

Social Responsibility Standards: A Quick Glimpse

Although efforts to establish measurements, standards and certifications related to various areas of social responsibility are ongoing, here are many of the most common ones referenced:

ISO Standard 24000--Social Responsibility:

The International Organization for Standardization is developing an international standard of voluntary guidelines for social responsibility. Publication date: 2008. Because it is voluntary, it won't be a certification standard.

FOOD LABELING



Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO)

Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO) coordinates Fairtrade labeling at an international level. Its standards are designed to tackle poverty and empower producers in the world's poorest countries. FLO also helps producers to gain Fairtrade certification and develop market opportunities. Locally based Liaison Officers provide training, guidance on certification and facilitate relationships with buyers. FLO's member organizations around the world produce or promote Fairtrade products. They developed the Fairtrade labeling model and are responsible for decision making within FLO. The Fairtrade certification system is run by a separate company called FLO-CERT. By checking compliance with Fairtrade standards, FLO-CERT ensures that relevant social and environmental standards are met and that producers receive a fair price.



Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Created in 1993 to move forward discussions and practices related to sustainable forestry worldwide. The council "sets forth principles, criteria and standards that span economic, social and environmental concerns. One of the best-known global

systems for guiding forest management toward sustainable outcomes. 57 countries current apply FSC standards for forest management.



International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS)

The IOAS is an independent, non-profit organisation that is committed to cultivating integrity and trust across the organic community. It does this primarily by providing accreditation and assessment services to certification bodies working in organic agriculture. It currently works as the sole provider of accreditation against IFOAM Norms and is heavily engaged in working in collaboration with regulators of the organic trade on international and national levels. Since 2005 the IOAS also provides a training service relevant to government authorities, accreditation bodies and certification bodies working in the field of conformity assessment of organic agriculture.



Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

The Marine Stewardship Council is a certification and ecolabelling program for sustainable seafood from wild fisheries. The Marine Stewardship Council works with fisheries, seafood companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public to promote the best environmental choice in seafood globally.

MSC's standards cover sustainable fishing and seafood traceability. They ensure that MSC-labelled seafood comes from, and can be traced back to, sustainable fisheries. The MSC standards are consistent with the "Guidelines for the Eco-labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Wild Capture Fisheries" adopted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in 2005.



[Rainforest Alliance / Sustainable Agriculture Network \(SAN\)](#)

The Rainforest Alliance is an NGO working to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behavior. The Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) promotes efficient and productive agriculture, biodiversity conservation and sustainable community development by creating social and environmental standards.

The Rainforest Alliance promotes standards developed by the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) for sustainability that conserve wildlife and wildlands and ensure the well-being of workers and their communities. Farms that meet the criteria of the Sustainable Agriculture Network earn the right to use the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal.

The Rainforest Alliance and the SAN are joint owners of the Rainforest Alliance Certified system.



[Social Accountability Accreditation Services \(SAAS\)](#)

Social Accountability Accreditation Services (SAAS) supports social responsibility by ensuring the implementation of credible social standards designed to protect people and their communities. SAAS evaluates and accredits auditing organisations to assure they are qualified to hold their clients accountable to such social standards. SAAS is the only global accreditation body whose mission is to support implementation of social and labour standards.

SAAS supports labour rights and the improvement of workplace environments through social responsibility, accountability and transparency of businesses and organizations. This is accomplished by ensuring the implementation of credible social standards and codes of conduct by providing quality assurance and evaluation services designed to assess competency of auditors. SAAS sets strict standards and oversight procedures, evaluating and accrediting auditing organisations to assure they are qualified to hold their clients accountable to social standards like SA8000. SAAS operates a quality system consistent with the requirements of ISO / IEC Guide 17011. This system includes regular review and external audits.



[Social Accountability International \(SAI\)](#)

Social Accountability International (SAI) is a global, multi-stakeholder non-profit organisation dedicated to improving workplaces and communities. SAI works to improve working conditions through the expansion and further development of its SA 8000 standard, a voluntary social standard for decent working conditions based on international human rights and labour conventions. SAI offers training in SA8000 and other workplace standards to managers, workers and auditors. It contracts with a global accreditation agency, Social Accountability Accreditation Services (SAAS) that licenses and oversees auditing organizations to award certification to employers that comply with SA8000.



[Union for Ethical BioTrade](#)

The Union for Ethical BioTrade is a not-for-profit association that promotes the "Sourcing with Respect" of ingredients that come from native biodiversity. Members commit to gradually ensuring that their sourcing practices promote the conservation of biodiversity, respect traditional knowledge and assure the equitable sharing of benefits all along the supply chain.

Its standards reflect the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the Millennium Development Goals.

The "ethical sourcing of biodiversity" refers to practices that promote the sustainable use of natural ingredients derived from flora and fauna that naturally occur in the sourcing area.



UTZ CERTIFIED

Farms and cooperatives use UTZ certification to prove that they grow their coffee, tea or cocoa professionally and with care for their local communities and the environment. Producers comply with the UTZ CERTIFIED Code of Conduct, which sets criteria for efficient farm management and socially and environmentally responsible production of coffee, cocoa and tea. UTZ CERTIFIED's training on good agricultural and business practices enables producers to reduce costs and increase yields without compromising the environment or the people involved. Producers are inspected annually by independent auditors to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct. UTZ CERTIFIED offers online real-time traceability providing brands and retailers with a tool to incorporate and credibly demonstrate responsible sourcing practices.

OTHER RELATED CERTIFICATIONS

Principles for Responsible Investment:

Created by the United Nations Environment Program Finance Initiative and the UN Global Compact. A framework that helps institutional investors achieve better long-term investment returns and sustainable markets through improved analysis of environmental, social and governance issues in investment process and the exercise of responsible ownership practices. For a list of signatories, visit www.unpri.org/signatories.

United Nations Global Compact:

A voluntary, non-bureaucratic initiative of the United Nations designed to stimulate change, promote good corporate citizenship, and encourage innovative solutions and partnerships through the power of collective action. Its 10 principles are followed by more than 4,000 corporations, NGOs and other entities worldwide

Energy Star:

A joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy that offers guidelines, tools, expert help, a recognition program and information on energy efficiency. A great starting place for anyone with energy-related questions.

European Ecolabel:

The highest environmental certification available from the European Union. A voluntary scheme designed to encourage businesses to market products and services that are friendly to the environment. Its highly recognized flower symbol allows European consumers to easily identify which products have been certified. The European Eco-label is part of a broader strategy to promote sustainable consumption and production.

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI):

Considered one of the most important developments in the arena of social audits, the Global Reporting Initiative aims to make reporting on economic, environmental and social performance--sustainability reporting--by all organizations in every sector worldwide as routine and comparable as financial reporting. The GRI Reporting Framework is increasingly recognized as the de facto global standard in sustainability reporting, in large part because it "seeks to reduce confusion [and] harmonize rules of disclosure as much as possible"

Green Globe 21:

A popular international environmental certification and benchmarking program specifically for the travel and tourism industry. Green Globes environmental reports demonstrate responsible behavior across the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental management. Formerly a membership program where signatories simply committed to make themselves more environmentally sustainable, membership now requires third-party verification and is subject to international performance benchmarking. It also offers a certification program.

ISO Standard 14000--Environmental Management Systems:

A systems approach to environmental management that identifies an organization's efforts and performance toward minimizing environmental harm. A framework of standards used by hundreds of organizations worldwide. Developed by the International Organization for Standardization.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED):

Run by the Green Building Council, the LEED Green Building Rating System "is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings."