



The Consumer Goods  
**FORUM**



Sustainable Supply  
Chain Initiative



## Building trust in sustainability standards worldwide

### What We Do

To support companies in their supply chain due diligence, the Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) was launched by The Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) in 2017 to recognise third-party auditing schemes and programmes that cover key sustainability requirements and apply relevant governance and verification practices. Through a comprehensive benchmarking process built on criteria developed by CGF members and expert stakeholders, the SSCI currently recognises third-party auditing programmes that meet industry expectations on social sustainability, and in the future, on environmental sustainability as well.

### Why We Do It

Organisations use third-party audits and certifications to ensure their suppliers provide decent working conditions to their employees, source their materials sustainably and respect the environment, among other criteria. But with hundreds of schemes on the market to choose from, and dozens more emerging each year, it can be challenging for organisations to know which scheme to trust. The decision becomes more challenging given that not all auditing schemes cover social sustainability measures the same way, resulting in distrust in audits and misalignment in the industry.

### How We Do It

In only three years, the SSCI has become a leading industry source for defining social sustainability criteria with its large network of coalition members, stakeholders and partners. After the SSCI was founded by the CGF Board in 2017 and its CEO-led Steering Committee was developed, two Technical Working Groups were launched. These Working Groups, consisting of CGF members and industry partners, are tasked with developing the criteria for each benchmarking scope. The SSCI also developed a partnership with the

Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) in 2018 to develop a social compliance benchmarking standard specific to the needs of auditing and certification schemes targeting the seafood industry.

Keeping in line with our commitment towards building transparency in the industry, the SSCI also welcomes public comments and feedback during the development of benchmarking criteria, as well as applicant schemes. Once the criteria has been initially developed by the Working Groups, the SSCI opens an online public consultation and engages directly with relevant stakeholders and industry leaders.

The first version of benchmarking criteria on Social and Scheme Management Criteria were finalised in early 2020 and opened for applications in May 2020.

### The Benchmarking Process

The SSCI benchmarking process consists of six steps, starting with an application to the SSCI team.



- Step 1: Scheme application
- Step 2: Desktop review
- Step 3: Office consultation with expert Benchmark Leader
- Step 4: Public consultation
- Step 5: Industry review and SSCI decision
- Step 6: SSCI recognition

SSCI-recognised schemes will be listed on the SSCI website.

*“The SSCI provides companies with much needed transparency on which voluntary standards are credible and robust, so that companies can simply ask their suppliers ‘Do you have an SSCI-recognised audit?’*

*This is a game changer!”*



**Hugo Byrnes,**  
Vice President of Product Integrity, Ahold Delhaize  
Co-Chair, Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative



Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative



### Now Welcoming Applications

The SSCI is pleased to announce third-party auditing schemes and programmes are now invited to apply for SSCI recognition. Schemes will be benchmarked against the SSCI Social and Scheme Management Criteria.

#### Social Criteria

Ensures schemes cover key social sustainability standards

- Management Systems
- Compliance with National Legislation
- No Forced, Bonded and Prison Labour
- No Child Labour
- Freedom of Association and Effective Recognition of the Right to Collective Bargaining
- No Discrimination, Harassment or Abuse
- Health and Safety
- Building and Fire safety
- Wages, Benefits and Terms of Employment
- Working Hours
- Grievance Mechanisms

#### Scheme Management Criteria

Ensures schemes operate ethically and responsibly

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Governance</b>                  | <b>Operational Management</b>   |
| • Scheme Governance                | • Relationship with Audit Firms |
| • Scope and Objectives             | • Auditor Competence            |
| • Integrity Programme              | • Audit Protocol                |
| • Logo Use and Claims              | • Audit Reporting               |
| • Standard Setting and Maintenance | • Follow-up Action              |
| • Accreditation                    | • Data Management               |

The SSCI will benchmark schemes against its Social and Scheme Management Criteria in three different sectoral scopes:

#### Manufacturing & Processing

For schemes covering manufacturing and processing facilities

*Now accepting scheme applications*

#### Primary Production

For schemes covering land-based agriculture and aquaculture production

*Under development*

#### At-Sea Operations

For schemes covering the seafood sector



*Public consultation launched July 2020*

#### To Apply

For more information, please contact the SSCI team or visit the SSCI website to download the application form and benchmarking requirements. Schemes undergoing benchmarking and SSCI-recognised schemes will be listed on the SSCI website.

### Join Us

Membership to the SSCI, the newest Coalition of Action from The Consumer Goods Forum (CGF), is open to interested CGF members and relevant industry partners. Join more than 20 global leaders shape the industry's expectations for sustainability standards and drive harmonisation in this key issue. Contact the SSCI team for more information.



[www.tcgfssci.com](http://www.tcgfssci.com)



[ssci@theconsumergoodsforum.com](mailto:ssci@theconsumergoodsforum.com)



@CGF\_Sus



Social and Environmental Sustainability

CEO Co-Sponsors

Sainsbury's



Building trust in sustainability standards worldwide