



Introducing the SSCI Benchmark

The Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative is helping build trust in sustainability standards worldwide by recognising third-party certification, monitoring, and audit schemes that meet industry-defined expectations for sustainability.

In achieving SSCI Recognition, schemes demonstrate they cover key sustainability elements and apply relevant governance mechanisms — raising the bar for sustainability certifications and driving harmonisation in the industry.

About the SSCI Benchmark

Created by the industry, for the industry, the Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) is a CEO-led Coalition of Action from The Consumer Goods Forum helping businesses navigate the complex sustainability landscape and practice robust supply chain due diligence.

To do so, the SSCI operates a benchmark to drive alignment, credibility, and continuous improvement among the third-party auditing, monitoring, and certification standards that businesses use to verify the sustainability of their supply chains. The SSCI Benchmark recognises schemes and programmes that meet the industry’s minimum expectations for how schemes should operate and what sustainability topics they should cover. The Benchmark currently recognises social sustainability standards and is working to expand its scope to include environmental sustainability standards as well.

To become SSCI-Recognised, schemes are evaluated against the SSCI Benchmark Criteria. These are an industry-developed set of expectations based on internationally recognised guidelines and codes defining what social and environmental schemes should include regarding audit content, audit protocol, and governance. The 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. After achieving SSCI Recognition, schemes are monitored annually to ensure continued alignment with the Criteria.

As a result of this benchmarking process, the SSCI provides trusted guidance on which schemes are consistently credible and trustworthy, while helping to improve the quality of audits and certifications used in our industry.

Why Apply?

With the 2030 deadline to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals quickly approaching, all businesses have a role to play to help make sustainability the norm in our industry. Your standards play an important part in ensuring businesses act as a force for good, and the SSCI is designed to help improve your ability to do so.

For sustainability schemes and programmes, achieving SSCI Recognition sends a clear signal to organisations that your standard meets the industry’s expectations for sustainability requirements, operates responsibly, and is aligned with the industry’s collective movement towards responsible business and the requirements of existing and emerging policy environments.

SSCI Recognition adds an additional, yet key, layer of verification and trust to your scheme – setting you apart from the competition and demonstrating your commitment to being a leader in the sustainability field.

JOIN YOUR PEERS

SSCI-Recognised Schemes



Current Applicants



(As of April 2023)

Follow their progress at recognition.tcgfssci.com



About the Benchmark Process

The SSCI Benchmark process consists of six steps, starting with an application to the SSCI team. Schemes are benchmarked against the SSCI Benchmark Requirements (Criteria), and the process is designed to last 12 months.



The Benchmark currently recognises social sustainability standards operating in three sectors: Manufacturing & Processing; Primary Production (land-based agriculture and aquaculture); and At-Sea Operations. Environmental standards will soon be recognised under three scopes: Manufacturing & Processing; Primary Production; and Forestry.

Social sustainability standards are benchmarked against the SSCI Social Criteria, which ensures schemes cover these key social sustainability topics:

- 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
- Harrassment or Abuse
- Health and Safety
- Building and Fire Safety
- Wages, Benefits and Terms of Employment
- Working Hours
- Grievance Mechanisms
- Primary Production: Chemical Management and Community Impact/ Responsible Farming Practices
- At-Sea Operations: Repatriation

Environmental sustainability standards will be benchmarked against the SSCI Environmental Criteria, which will ensure schemes cover key environmental sustainability topics. To participate in the development of this Criteria, contact our Environmental Working Group at ssci@theconsumergoodsforum.com.

All applicants are benchmarked against the SSCI's Scheme Management Criteria, which ensure schemes operate ethically and responsibly. The topics are:

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| <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme Governance • Scope and Objectives • Integrity Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logo Use and Claims • Standard Setting and Maintenance • Accreditation | <p>Operational Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship with Audit Firms • Auditor Competence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Protocol • Audit Reporting • Follow-up Action • Data Management |
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Join Your Peers — Apply Today!

Third-party social sustainability standards are invited to apply for SSCI Recognition under three sectoral scopes: Manufacturing & Processing, Primary Production (including land-based aquaculture), and At-Sea Operations. The SSCI is also developing a set of Environmental Criteria to open the Benchmark to environmental sustainability standards.

To download the Benchmark Criteria and apply, visit benchmark.tcgfssci.com.

Contact the SSCI



www.tcgfssci.com



ssci@theconsumergoodsforum.com



@CGF_Sus



CGF Social and Environmental Sustainability

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Building trust in sustainability standards worldwide