

YOUR INPUT NEEDED

We're setting the bar for sustainability standards in our industry. Join the movement!



The Challenge

Certifications are a key tool for organisations to use when conducting supply chain due diligence. However, with dozens of standards to choose from, and more emerging each year — all of which approach sustainability differently — it can be difficult for organisations to know which schemes to trust.

The Solution

The Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) benchmarks third-party sustainability auditing, monitoring, and certification standards against industry-developed criteria to provide trusted guidance on which standards cover key sustainability topics and operate responsibly. The SSCI currently operates a social benchmark and is working to expand its scope to environmental sustainability.

Your Opportunity to Participate

We're looking for expert insight as we expand our scope to include environmental sustainability and develop our Benchmark Criteria for environmental sustainability standards. You're invited to participate in a stakeholder consultation and evaluate the first draft of the Criteria which will apply to schemes and programmes working in the Manufacturing & Processing; Primary Production; and Forestry sectors. Keep reading to learn more about this opportunity and the Criteria available for consultation.

The Consultation Process

The SSCI Environmental Benchmark Criteria will define minimum requirements for how environmental certifications should operate. In demonstrating alignment with these Criteria, standards will achieve SSCI Recognition and join a list of trusted, credible standards. This process will help ensure the industry has a clear and consistent set of expectations to follow and help build trust in environmental certifications. **We need your help to make this process successful!**

As we develop the Benchmark Criteria for environmental standards, **we want to ensure that we cover all the essential areas required for a comprehensive environmental certification framework. Therefore, we invite you to review our proposed structure and provide feedback on whether we are covering all the essential areas.** We also welcome your recommendations for the benchmarking process and any other stakeholders who should be involved in the process. We understand that some stakeholders may be concerned about the minimum requirements being too stringent or restrictive; however, **we assure you that the process will be collaborative, and we will take all feedback into account to develop realistic, effective, and achievable standards.**

By participating in development of the Benchmark Criteria, you will contribute to a more **transparent, credible, and sustainable environmental certification system.** Your input will help ensure that the SSCI recognises the best environmental certifications and sets a bar for our industry that meets the expectations of all stakeholders.

We believe that this benchmarking process is a game-changer for the environmental certification landscape, and we need your help to make it a success. Join us in this movement and make a positive impact on our environment!





About the Benchmark

The SSCI Benchmark process consists of six steps, starting with an application to the SSCI team. The process is designed to last 12 months.



About the Draft Environmental Benchmark Criteria

You are invited to provide your feedback on our draft Benchmark Criteria for environmental sustainability standards working in the Manufacturing and Processing; Primary Production; and Forestry sectors.

Benchmark applicants will be evaluated against the SSCI's Environmental Benchmark Criteria and the SSCI's Scheme Management Criteria.

The Environmental Benchmark Criteria will define the key environmental sustainability topics that standards should cover. The topics include:

- Environmental Management System
- Legislation and Transparency
- Pollution Prevention and Management of Potentially Hazardous Substances
- Major Incident Prevention and Management
- Soil Preservation
- Energy Use
- Water Use
- Emissions to Air
- Wastewater
- Waste
- Land Use and Biodiversity
- Grievance Mechanisms

The public consultation will run on the SSCI website from 30th May to 30th June 2023. We invite you to review the draft Environmental Benchmark Criteria and send your comments by the deadline to ssci@theconsumergoodsforum.com.

Other Benchmarking Information

All SSCI Benchmark applicant schemes will be evaluated against the SSCI Scheme Management Criteria in addition to the Environmental Benchmark Criteria. While the Environmental Benchmark Criteria will define the topics that standards should cover, the Scheme Management Criteria ensure schemes operate ethically and responsibly. These Criteria are not open for consultation at this time, but should you have any feedback for the SSCI team, we invite you to contact us. The Scheme Management Criteria cover:

Governance

- Scheme Governance
- Scope and Objectives
- Integrity Programme
- Logo Use and Claims
- Standard Setting and Maintenance
- Accreditation

Operational Management

- Relationship with Audit Firms
- Auditor Competence
- Audit Protocol
- Audit Reporting
- Follow-up Action
- Data Management

Importantly, all SSCI Benchmark Criteria are designed to be updated as the sustainability and due diligence landscapes evolve in the spirit of the SSCI's commitment to drive continuous improvement and set standards for best practice in the industry.

Contact the SSCI



www.tcgfssci.com



ssci@theconsumergoodsforum.com



@CGF_Sus



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