

# Interactive workshop: Integrating credible sustainability standards into trade policy

3 June 2025



# Welcomes & Opening remarks

# Welcome and housekeeping

## Facilities and fire exits

› The restrooms and emergency exits are located on either side of the Sausalito room. On one side, you will find the men's restroom, and on the other side, the women's restroom.

## Wi-fi

› The Wi-Fi is open and does not require a password. Your guests can connect directly to the network "N'vY" or "conference."

## Refreshments

Coffee breaks & Lunch will be served in the Foyer Sausalito

## Questions about the event?

› Speak to Sofia, or any other ISEAL and IISD staff member



# Today's agenda

- › 9h00 – 9h10: Welcome & **Opening remarks**
- › 9h10 – 10h30: **Session 1**: The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy – State of play
- › 10h30 – 11h00: **Coffee & Tea** break
- › 11h00 – 12h30: **Session 2**: Identifying and leveraging credible VSS: tools and frameworks
- › 12h30 – 13h30: **Lunch break** with an optional 30-minute session by Evidensia
- › 13h30 – 15h00: **Interactive Session**: World Café
- › 15h00 – 15h15: **Closing** remarks





# Opening remarks



**Karin Kreider,**  
Executive Director  
ISEAL



**Nathalie Bernasconi,**  
Vice-President,  
Global Strategies and  
Managing Director, Europe,  
IISD



# **Session 1: The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy – State of play**

**Presentation by Joshua Wickerham, Senior Advisor,  
Outreach and Engagement, ISEAL**

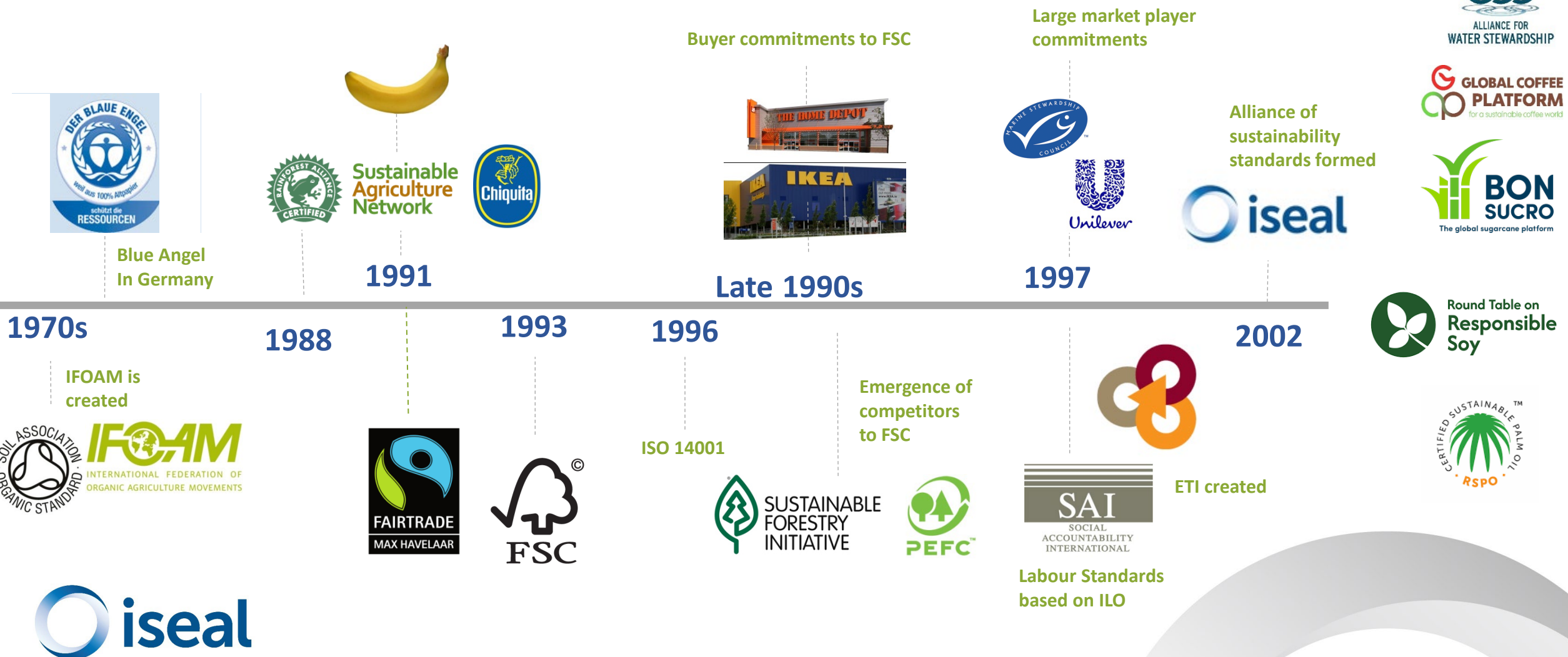
**“What are voluntary sustainability standards (VSS)?”**

# Core elements of a sustainability system



# Sustainability systems timeline

... and many more since



# Introducing ISEAL



We empower sustainability systems (standards and similar tools) to drive global change.



We believe market-led sustainability efforts are critical to addressing sustainability challenges at scale and achieving the SDGs.



Credible and effective sustainability standards deliver positive social, economic and environmental impacts.



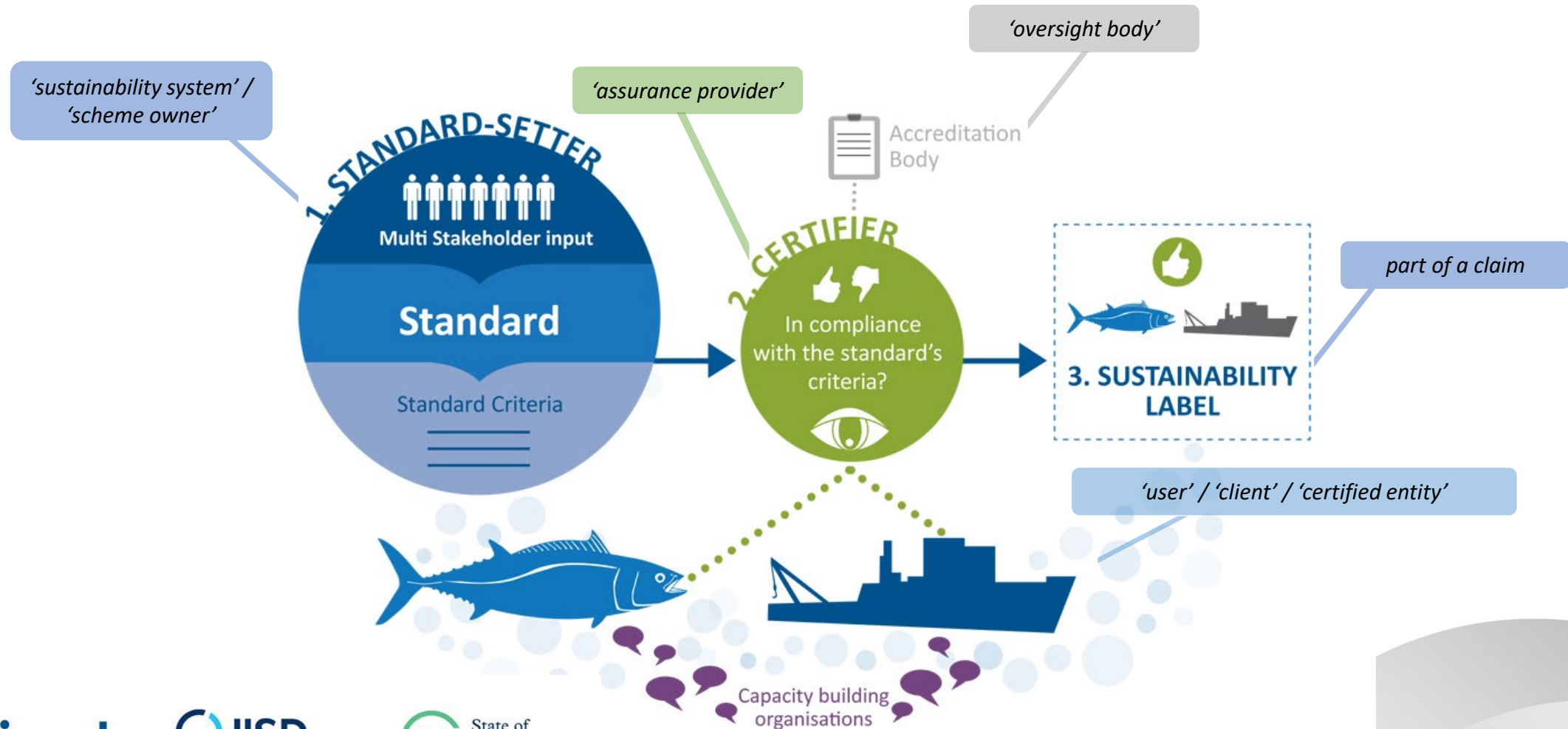
# ISEAL Community: Ambitious, collaborative and transparent sustainability systems

47 Voluntary Sustainability Systems, or Voluntary Sustainability Standard (VSS) across many sectors. Global and national standards:

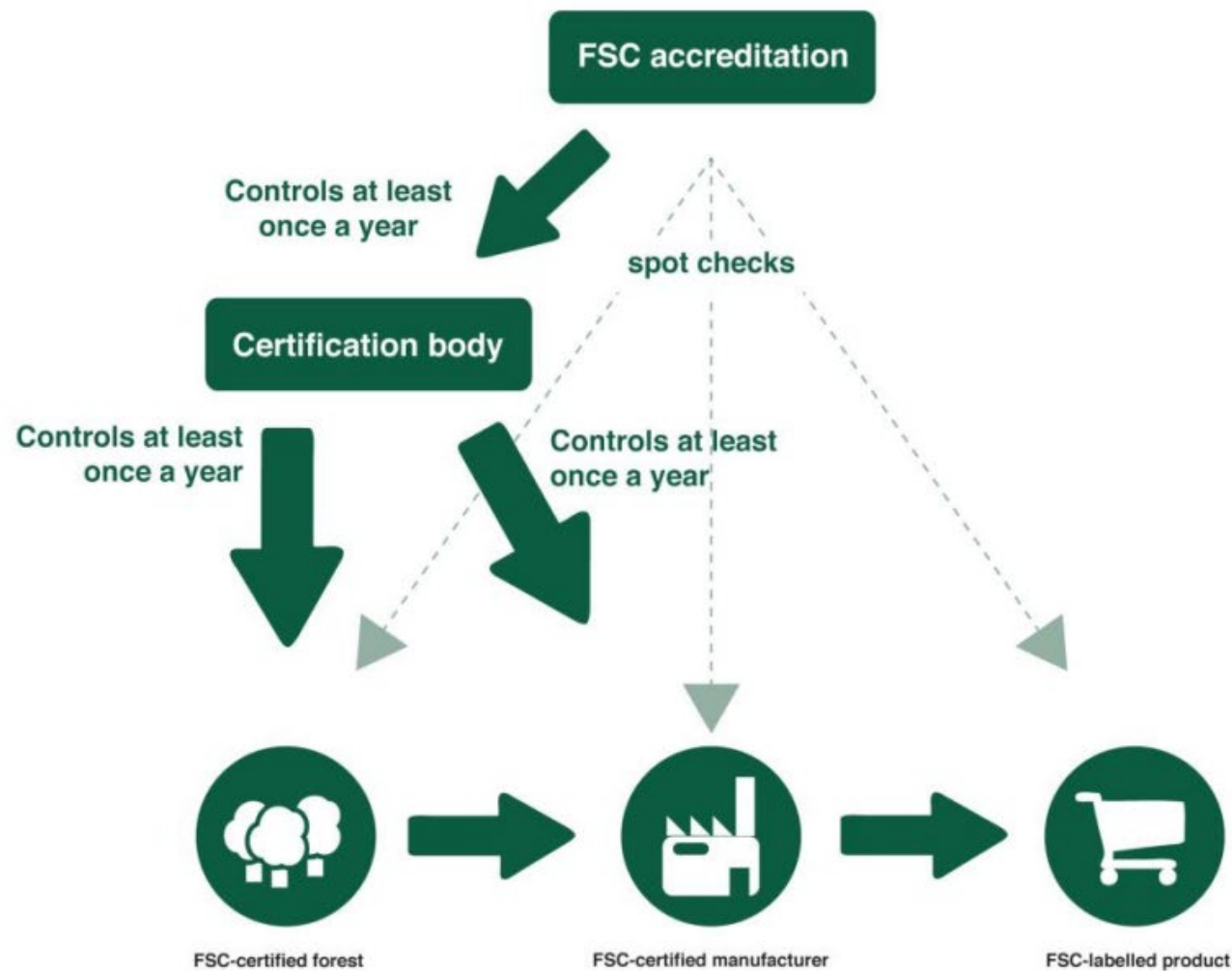
- › Fisheries and aquaculture
- › Agriculture and biotrade
- › Textiles
- › Climate and carbon
- › Forestry
- › Water stewardship
- › Infrastructure
- › Biomaterials
- › Extractives (minerals and metals) and jewellery
- › Tourism and sport

# A traditional voluntary sustainability standard (VSS)

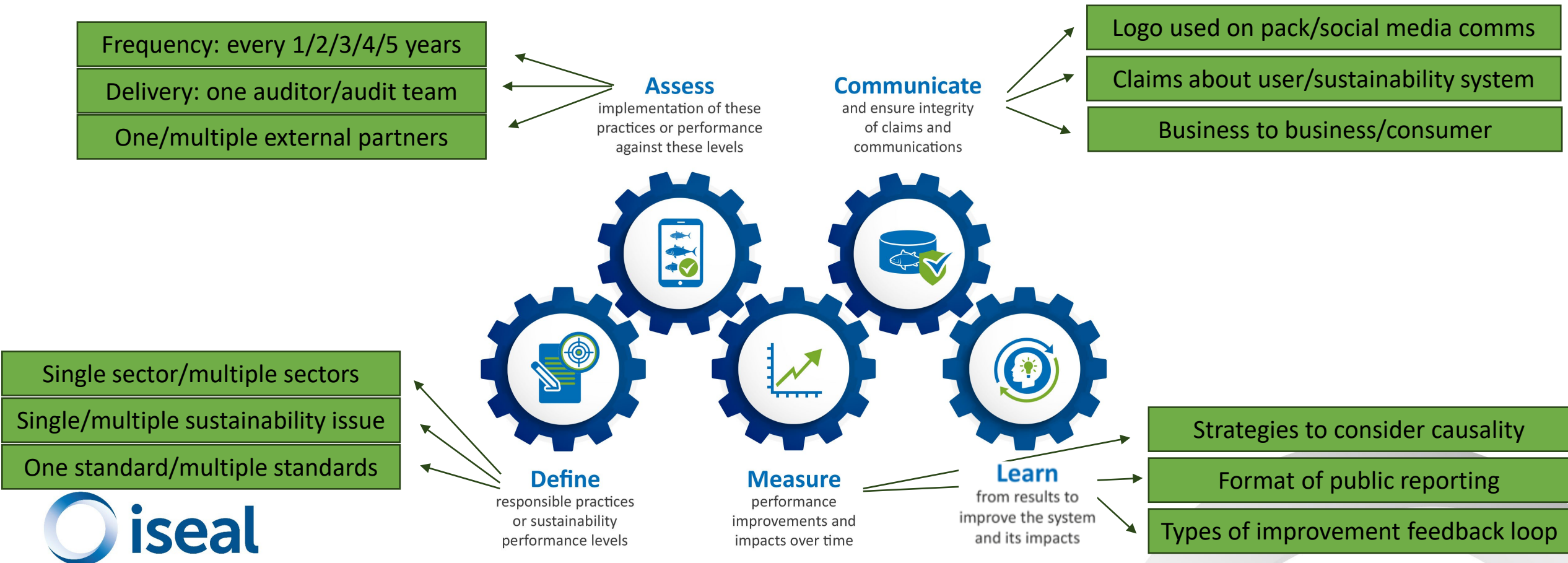
Many pieces, working together supporting global value chains and sustainable trade



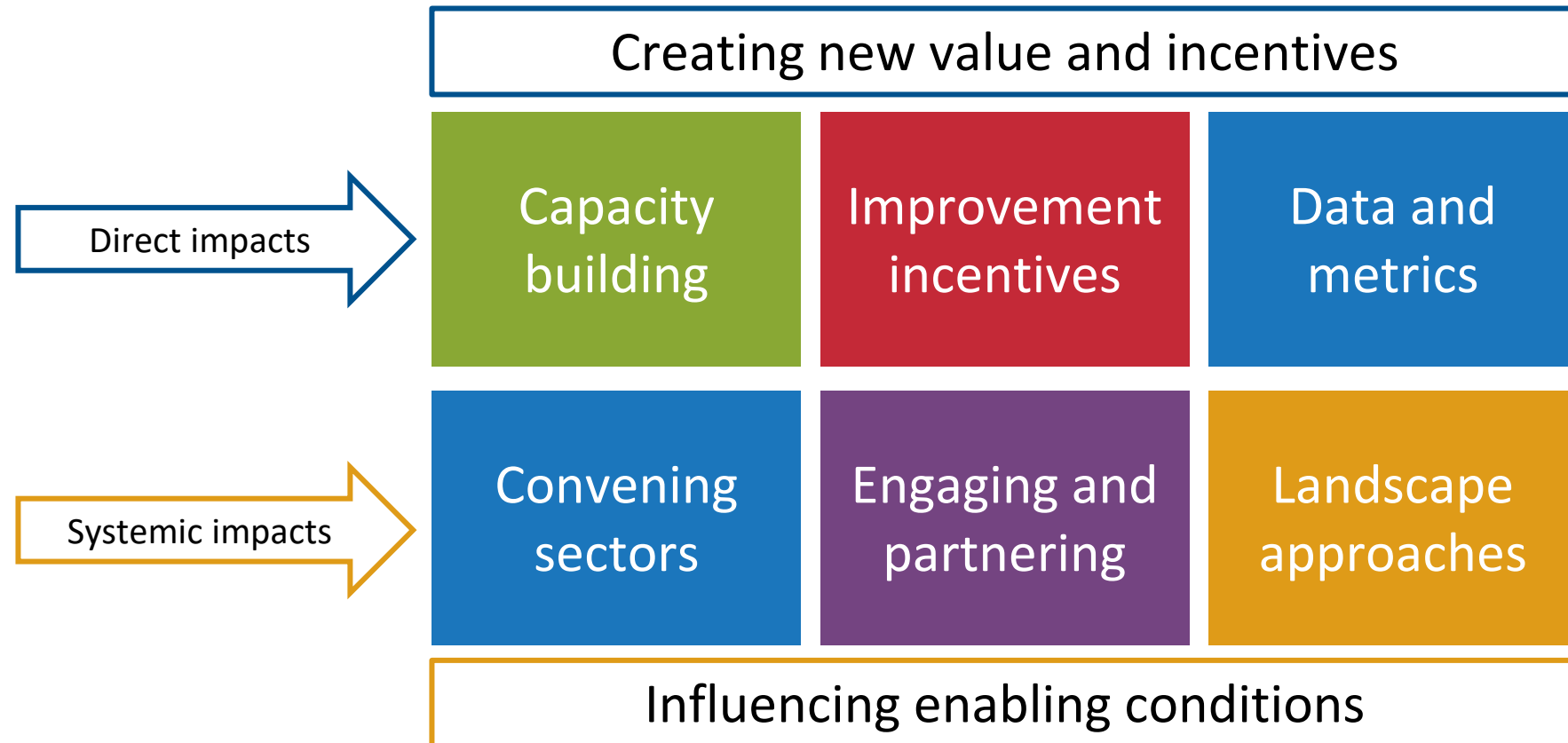
# Case study: Forest Stewardship Council



# Variability within a type of sustainability system



# Trade effects of VSS go beyond system components



# Implications for trade policy

- › There is great variability within VSS
- › Small differences can have a big impact
- › Credible practices build credible standards
- › Credibility of the standard is in the implementation
- › Virtuous cycle of policy and market practices: Credible VSS practices build on trade rules and vice versa

# Session 1: The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy – State of play

Presentation by Florencia Sarmiento, Policy Advisor, IISD

“PLACEHOLDER FOR TITLE & SLIDES”

# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Key messages

- › Policymakers increasingly integrate VSSs into trade policy frameworks.
- › There are different levels and natures of integration, which vary by instrument (public procurement v. due diligence).
- › The effective use of VSSs in trade policy requires defining credibility criteria for which VSSs to use.



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

Policymakers increasingly integrate VSSs into trade policy frameworks:

- › Market access
- › Free trade agreements
- › Due diligence
- › Export promotion
- › Government procurement



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Market access

- › Some regulations introduce explicit or implicit references to VSSs as part of compliance criteria with market access regulations.
- › For example, **South Korea's Sustainable Timber Act** requires legality verification for timber imports.
- › It recognizes VSSs like FSC and PEFC as acceptable evidence of compliance with the legality requirements.



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Free Trade Agreements

- › References to VSSs in FTAs have grown: 34 agreements from 2018 to 2025, up from only 17 before 2018.
- › Different uses:
  - › **Cooperation** – Exchange of information on VSSs.
  - › **Promotion** – Facilitating trade in certified products.
  - › **Recognition** – Acknowledging VSSs as contributing to high environmental protection standards.
  - › **Guidelines** – Encouraging truthful, not misleading mechanisms, based on recognized standards.
  - › **Support** – Direct use of VSSs for FTA implementation (e.g., Switzerland implementation of EFTA-Indonesia CEPA).



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Due diligence

- › VSSs are recognized as well-placed to support compliance with due diligence regulations and requirements.
- › Some regulations, like **EUDR** in Article 10, explicitly acknowledge that VSSs can serve as valuable tools for conducting risk assessments and supporting compliance with due diligence requirements.



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Public Procurement

- › VSSs are used in sustainable public procurement as proxies for sourcing products that are compliant with social and environmental performance.
- › **Mexico's** federal government procurement policy requires that all timber and wooden furniture products be certified by a third party to verify that they are made of wood from sustainably managed forests.
- › For this purpose, Mexico recognizes certifications such as the FSC and the PEFC standards.



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Export promotion

- › Some governments are integrating VSSs into their export promotion strategies to increase access to sustainable markets and boost exports.
- › In **Mozambique**, the government aligned national cotton regulations with the Better Cotton standard's criteria, using VSSs to boost sustainable production and improve access to export markets.



# The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy

## Conclusion

- › **Growing relevance:** Policymakers are increasingly directly and indirectly integrating VSSs in trade policy to facilitate sustainable trade.
- › **Integration varies:** In some cases, their use is mandatory; in others, it is encouraged or promoted.
- › **Support is essential:** As some challenges remain, capacity-building services and financial assistance for producers to access and maintain certification is needed.
- › **Credibility criteria needed:** Since not all VSSs are equal, the use of VSSs in trade policy must also be accompanied by credibility criteria (*Session 2*).

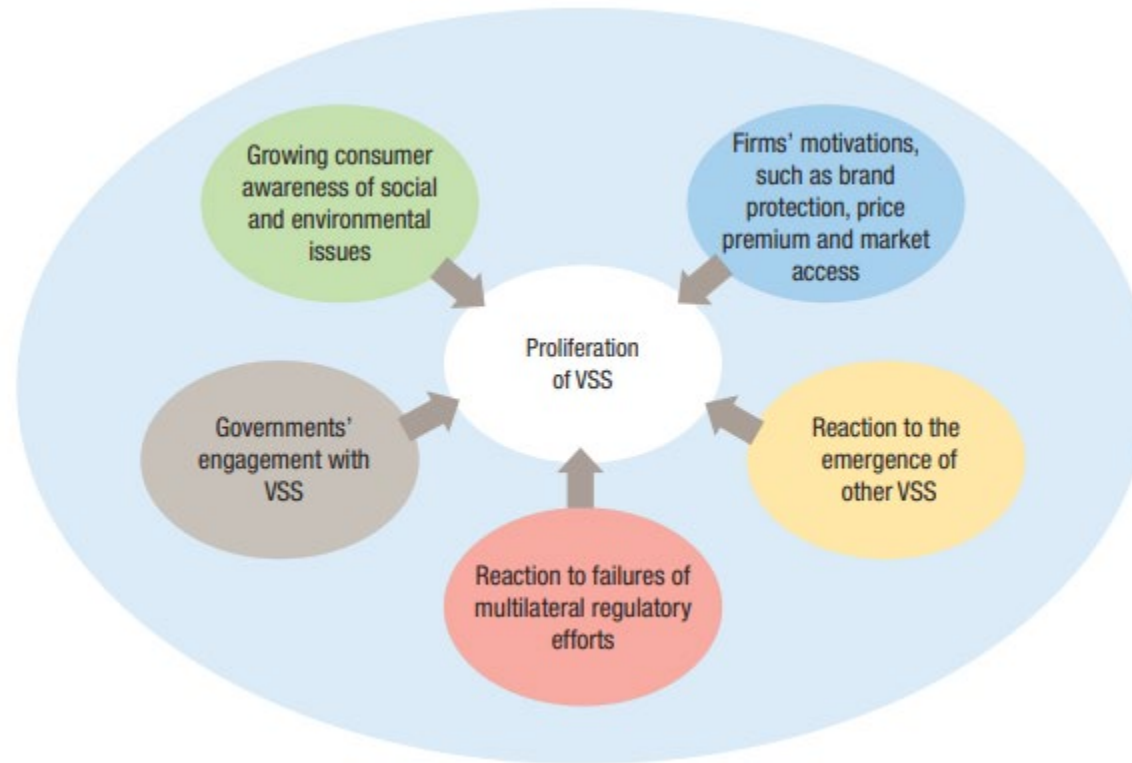


# **Session 1: The Use of VSSs in Trade Policy – State of play**

**Presentation by Paulo Mortara Batistic, Associate  
Economics Affairs Officer, United Nations Forum on  
Sustainability Standards (UNFSS)  
“VSS in trade policy”**

# ➤ Preamble

## Factors contributing to the proliferation of VSS between the 1990s and the 2010s



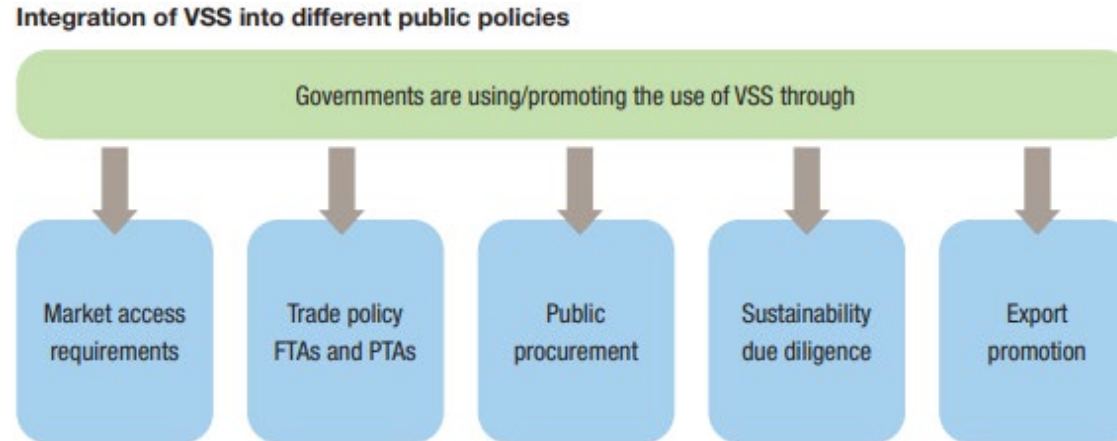
Source: "Voluntary sustainability standards in international trade", UNCTAD, 2023

# VSS in trade policy

1. **VSS and Public Policy**
2. **Due diligence and VSS**
3. **Conclusion**



# ➤ Opportunities for VSS in Public Policy



Source: “Voluntary sustainability standards in international trade”, UNCTAD, 2023

- ▶ **Market access:** Republic of Korea’s Act on the Sustainable Use of Timbers (2017) – FSC/PEFC, EU RED
- ▶ **Trade policy FTAs and PTAs:** UNFSS 4<sup>th</sup> Flagship - “at least 19 FTA’s mentioned in promotional way”.
- ▶ **Public procurement:** e.g. EU, Switzerland, Brazil, etc.
- ▶ **Export promotion:** FSC-Gabon, National VSS -> Brazil “Selo Verde”, Costa Rica “Esencial”
- ▶ **Sustainability due diligence:** 6<sup>th</sup> flagship slides ahead.



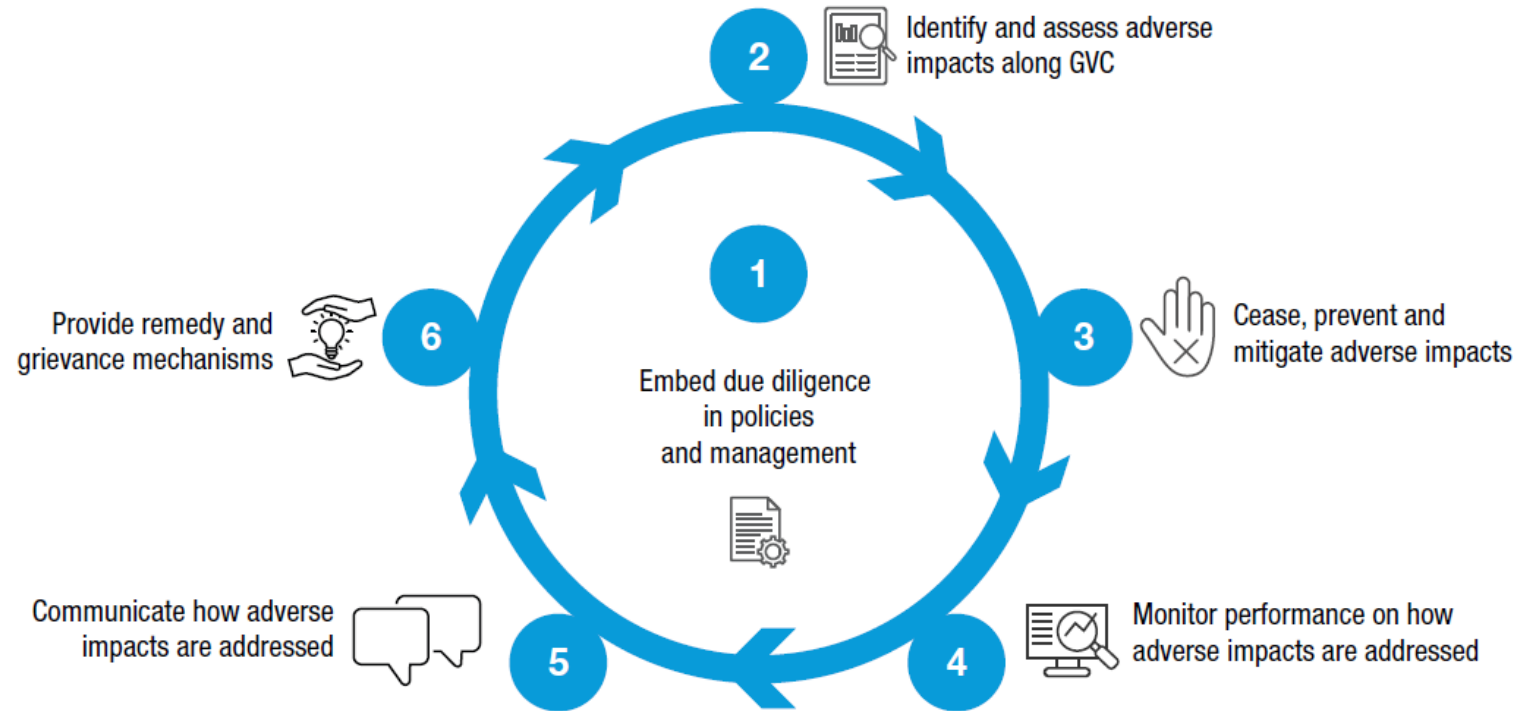
# ➤ Challenges of integrating VSS

- ▶ **Capacity constraints** → *Scaling limitations*
- ▶ **Limited Sector Coverage** → *Sectoral gaps*
- ▶ **Proliferation of Labels** → *Certification fatigue*
- ▶ **Recognition System Overlap** → *Compliance complexity*
- ▶ **Risk of Over-Certification** → *Excess certification*
- ▶ **Distributional Inequities** → *Access barriers*

# VSS in trade policy

1. VSS and Public Policy
2. Due diligence and VSS
3. Conclusion

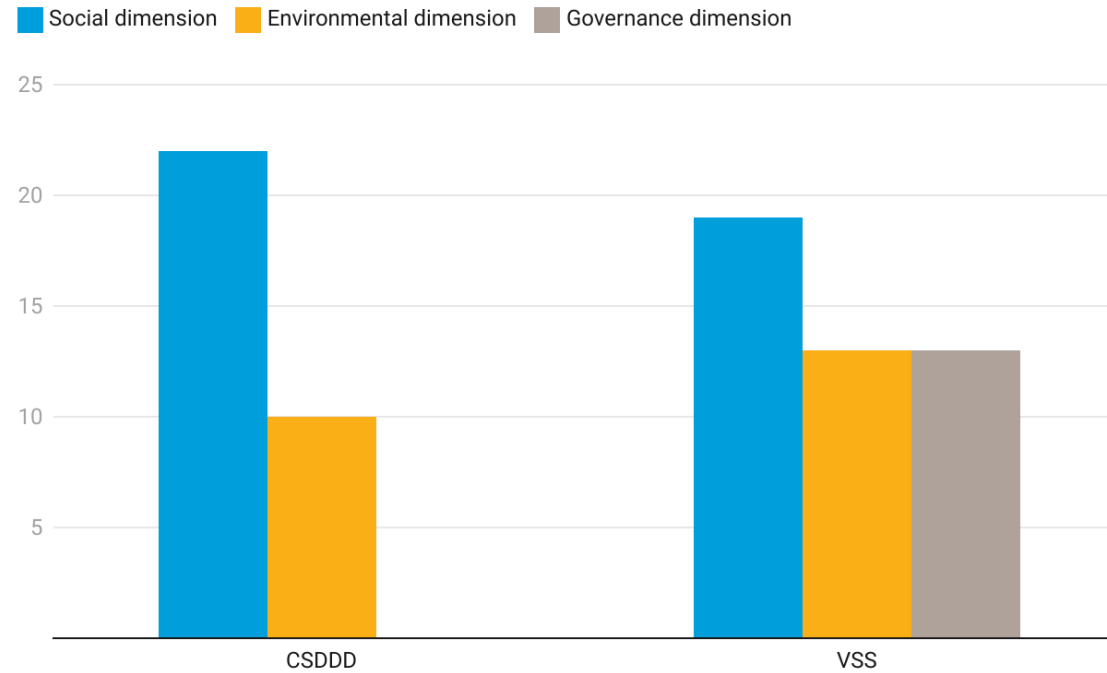
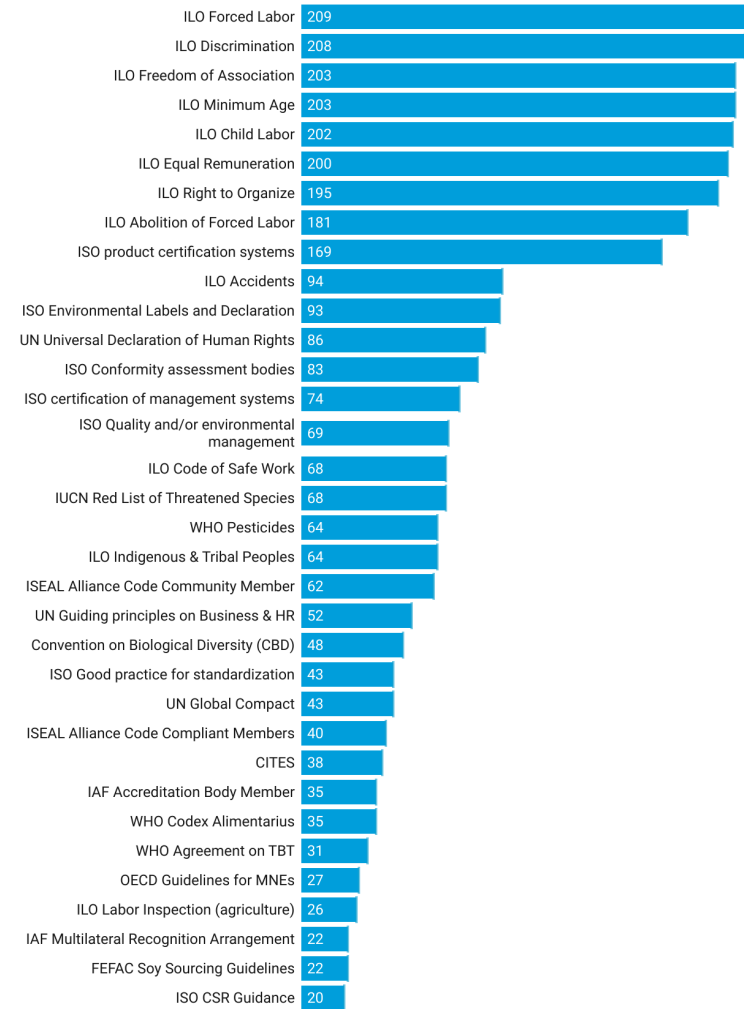
# ➤ Due diligence and VSS



Source: “The future of Sustainable trade”, UNCTAD, 2024

# Due diligence and VSS

Number of VSS referring to international convention



Created with Datawrapper

Created with Datawrapper

Source: "The future of Sustainable trade", UNCTAD, 2024







# Due diligence and VSS

Standard	EUDR	RA	FT (01.04.2017_v.1.5)	FT (27.09.2023_v.2.2)	4C v4.0	4C v4.1 (Valid from 01/07/2024)	RSPO	RTRS	ProTerra 4.1	ProTerra 5.0	FSC	PEFC
<b>Scope</b>	All	Coffee, Cocoa	Coffee, Cocoa	Coffee, Cocoa	Coffee	Coffee	Palm Oil	Soy	Soy	Soy	Timber, Rubber	Timber, Rubber
<b>Definition of forest</b>	FAO Definition	+	-	+	±	±	±	+	±	±	±	+
<b>Deforestation-free requirement</b>	Article 2 (8) 'deforestation-free': No deforest. or degradation	+	-	+	±	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Legality</b>	Prod. in accordance w/ National legislation	+	±	±	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Vulnerable/ Indigenous Rights</b>	FPIC	+	±	±	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	±

Source: "The future of Sustainable trade", UNCTAD, 2024

# ➤ Due diligence and VSS

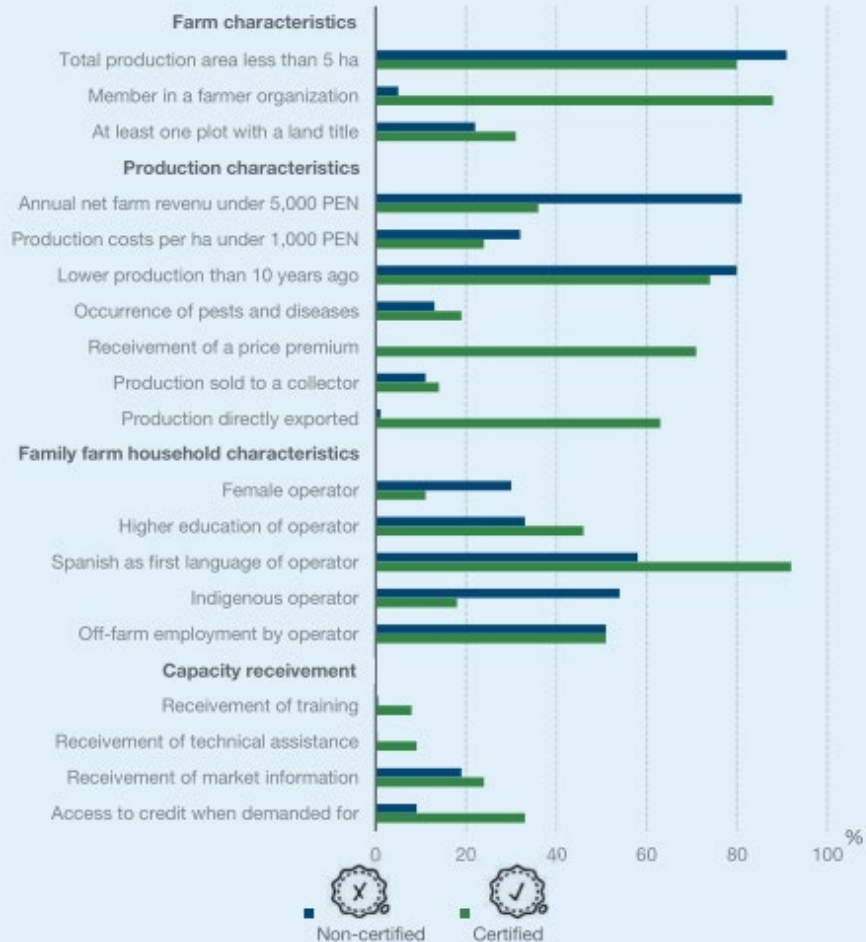
## Due diligence process and VSS infrastructures

Due diligence steps		VSS infrastructures
1. Embed due diligence in policies and management		VSS requirements on policies and management systems related to sustainable production practices VSS adoption demonstrating commitment to responsible business conduct
2. Identify and assess adverse impacts along GVC		VSS risk assessment requirements VSS traceability systems
3. Cease, prevent and mitigate adverse impacts		VSS corrective action plans VSS audits VSS risk assessment requirements
4. Monitor performance on how adverse impacts are addressed		VSS audits (top-down monitoring) VSS complaint systems (bottom-up monitoring)
5. Communicate how adverse impacts are addressed		VSS reporting templates VSS public audit reports
6. Provide remedy and grievance mechanisms		VSS grievance and complaint systems

Source: “The future of Sustainable trade”, UNCTAD, 2024

# ➤ Already installed capacity of VSS

Characteristics of Peruvian certified vs. non-certified producers based on the Peruvian National Agricultural Survey of 2019



Source: Peruvian National Agricultural Survey of 2019.

## Key takeaways:

- ▶ Land-tenure higher under certification
- ▶ Differences in farm revenue
- ▶ Certified production costs a little more
- ▶ Disparity in capacity-building measures

# VSS in trade policy

1. VSS and Public Policy
2. Due diligence and VSS
3. Conclusion

# Conclusion

## ▶ **The rise of mandatory due diligence**

Governments worldwide are increasingly adopting legally binding due diligence requirements.

## ▶ **The critical role of VSS**

VSS align closely with sustainability goals and are adapting to support compliance with new regulations.

## ▶ **Impacts on developing countries**

Due diligence measures could exclude small producers who lack the resources to meet stringent requirements.

## ▶ **Lessons from VSS for due diligence**

The six-step due diligence framework closely aligns with processes used by VSS.

This alignment creates opportunities for policymakers to leverage existing systems, to streamline due diligence implementation.

## ▶ **Recommendations for inclusivity**

To ensure sustainable trade governance benefits all, the report calls for harmonizing regulations, increasing producer participation and providing financial support for small producers.

Calls for fair value distribution along GVCs and capacity-building programs tailored to vulnerable actors.

# Thank you

[paulo.mortarabatic@un.org](mailto:paulo.mortarabatic@un.org)



# References

- ▶ [Voluntary Sustainability Standards in International Trade](#)
- ▶ [The future of sustainable trade: Due diligence initiatives, voluntary sustainability standards and developing countries](#)
- ▶ [4th Flagship Report of the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards \(UNFSS\)](#)
- ▶ [Governo Federal institui Programa Selo Verde Brasil para normalizar e certificar produtos e serviços de origem sustentável —](#)
- ▶ [esencial Costa Rica](#)

# Roundtable on country experiences

Benefits, challenges, and lessons learnt from integrating VSSs in trade policy



**Dominik Ledergerber,**  
Advisor, Free Trade  
Agreements/European Free  
Trade Association, SECO



**Jack Yao,**  
Secretary General,  
ODCCN



**Cameron Plese,**  
Head of North  
America/Head of  
Government Affairs,  
RSPO



**Corin Wood-Jones,**  
Director, Special Projects,  
Better Cotton Initiative



**Moderated by,**  
**Leslie Sajous**  
Associate Manager, Policy &  
engagement  
ISEAL

# Coffee and networking

› Please be back at **11h00**



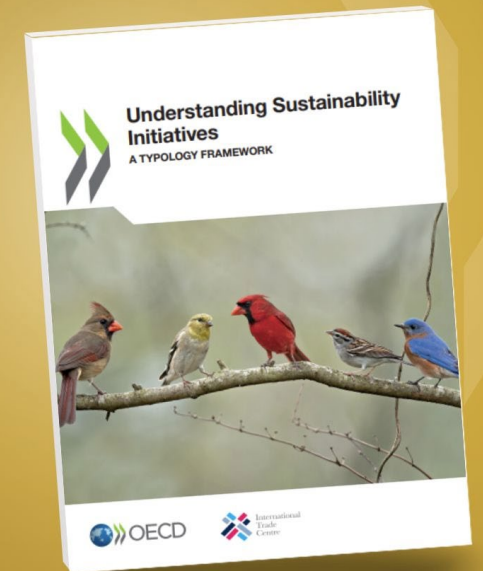
# **Session 2: Identifying and leveraging credible VSS: tools and frameworks**

**Presentation by Cemre Balaban, Trade Policy Analyst,  
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development  
(OECD)**

# Context

## A multistakeholder collaboration

- International Trade Centre (ITC)
  - ITC-led Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD) Technical Working Group (including IISD; ISEAL Alliance, GIZ, among others)
- OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate (TAD)
- OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct (RBC)



# Sustainability Initiatives

- Any multistakeholder, government-run or industry-led scheme or programme that...
  - ✓ provides tools, information, guidance, framework, capacity building; and or
  - ✓ sets requirements and/or expectations for, and/or assesses an organisation's operations, products, services, suppliers...
- in relation to sustainability objectives.

## Examples:

- ✓ Environmental labeling and information schemes (ELIS)
- ✓ Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS)
- ✓ Voluntary Third Party Assurance Programmes (VTPA)
- ✓ Sustainability systems or schemes



# A Typology of Sustainability Initiatives

- › A framework to better navigate the complex landscape of sustainability initiatives.
- › Providing **parameters (differentiators)** and a common language to characterise and differentiate sustainability initiatives.
- › Principles: High-level differentiation, Flexible, value-neutral

- **Guide** comparison/benchmarking of Sustainability Initiatives;
- **Inform** capacity building platforms (including in developing countries) to increase awareness and uptake;
- **Support** private actors in search of Sustainability Initiatives relevant for their business;
- **Help** evaluate, use and reference Sustainability Initiatives in regulatory frameworks.



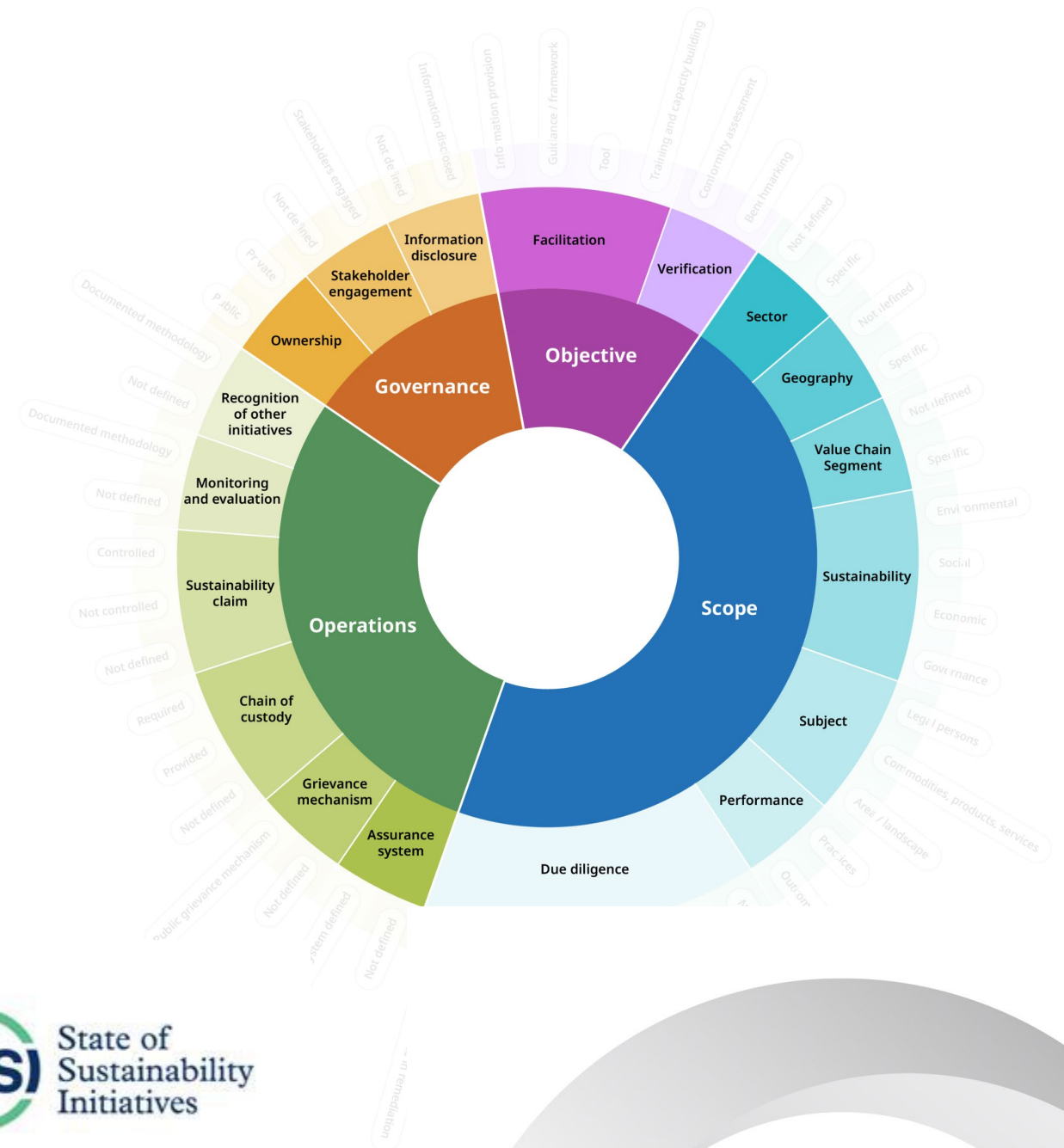


# The Typology Framework

## Structure and principles

### Differentiators

Independent differentiators within each chapter

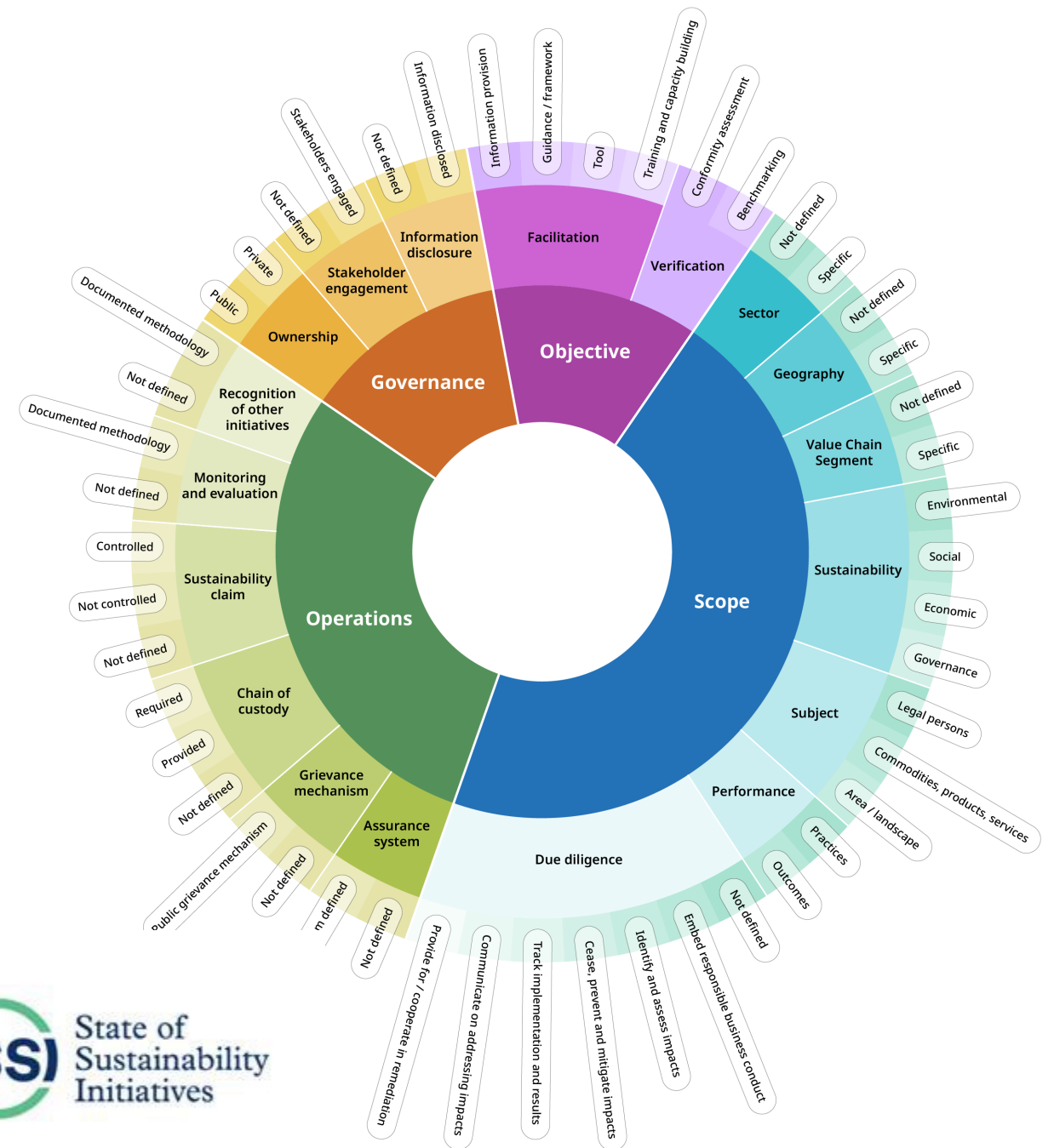


# The Typology Framework

## Structure and principles

### Attributes

Independent attributes for each differentiator



# Chapter 1. Objective

## Differentiators

Facilitation

## Attributes

Information provision

Guidance/framework

Tool

Training and capacity building

Verification

Conformity assessment

Benchmarking



# Chapter 2. Scope (selected examples)

Differentiators	Attributes
Sector	Non defined
	Specific
Geography	Non defined
	Specific
Value chain segment	Non defined
	Specific
Sustainability	Environmental
	Social
	Economic
	Governance

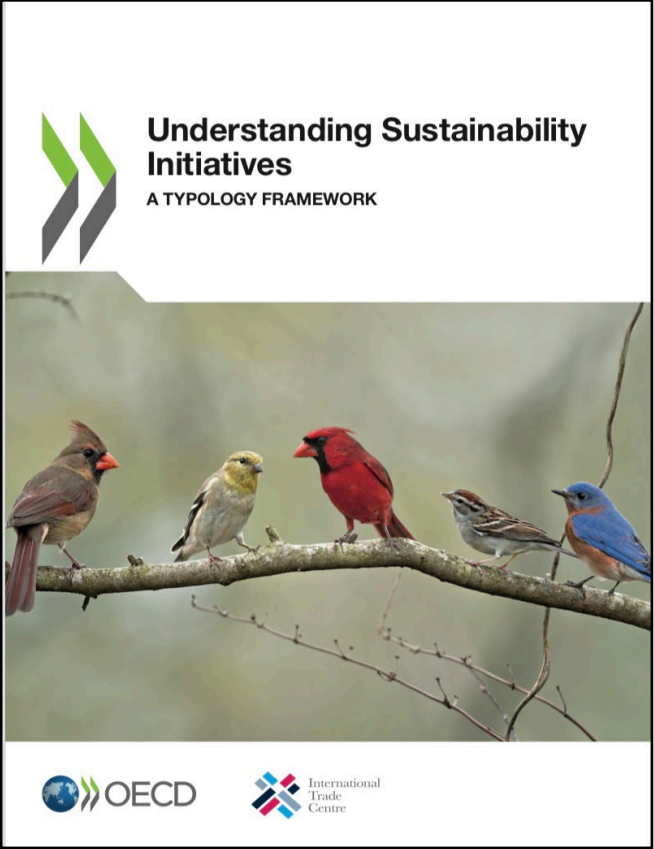
# Chapter 3. Operations (selected examples)

Differentiators	Attributes
Assurance system	Non defined
	Assurance system defined
Grievance mechanism	Non defined
	Public grievance mechanism
Chain of custody	Required
	Provided
	Not defined

# Chapter 4. Governance

Differentiators	Attributes
Ownership	Public
	Private
Stakeholder engagement	Non defined
	Stakeholder engagement
Information disclosure	Non defined
	Information disclosure

# Joint publication OECD-ITC released in October 2024 @ G20 in Brazil



[bit.ly/3Vi8llk](https://bit.ly/3Vi8llk)



**Thank you**



# **Session 2: Identifying and leveraging credible VSS: tools and frameworks**

**Presentation by Shemina Amarsy, Advisor on Sustainability  
Standards & Value Chains, International Trade Centre (ITC)**

# International Trade Center



Joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. Established in 1964 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Pamela Coke-Hamilton,  
Executive Director



# Why the Standards Map?

## Navigating the sustainability landscape

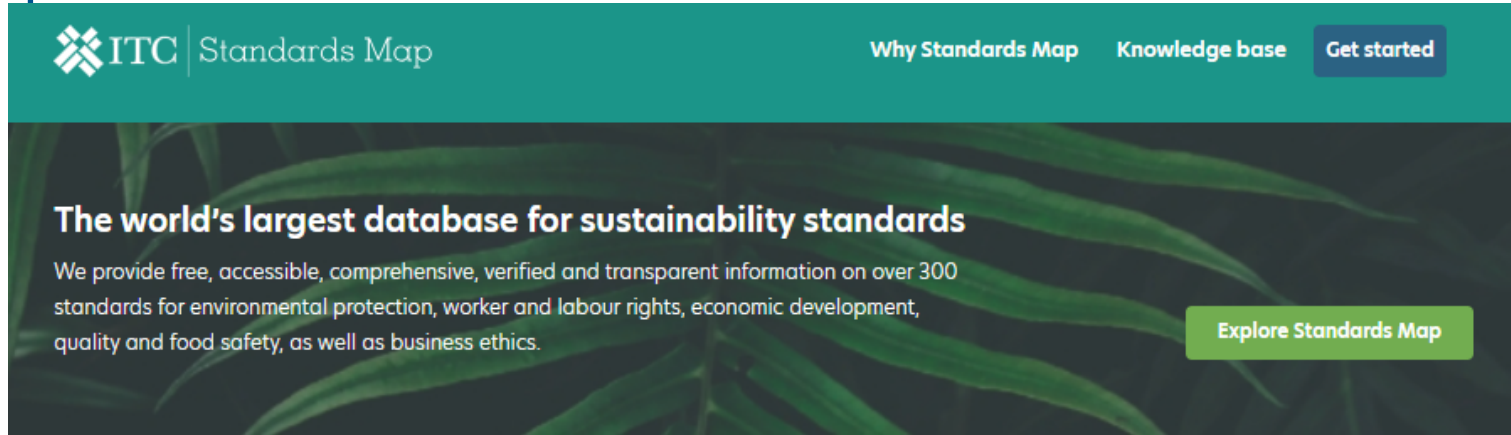
## What's a standard?

*Sustainability initiatives/schemes/programmes  
OR: Certification programs, audit protocols, CSR codes of  
conduct, international conventions & guidelines, reporting  
frameworks*

- Multistakeholder, government-backed or industry-led
- Tools, information, guidance, framework, capacity building
- Facilitate, set requirements, or assess an organization's operations, products, services, suppliers and/or other business relationships in relation to sustainability objectives



# What is the Standards Map?



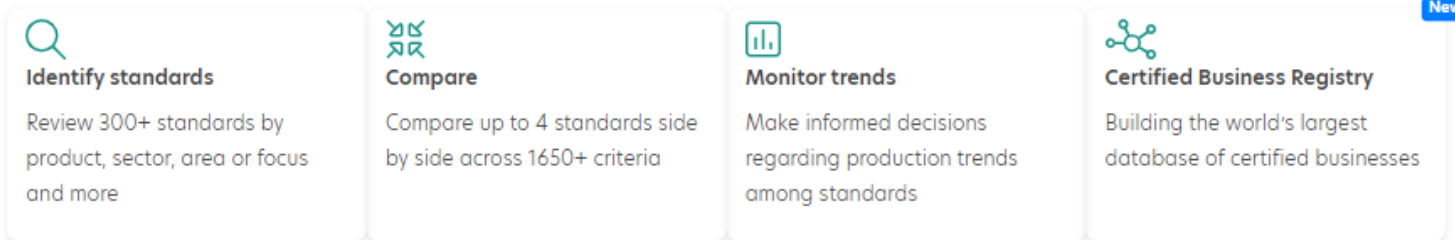
The screenshot shows the homepage of the Standards Map website. At the top, there is a teal navigation bar with the ITC logo and 'Standards Map' text on the left, and 'Why Standards Map', 'Knowledge base', and a 'Get started' button on the right. Below the navigation bar is a large dark green banner with the text: 'The world's largest database for sustainability standards'. Underneath this, it says: 'We provide free, accessible, comprehensive, verified and transparent information on over 300 standards for environmental protection, worker and labour rights, economic development, quality and food safety, as well as business ethics.' A green button labeled 'Explore Standards Map' is positioned on the right side of the banner.

- Global Public Tool
- Accelerate the transition to sustainable trade
- Helping MSMEs overcome the knowledge gap to add value to their products and do business with buyers who increasingly require standards

## Standards Map free toolkit

Our free tools help you to find trusted and neutral information about voluntary sustainability standards (VSS), codes of conduct, audit protocols, reporting frameworks and company programs on sustainability. Download two pager

How this works →



The screenshot shows four cards representing the free toolkit. Each card has an icon, a title, and a brief description. The 'Certified Business Registry' card has a 'New' badge in the top right corner.

Identify standards	Compare	Monitor trends	Certified Business Registry
Review 300+ standards by product, sector, area or focus and more	Compare up to 4 standards side by side across 1650+ criteria	Make informed decisions regarding production trends among standards	Building the world's largest database of certified businesses

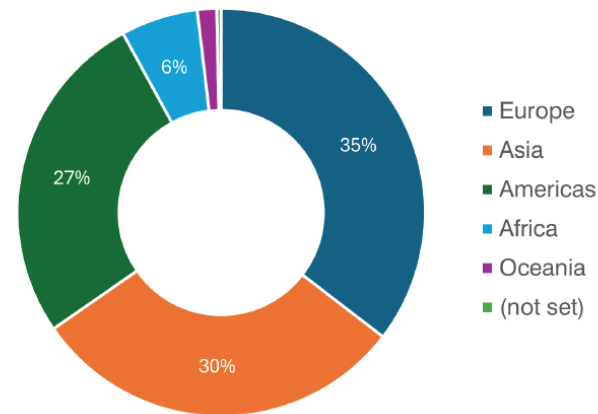


# Traffic and Use Cases of the Standards Map

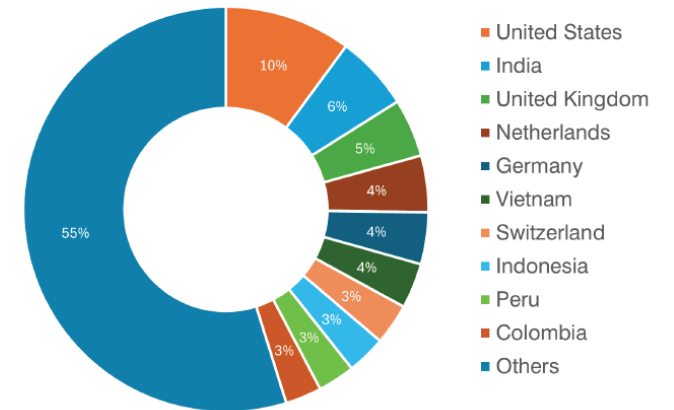
## Quick Statistics:

- Users from over 192 countries
- Over 600'000 users ( 146' 000 these last months)
- 19 industry sectors
- 357 standards
- +1500 database criteria

USERS ACCESS BY REGION

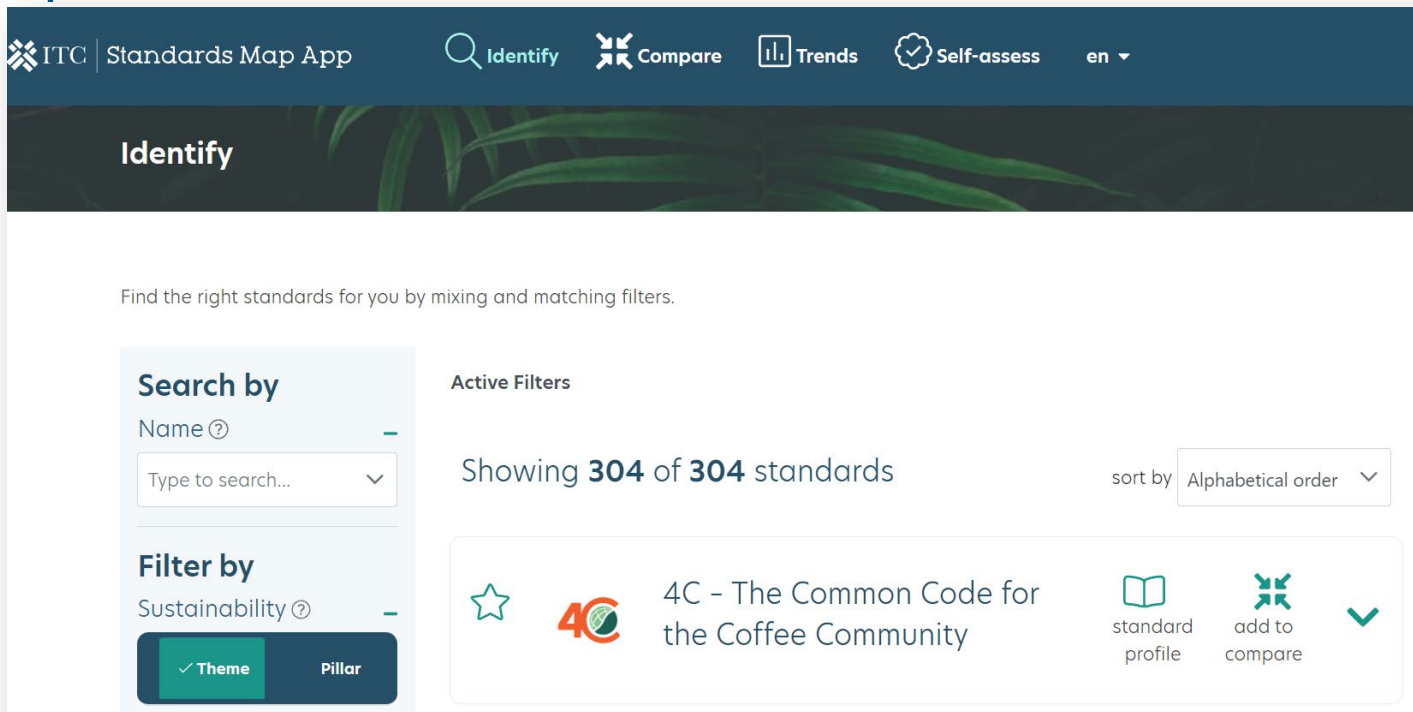


USERS ACCESS BY COUNTRY



- SMEs
- Brands, retailers
- NGOs, Academia
- Policy Makers

# Identification of Standards




The screenshot shows the ITC Standards Map App interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ITC logo and the text 'Standards Map App'. Below this, there are icons for 'Identify', 'Compare', 'Trends', and 'Self-assess', along with a language dropdown set to 'en'. The main header area is dark blue with the word 'Identify' in white. Below the header, there is a search bar and a filter section. The search bar is labeled 'Search by' and has a dropdown menu for 'Name' with a search icon. Below the search bar, there is a text input field with the placeholder 'Type to search...'. To the right of the search bar, there is a section for 'Active Filters' which shows 'Showing 304 of 304 standards'. Below this, there is a 'sort by' dropdown menu set to 'Alphabetical order'. The main content area displays a list of standards. The first standard shown is '4C - The Common Code for the Coffee Community'. It has a star icon, a '4C' logo, and two action buttons: 'standard profile' and 'add to compare'.

## Filters to select standards based on:

- ❖ Sectors and products
- ❖ Origin and destination markets
- ❖ Sustainability themes and pillars
- ❖ Value chain focus
- ❖ SDGs
- ❖ Availability of consumer label
- ❖ Recognition by industry platforms

# Standards profile



Standard profile for  
**Bonsucro**

[Overview](#) [Requirements](#) [How to comply](#) [Governance](#) [Resources](#) [Registry](#)

Key facts and presentation for the standard.

Bonsucro was born out of the Better Sugarcane Initiative, a global multi-stakeholder non-profit organisation dedicated to reducing the environmental and social impacts of sugarcane production. Bonsucro aims to ensure that current and new sugarcane production and all sugarcane derived products are produced sustainably, through 'Standard Setting' and 'Certification'.  
[Read less](#)

## Sector(s)



Agriculture

## Product(s)

Sugar

## Value chain focus



Production ✓



Manufacturing ✓



Distribution ✓



Consumption



B2B Claim

## Purpose

Accreditation

Best practices and guidelines

## Typology

Private Standard

## Recognitions & certifications



ISEAL Community Member

## Review information on:

- ❖ Facts and figures
- ❖ Geographic scope
- ❖ Sectors and products covered
- ❖ Value chain focus
- ❖ Requirements
- ❖ Verification and audit procedures
- ❖ Governance and standard setting



# Standards comparison



## (Advanced) comparison on:

- ❖ Requirements
- ❖ Verification and audit procedures
- ❖ Governance and standard setting
- ❖ *National standards to standards requirements?*

# Advanced standards comparison




Modify comparisons parameters and change the focus of analyses using the various options

Open and collapse sections of the database and review the various indicators covered by each standard

Review in detail the scope and coverage of sustainability topics by each standard, the degree of obligation, compliance level of criticality, explicitness, full text and source of information

Show Pillars ▾ View Table (advanced) ▾ Criteria coverage Covered by the standard ▾ Criteria proportion by Not applicable

ⓘ Some of the standards you are comparing have different mandates, typologies or operate in different sectors.

	 Fairtrade International - Small Producers Organizations	 Rainforest Alliance - 2020	 Baseline Code - Global Coffee Platform
<b>Environment</b>			
<b>Soil</b>			
Soil: general principle	<p>✓</p> <p>Time to comply: <i>Within 3 years</i> Criticality: <i>Minor</i> Explicit: <i>no</i> Excerpt Intent and scope: Soil and water are non-renewable resources. Fertile soils and clean and available wat... More info +</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Time to comply: <i>Immediate</i> Criticality: <i>Major</i> Explicit: <i>yes</i> Excerpt 4.4.2 Based on the soil assessment, management identifies soil management measures and includes... More info +</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Time to comply: <i>Immediate</i> Criticality: <i>Major</i> Explicit: <i>yes</i> Excerpt Principle: Soil conservation practices are in place. More info +</p>
Criteria on soil erosion	<p>✓</p> <p>Time to comply: <i>Within 3 years</i> Criticality: <i>Major</i> Explicit: <i>yes</i> Excerpt 3.2.20: You identify land at risk of soil erosion and land that is already eroded in fields where your... More info +</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Time to comply: <i>Immediate</i> Criticality: <i>Major</i> Explicit: <i>yes</i> Excerpt 6.4.5 Erosion by water and wind is reduced through practices such as re-vegetation of steep areas and... More info +</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>Time to comply: <i>Immediate</i> Criticality: <i>Major</i> Explicit: <i>yes</i> Excerpt (Yellow) Soil conservation measures have been started. Indicators: Some measures are taken to...</p>

# Coming features of the Standards Map


Standard profile for **Business Alliance for Sustainability (BA4S)**

Overview Requirements How to comply Governance Due diligence Resources

The BA4S is a voluntary sustainability business initiative with over 20 years experience in sustainability of textile sector. It was founded by a club of multinationals, developing tools to identify risks in their supply chains and has constantly evolved and adopted to its members' needs, with now thousands of companies implementing the BA4S methodology. [Read more](#)

**Label**  
Consumer label ⓘ

**Typology**  
Short explanation




Sector	✓ Specific ⓘ This standard covers specific sectors. <a href="#">Find the list below.</a>
Geography	+ Not defined ⓘ
Value chain segment	+ Not defined ⓘ
Sustainability	+ Not defined ⓘ
Subject	+ Not defined ⓘ
Performance	+ Not defined ⓘ
Due diligence	+ Not defined ⓘ

**Sectors**  
Clothing, Manufactured products, Textiles

**Products**  
Clothing, Household, Other products, Textiles / Garments

**Geographical scope**  
For origin ⓘ: 26 countries around the world. [Show them all](#)  
For destination ⓘ: 54 countries in Africa: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, ... [Show them all](#)

**Recognitions & certifications**  
SSCI recognized  
[View textile trends](#)




Sector	✓ Specific ⓘ This standard covers specific sectors. <a href="#">Find the list below.</a>
Geography	+ Not defined ⓘ
Value chain segment	+ Not defined ⓘ
Sustainability	+ Not defined ⓘ
Subject	+ Not defined ⓘ
Performance	+ Not defined ⓘ
Due diligence	+ Not defined ⓘ



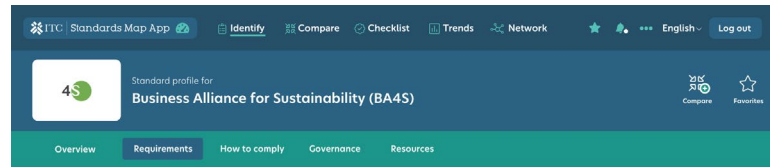
Facilitation	✓ Guidance / Framework ⓘ
Verification	+ Not defined ⓘ
Information provision ⓘ	X Not defined ⓘ
Tool ⓘ	X Not defined ⓘ
Training and capacity building ⓘ	ⓘ data not available

user reaches the wheel, animation automatically starts



Sector	+ Not defined ⓘ
Geography	+ Not defined ⓘ
Value chain segment	+ Not defined ⓘ
Sustainability	+ Not defined ⓘ
Subject	+ Not defined ⓘ
Performance	+ Not defined ⓘ
Due diligence	+ Not defined ⓘ

# Coming features of the Standards Map



## Global overview of the requirements

Embed Identify & assess adverse impacts Cross, prevent or mitigate Track Communicate Provide for or cooperate



### Area

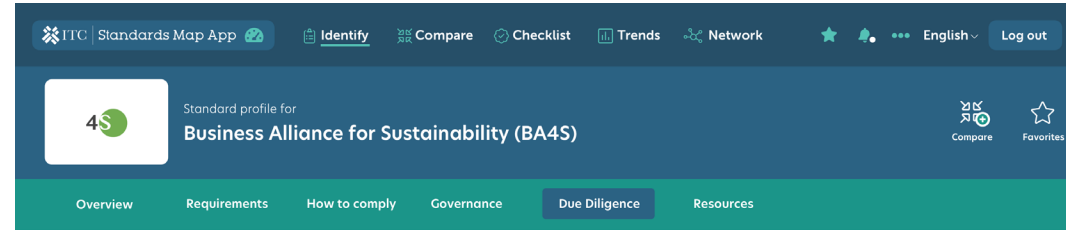
Standards have different sustainability focus. The shares are calculated based on the number of criteria referenced in the Standards Map database that are addressed by the standard's requirements. For more information on our methodology, go to our [Knowledge Centre](#).

## Detailed requirement list

Show by Due Diligence processes

Due Diligence	Time to comply	Criticality	Explicit	More information / Notes
Embed				
Identify & assess adverse impacts				
Criteria on ongoing processes for human rights due diligence	Within 1 year	Minor	Yes	<b>Excerpt</b> (SUPERIOR) 6.6 (MINOR) Is there evidence that the facility adopts internal disciplinary practices for the leadership a... <a href="#">Read more</a>
Criteria on prevention and mitigation of adverse human rights impacts	Within 1 year	Minor	Yes	<b>Excerpt</b> (BASIC) 2.8.4 (MAJOR) Is there evidence that the facility adopts procedures to avoid or mitigate the risk of moral, sexual harassment or violence at work, in accordance wit... <a href="#">Read more</a>

Data last collected by the ITC: 21 May 2021



## Corporate sustainability Due Diligence

Reference	Standards Map criteria	BA4S
CS3D OECD RBC UNGP Rec. 44	Criteria on prioritisation of operations and business relationships that have the most significant adverse impacts	<b>3.2.3</b> Members identify and document which human rights risks are most significant in terms of severity and likelihood
Annex Part I Art. 6: 1 Art. 4 (c) violations of rights and prohibitions included in international human rights agreements	Criteria on human rights: general principle	<b>1.1.2</b> BA4S Code of Conduct directly refers to International conventions on fundamental human rights, Fundamental international labor standards
Annex Part II 2004 Stockholm Convention	Criteria on prohibition of use of hazardous chemicals	<b>4.2.2.3</b> Members do not use persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and... <a href="#">Read more</a>

Data last collected by the ITC: 21 May 2021

Want to learn more? Check out the [OECD Due Diligence Checker](#)



# Examples of usage of the Standards Map

 ITC | Standards Benchmarking Services

## Data-driven insights on sustainability standards

Navigating the complex landscape of sustainability standards can be challenging for consumers, producers, buyers, and policymakers. ITC Benchmarking Services empower you to achieve your sustainability goals with comprehensive data and expert advisory services, ensuring your initiatives are informed by the most reliable information available.

- Foster standards **alignment and collaboration** in a pre-competitive space
- Inform **sourcing or financing decisions**
- Promote **transparency** on standards
- Emphasize potential role of standards within **sustainability legislation** framework
- Implement in-country sustainability **capacity building** projects
- Nurture **research** and knowledge on standards



# Examples of usage of the Standards Map

## Trade Policy leveraging Standards Map data to :

- Support the development and application of robust legislative frameworks that support sustainability;
- Access an overview of the best practices promoted by leading standards;
- Develop and implement sustainable public procurement strategies.



# Examples of usage of the Standards Map



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

## Guidance on Social Sustainability Standards for Public Procurement in the Textile Sector

2022



- Addressed to **public procurement departments**, contracting authorities and sustainable procurement specialists
- Way and extent **standards** contribute to respect of human, environmental and labour rights in textile supply chains
- Help the **Swiss public sector** to apply and review the social conditions for participations
- Also for companies interested in **submitting tenders** ( conditions of participation in public offers)



### Third parties operating in the value chain

Textile purchasing involves a large number of third parties (subcontractors and suppliers). Therefore, in order to effectively ensure compliance with ecological, social and economic requirements, these third parties must also be included accordingly.

The tenderer is obliged to contractually impose on all third parties the obligations to comply with the minimum social requirements. It does so directly by contract with the third parties it has engaged, or obliges these third parties to require other third parties to comply with these obligations.

For financial reasons, given the management involved, it is not possible to include all third parties in the monitoring of compliance with the minimum requirements. Therefore, the contracting authority, if necessary, will only verify compliance with the requirements for those third parties who:

- fulfil an essential part of the mandate,
- provide a considerable component of the mandate,
- provide a significant partial performance of the mandate or
- operate in a sector or production step that is particularly exposed to risks.

Third parties who fulfil one or more of these conditions are considered to be significant third parties of the tenderer.

**Shemina Amarsy**  
[samarsy@intracen.org](mailto:samarsy@intracen.org)

<https://www.standardsmap.org>



# Thank you

# **Session 2: Identifying and leveraging credible VSS: tools and frameworks**

**Presentation by Leslie Sajous, Associate Manager, Policy and  
Engagement, ISEAL**

**“The ISEAL Credibility Principles and Code of Good Practice”**

# Defining credible practice

ISEAL is a recognised and trusted thought leader on credible practices and the use of credible sustainability systems.

The ISEAL Credibility Principles define the values of...



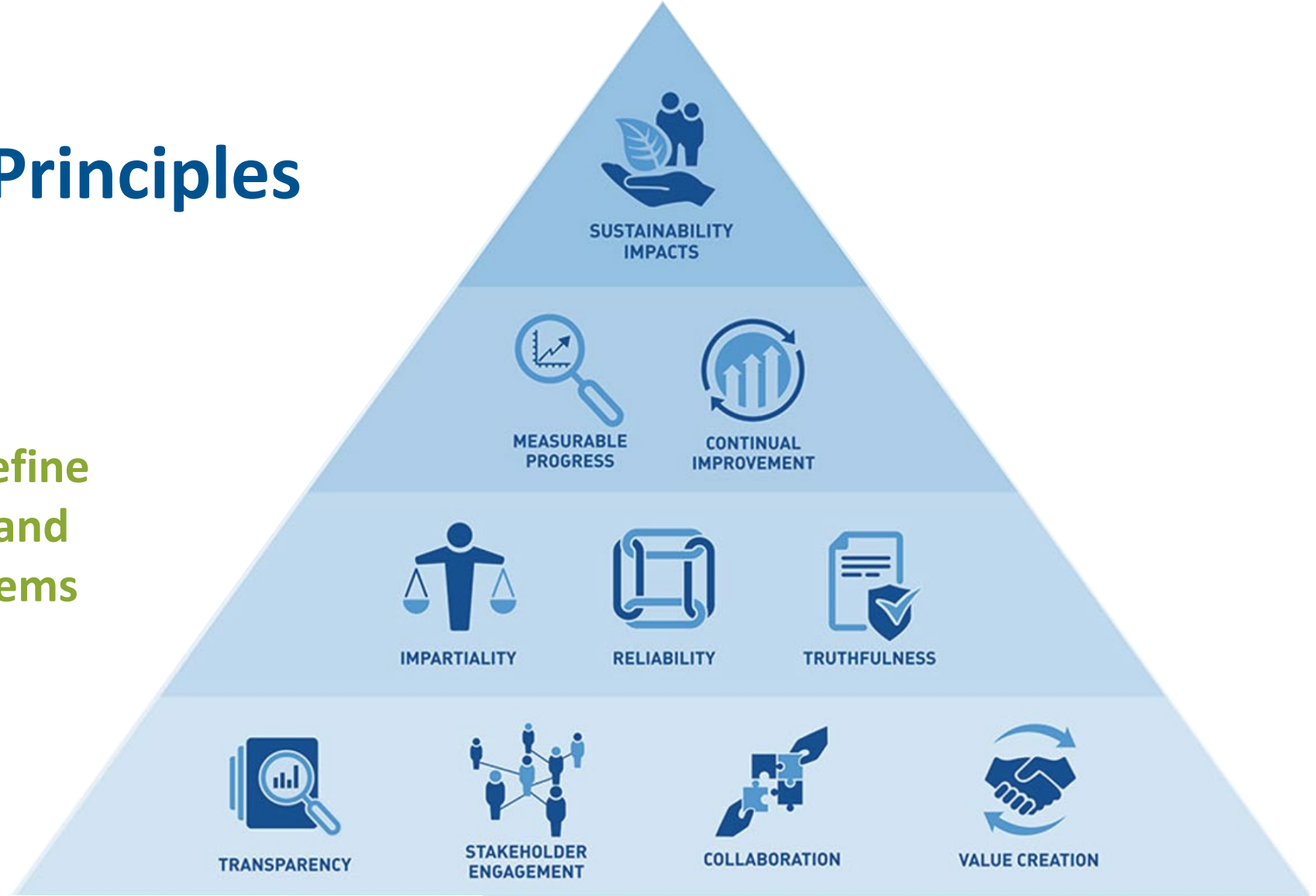
The ISEAL Code defines the practices of...

....effective and credible sustainability systems



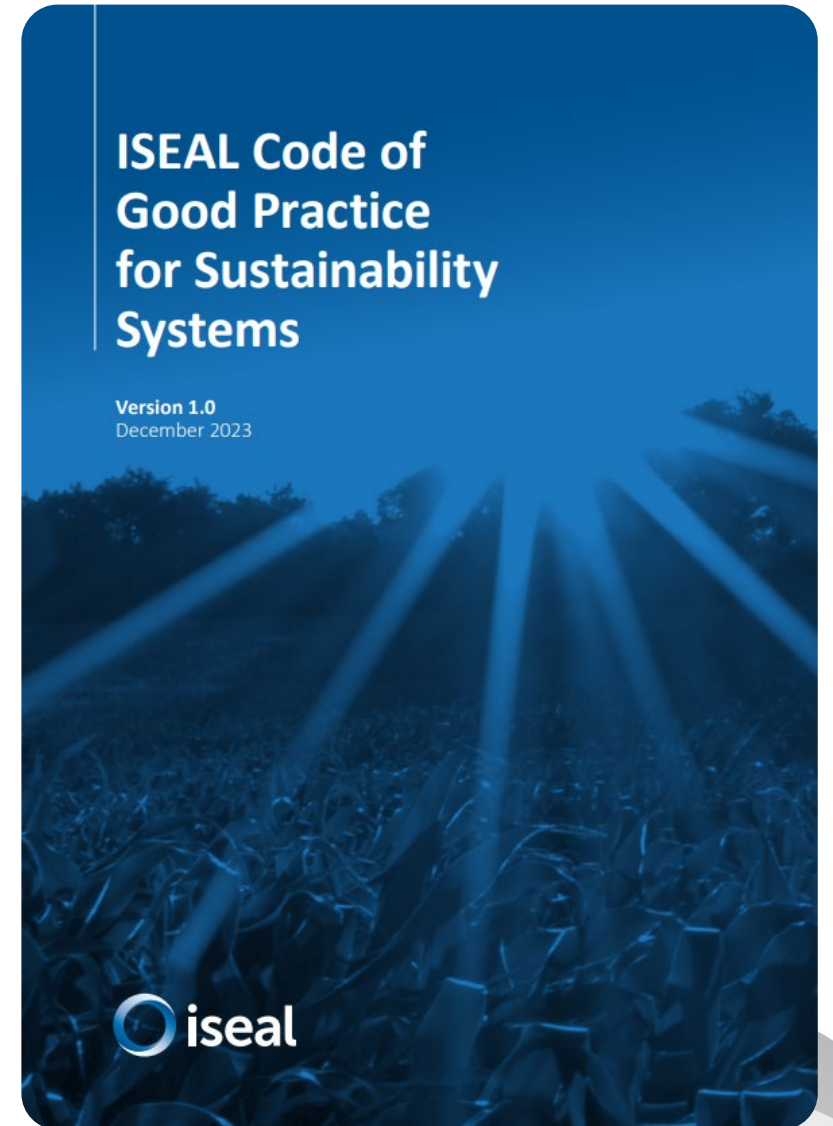
# ISEAL Credibility Principles

The Credibility Principles define the core values of credible and effective sustainability systems



# The ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems

The ISEAL Code provides a globally recognised framework, defining practices for effective and credible sustainability systems.



# Example

## ISEAL Credibility Principles

### TRANSPARENCY

A credible sustainability system earns trust by being open and honest.



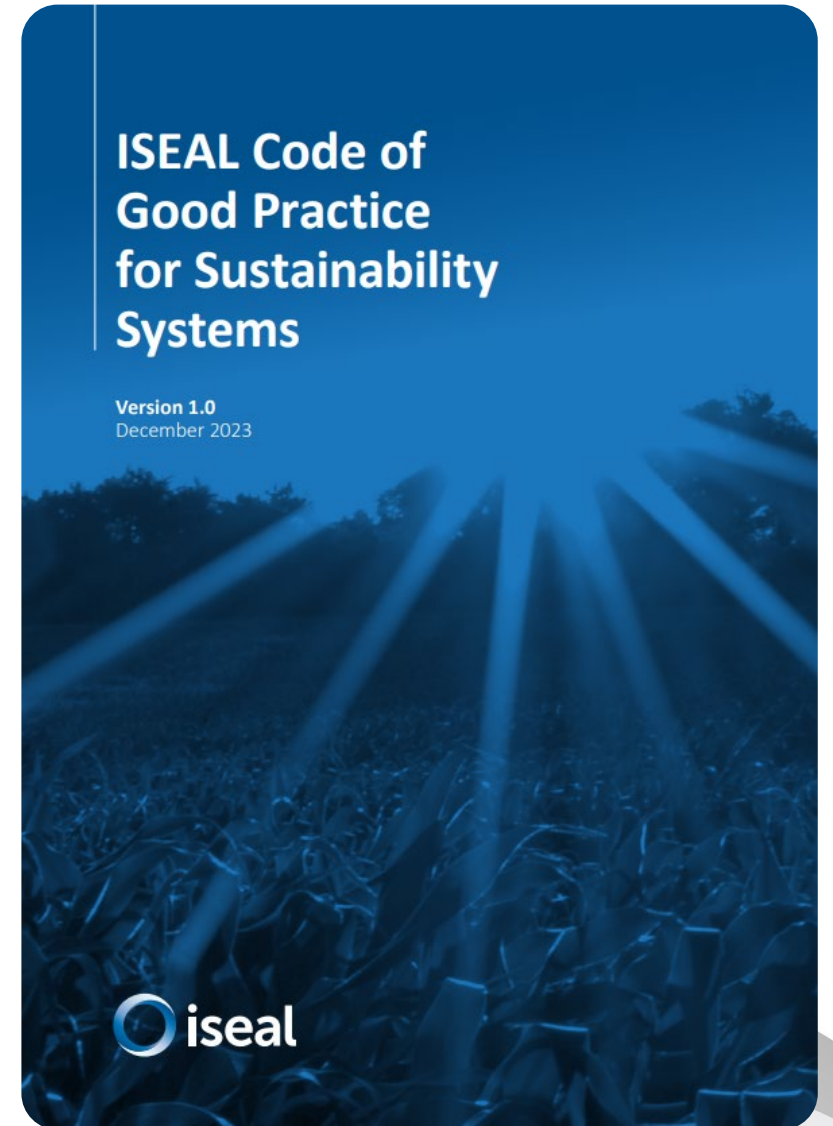
## The ISEAL Code

Clause and topic	Desired outcome
<b>1.6:</b> Public information about scheme impacts and strategies	Stakeholders have access to information about the scheme's intended impacts and strategies.
<b>2.10:</b> Public information about scheme governance and operations	Stakeholders have access to information about scheme governance and operations.
<b>6.3:</b> Terms of reference for standards	The scheme owner has clearly articulated what the standard aims to achieve and why it is needed.
<b>6.7:</b> Responding to comments	Stakeholders can see what input was received and how it has been considered.
<b>8.8:</b> Public information on claims	Stakeholders have access to relevant information about how the claims system operates.

# The ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems

The ISEAL Code provides a globally recognised framework, defining practices for effective and credible sustainability systems.

**Policymakers can use the ISEAL Code and Credibility Principles as a reference for credible practice.** ISEAL Code Compliant status can be used to recognise sustainability systems that have committed to adhere to good practices defined in the ISEAL Code.



# ISEAL Good Practice Guide for Benchmarking Sustainability Systems (v2)

Different actors use benchmarks of VSS to systematically evaluate their robustness and/or sustainability performance:



Companies

**Companies/business platforms** seeking to identify VSS that are sufficiently rigorous to meet specific needs and commitments, including as part of their due diligence process



Governments

**Governments** seeking to recognise VSS that fulfil public procurement requirements or market access requirements (EU RED)

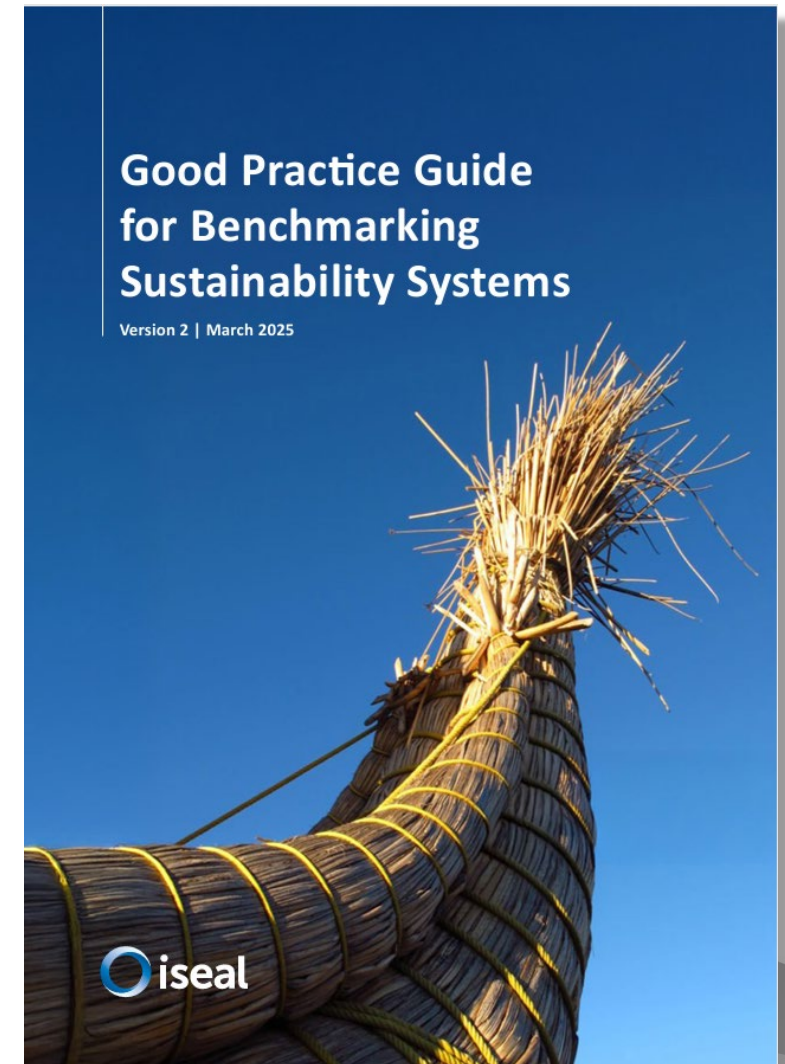


NGOs

**NGOs** seeking to highlight performance of different VSS to incentivise further improvement, often against specific sustainability priorities



[www.iseal.org/about-iseal/our-work/benchmarking](http://www.iseal.org/about-iseal/our-work/benchmarking)





**Time for a  
Q&A session**



# Interactive discussion

Exploring the integration of credible VSS in trade policy



**Ana Laura Lizano,**  
Minister Counsellor,  
Costa Rica Mission to the  
WTO



**Cathleen Mölling,**  
Assurance and Meta-label  
approach,  
Green Button



**Norma Tregurtha,**  
Director of Engagement  
and Markets,  
Bonsucro



**Serra Ayrál,**  
Counsellor, Trade and  
Environment Division,  
WTO



**Moderated by,  
Alice Tipping,**  
Director, Trade and  
Sustainable Development,  
IISD



# Session 2: Identifying and leveraging credible VSS: tools and frameworks

Presentation by Rupal Verma, Policy Analyst, IISD  
“Some findings from the explainer – Credibility criteria for VSSs”

# Criteria Used in Trade Policy to Assess VSS Credibility

Following OECD & ITC (2024) typology and based on a review of EU RED (2023), ACCTS (2024), EUDR Guidance (2025), and FTAs (2018–2022), the criteria most referenced in trade policy are:

## › Governance Criteria

- **Information Disclosure**
  - Governance structure, audit summaries, certification body info, monitoring results (e.g., EU RED)
- **Stakeholder Engagement**
  - Inclusive, transparent development processes (e.g., ACCTS: balanced, accessible participation)

# Criteria Used in Trade Policy to Assess VSS Credibility

## › Operational Criteria

- **Sustainability Claim**
    - Truthful, verifiable evidence required (e.g., EUDR, Chile-Ecuador FTA)
  - **Recognition of Other Initiatives**
    - Alignment with international standards (e.g., ACCTS)
  - **Chain of Custody (CoC)**
    - Traceability and acceptance of certain CoC models (e.g., EUDR Guidance)
- › Some policies go beyond these requirements and also specify additional criteria related to VSS, like **third-party assurance, auditor competence, and grievance mechanisms.**

# Interactive discussion

## Exploring the integration of credible VSS in trade policy



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Green Button



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Counsellor, Trade and  
Environment Division,  
WTO



**Moderated by,**  
**Alice Tipping,**  
Director, Trade and  
Sustainable Development,  
IISD





# Lunch

- › Lunch will be served in the restaurant downstairs.
- › If you have dietary requirements, please speak to a member of staff
- › Please be back at **13h30**



# Interactive session: *World Café style*

**3 rounds of 20 minutes each**

**Round 1:** Understanding VSSs –Identifying main knowledge gaps

**Round 2:** Credible VSSs and Trade Policy Design – Mapping key opportunities and challenges

**Round 3:** Leveraging VSSs in Trade Policy – blockages towards successful implementation

# Key takeaways and wrap up

**Plenary session** to summarize the findings from the three rounds of discussion

*Moderated by Joshua Wickerham, Senior Advisor, Outreach and Engagement, ISEAL*

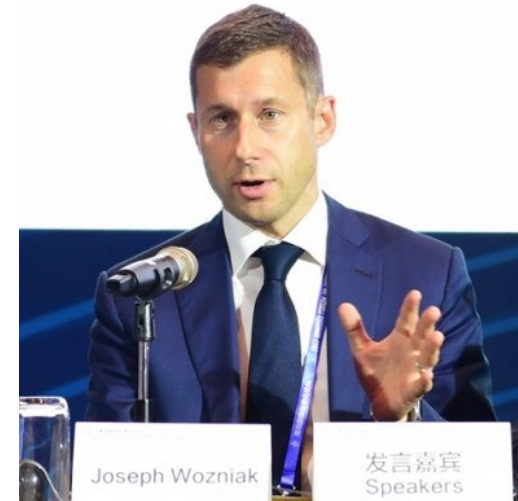
# Closing remarks



**Karin Kreider,**  
Executive Director  
ISEAL



**Florencia Sarmiento,**  
Policy Advisor  
IISD



**Joseph Wozniak,**  
Head, Tade for Sustainable  
Development,  
International Trade Centre (ITC)



**Martin Peter,**  
Deputy Head, Trade Promotion,  
Swiss State Secretariat for  
Economic Affairs (SECO)



# Coffee and networking



**Thank you**

