings).

Manila hemp fibres are very resistant to the action of weather and sea water and their main use is therefore for the making of ships' cables or fishing nets. They are also spun into yarns for weaving into coarse fabrics or for making hat braids.

Ramie. Ramie fibres are obtained from the bast of various plants, mainly the *Boehmeria tenacissima* (Rhea, green ramie) and the *Boehmeria nivea* (China grass, white ramie), cultivated mainly in the Far East.

The stalks are cut at ground level. Then, sometimes after preliminary drying, they are decorticated either by hand or mechanically to remove the skin of the stalk and to break and remove the inner woody part, the ramie then being obtained in the form of long ribbons. Decortication is followed by a process (generally by boiling in alkali) to remove the gummy pectic substance which binds the fibres together. The resulting fibres are then wrung out and dried and become pearly white.

Alfa or **esparto**. Alfa or esparto fibres are obtained from the leaves of the plants. They are, however, classified here only when they have been rolled, crushed, combed or otherwise processed in a way indicating their use for textile purposes. The untreated leaves are **excluded** (**Chapter 14**).

Aloe fibre.

Haiti hemp(*Agave foetida*).

Henequen (*Agave fourcroydes*).

Istle or **Ixtle** (Tampico or Mexican hemp). These fibres, extracted from the *Agave funkiana* or the *Agave lechugilla*, are used mainly in brush-making and usually fall in **heading 14.04**, but they are classified here when they have been processed in a way indicating their use for textile purposes.

Maguey or **Cantala**. These fibres are obtained from the *Agave cantala* (Philippines or Indonesia) or the *Agave tequilana* (Mexico).

Mauritius hemp (*Furcraea gigantea*), also known as piteira (Brazil).

New Zealand hemp or **flax** (*Phormium tenax*).

Peat fibre(sometimes known as Berandine or Beraudine peat). The fibres are obtained from a ligneous peat. They only fall here, however, when they have been treated in a manner indicating their use for textile purposes; otherwise they are **excluded** (**heading 27.03**).

Pineapple. The fibres, also known as Curana (Amazonas), Pina (Mexico) or Silkgrass, are obtained from leaves of pineapple plants of the *Bromeliaceae* family, which also includes fibres of Pita floja or Colombia pita or Arghan, Caroa (Brazil), Karates, etc.

Pita (*Agave americana*).

Sansevieria, also known as Bowstring hemp or Ife hemp.

Sisal (*Agave sisalana*).

Typha. The fibres are obtained from leaves of the Typha or cattail plant. These fibres should not be confused with the short seed hairs from the same plant which are used as a stuffing material in life-jackets, toys, etc., and are **excluded** (**heading 14.04**).

Yucca.

Bleaching or dyeing does not affect classification of the products in this heading.