

The Accountability Framework Initiative (AFi) - Advice and Guidance documents



Type – Advice; commitments, traceability, risk assessments, improvements, landscape and jurisdictional approaches, monitoring and reporting

Website – [here](#).

Contact – [the Accountability Framework Initiative for more information](#).

What is it?

The Accountability Framework Initiative (AFi) is a collective effort of multiple organizations dedicated to protecting forests, natural ecosystems, and human rights by making ethical production and trade of forestry and agricultural commodities the new normal.

The Accountability Framework

The Accountability Framework provides a consensus-based roadmap for companies to set goals, take action, and report on progress toward addressing deforestation, ecosystem conversion, and human rights in their supply chains.

Companies and organizations in the agricultural and forestry sectors can use the Accountability Framework to achieve responsible supply chains.

By following the Framework, companies can be confident that they are applying good practices and meeting stakeholder and market expectations. The Framework also provides a common starting point for organizations and initiatives working to scale up ethical supply chains.

The AFi works closely with delivery partners that offer tailored support to companies working to set and achieve supply chain goals aligned with the Accountability Framework.

You can learn more about these and the services they provide [here](#).

These organizations engage regularly with the AFi and are trained to offer Accountability Framework-aligned services and tools to accelerate the journey toward responsible supply chains.

Although currently focused on terrestrial commodities, the principles and guidelines are also applicable to the seafood sector, and can be used by:

- Companies;
- Financial institutions;
- Industry and multi-stakeholder initiatives (such as industry associations) and,
- Reporting initiatives (the reporting and assessment community and organizations)

The framework for companies is based on twelve core principles under seven action areas essential to achieving ethical supply chains.

1. Set Goals;
 - a. Protection of forests and other natural ecosystems;
 - b. Respect human rights; and,
 - c. Specification of commitments
2. Establish company systems;

- a. Company systems to drive effective implementation
3. Manage supply chains;
 - a. Supply chain assessment and traceability; and
 - b. Managing for supply chain companies
4. Manage production;
 - a. Site establishment
 - b. Site management and long-term protection; and,
 - c. Remediation and environmental restoration
5. Collaborate;
 - a. Collaboration for landscape and sectoral sustainability
6. Monitor and verify;
 - a. Monitoring and verification
7. Report progress
 - a. Reporting, disclosure, and claims

The framework provides a wealth of additional resources, including:

- Guidance documents for each of these core principles;
- Operational guidance on issues such as collaboration, environmental restoration and compensation, smallholder inclusion, monitoring and verification, etc.,
- Definitions;
- How to guides e.g., on how to write an ethical supply chain policy;
- Examples of how multiple companies have used the Framework;
- An AFI self-assessment tool; and,
- An AFI e-learning platform is also expected soon.
- It also provides advice and guidance on the following issues:
 - Deforestation and conversion;
 - Responsible production;
 - Monitoring and verification;
 - Human rights;
 - Traceability;
 - Certification;
 - Land sector GHG emissions;
 - Supply chain management;
 - Due diligence;
 - Landscape and jurisdictional approaches.

The AFI coalition includes:

- The AFI Steering Group is responsible for deciding the direction of the AFI and approving its material;
- Supporting Partners, who promote the use of the AFI by companies, industry groups, financial institutions, governments and other key stakeholders;
- The Backbone Team, who act as the AFI Secretariat co-hosted by the Rainforest Alliance and Meridian Institute, assists users in applying the framework;
- The Southeast Asia Coalition, which supports companies and other stakeholders to mainstream responsible agriculture and forestry supply chains in this region; and,
- The Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG), provides input and guidance from the perspective of companies, industry groups, and financial institutions. As an advisory group, the PSAG does not participate in AFI decision-making.