



**COFFEE  
SUSTAINABILITY  
REFERENCE CODE  
.....  
GLOSSARY & GUIDANCE**

# GLOSSARY

This Glossary supports the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code, a common language for the sector to collectively advance farmers' prosperity, social well-being, and the conservation of nature. This document is a living document that will be continually edited and updated.

## INTRODUCTION

- .....
- "All" producers/workers** The term "All" with respect to producers/workers is to signify inclusiveness regardless of race, colour, sex/gender, age, disability, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin (among other characteristics).
- .....
- Continuous improvement** Also known under ISO as "continual" improvement. Continuous Improvement is an ongoing effort to improve your organization's products, services, and/or processes.  
Source: ISO 9001:2015 subclause 10.3
- .....
- Farm** Area of land used for growing coffee. Regarding the applicability of the Principles and Practices in the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code, it refers to producer that are not considered individual smallholders (see definition of smallholders below).
- .....
- Group** An organised body of persons or enterprises that share similar characteristics are part of a shared internal management system and, for assessment purposes, are considered as a single unit.  
Source: ISEAL Alliance Assurance Code
- .....
- Primary processing** Series of methods to produce green coffee beans. Primary processing includes post-harvest processing methods like wet and dry processing.
- .....
- Producer** farmer/ farming family (smallholder or not) operating either individually or in a group. The terms "producer" and "farmer" are used interchangeably within the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code.
- .....
- Smallholders** Small-scale agricultural producers that primarily rely on family or household labor or workforce exchange with other members of the community. They might hire temporary workers for seasonal tasks or even hire (few) permanent workers. Source: Rainforest Alliance
- .....
- Traceability** The ability to verify the history, location, or application of an item by means of documented recorded identification.  
Source: ISEAL Alliance Chain of custody models and definitions



# ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

## **Business activities**

Everything that a company does in the course of fulfilling the strategy, purpose, objectives and decisions of the business. This may include activities such as mergers and acquisitions, research and development, design, construction, production, distribution, purchasing, sales, provision of security, contracting, human resource activities, marketing, conduct of external/government relations including lobbying, engagement with stakeholders, relocation of communities, social investment and the activities of legal and financial functions, among others. [Source: UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework definition](#)

## **Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)**

Diversity: includes all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

Equity: is fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Inclusion: is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

[Source: YW Boston](#)

## **Independent sources**

A source that has no vested interest, ties or receives support for providing the information.

## **Internal Management (inspection) System**

The documented set of procedures and processes that a group will implement to ensure it can achieve its specified requirements.

[Source: ISEAL Alliance Assurance Code](#)

## **Living Income**

The net annual income required for a household in a particular place to afford a decent standard of living for all members of that household. Elements of a decent standard of living include: food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs including provisions for unexpected events.

[Source: Global Living Wage Coalition](#)



## **Marginalized**

Those excluded from mainstream social, economic, educational, and/or cultural life. Examples of marginalized populations include, but are not limited to, groups excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status. Source: Foster Osei Baah et al. (2019)

---

## **Productivity**

Measure of production efficiency based on the ratio of production output to production inputs of land, capital, water, other natural resources, labour, energy or other materials. Productivity measures the ratio of what you get out of your coffee field to what you put into it. Source: OECD

---

## **Profitability**

Ability of a farm to earn a profit. A profit is what is left of the revenue a farm generates after it pays all expenses directly related to the generation of the revenue, such as producing a product, and other expenses related to the conduct of the business' activities.



# SOCIAL WELL-BEING

## Child labour

Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development. International standards set the general minimum age for admission to employment or work at 15 years (13 for light work) and the minimum age for hazardous work at 18 (16 under certain strict conditions). They provide for the possibility of initially setting the general minimum age at 14 (12 for light work) where the economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed.

Hazardous work is work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardise the health, safety, or morals of young persons.

Children between the ages of 13 and 15 years old may do light work, as long as it does not harm their health or development, or hinder their attendance at school or participation in vocational orientation and training. Source: ILO Convention 138 article 3 and 7, ILO Recommendation 190

## Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining is a key means through which employers and their organizations and trade unions can establish fair wages and working conditions. It also provides the basis for sound labour relations. Typical issues on the bargaining agenda include wages, working time, training, occupational health and safety and equal treatment. The objective of these negotiations is to arrive at a collective agreement that regulates terms and conditions of employment. Collective agreements may also address the rights and responsibilities of the parties thus ensuring harmonious and productive industries and workplaces. Enhancing the inclusiveness of collective bargaining and collective agreements is a key means for reducing inequality and extending labour protection. Source: ILO

## Discrimination

Any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin (among other characteristics), which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity and treatment in employment or occupation. Source: ILO C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)



## Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples (FPIC)

A legal condition whereby a person or community can be said to have given consent to an action prior to its commencement, based upon a clear appreciation and understanding of the facts, implications and future consequences of that action, and the possession of all relevant facts at the time when consent is given. Free, prior and informed consent includes the right to grant, modify, withhold or withdraw approval. [Source: United Nations Human Rights](#)

## Gender Based Violence and harassment

Means violence and harassment directed at persons because of their sex or gender, or affecting persons of a particular sex or gender disproportionately, and includes sexual harassment. [Source: ILO C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 \(No. 190\)](#)

## Gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) analysis

Is a concept that addresses improving access to livelihood assets and services for ALL, including the women, poor, and excluded. It supports inclusivity and increases the voice and influence of all including of the women, poor and excluded (adapted UNDP). [Source: UNDP](#)

## Human Rights

Basic international standards aimed at securing dignity and equality for all. They include the rights contained in the International Bill of Human Rights – meaning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. They also include the principles concerning fundamental rights set out in the International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. [Source: UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework](#)

## Human Rights Due Diligence

Due Diligence is an ongoing risk management process to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how a company addresses its actual and potential human rights impacts. The guidance recommends four key steps: assessing actual and potential human rights impacts; integrating and acting on the findings; tracking responses; and communicating about how impacts are addressed. [Source: UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework](#)

## Living Wage

The remuneration received for a standard workweek by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and her or his family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events. [Source: Global Living Wage Coalition](#)



**National minimum wage**

Minimum amount of remuneration that an employer is required to pay wage earners for the work performed during a given period, which cannot be reduced by collective agreement or an individual contract. Source: ILO

---

**Violence and harassment**

Range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment. Source: ILO C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)

---

**Workers**

All workers including permanent, seasonal, part time, piece rate, migrant and 3rd party contractors.

---

**Piece rate workers**

Workers who are paid a set amount of money per number of unit output or per number of completed tasks.

---

**Seasonal workers**

Workers who hold implicit or explicit contracts of employment where the timing and duration of the contract is significantly influenced by seasonal factors such as climatic cycle, public holidays and/or agricultural harvests. These workers may be classified as employees or own-account workers according to the specific characteristics of the employment contract. Source: OECD



# ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY & STEWARDSHIP

## **Carbon sequestration**

The process of removing carbon from the atmosphere and depositing it in a reservoir. [Source: UNFCC](#)

## **Climate change adaptation**

Refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change. In simple terms, countries and communities need to develop adaptation solution and implement action to respond to the impacts of climate change that are already happening, as well as prepare for future impacts. [Source: UNFCC](#)

## **Climate change mitigation**

In the context of climate change, a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Examples include using fossil fuels more efficiently for industrial processes or electricity generation, switching to solar energy or wind power, improving the insulation of buildings, and expanding forests and other "sinks" to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. [Source: UNFCC](#)

## **Cutoff date (related to no-deforestation and no-conversion commitments)**

The date after which deforestation or conversion renders a given area or production unit non-compliant with no-deforestation or no-conversion commitments, respectively. [Source: Accountability Framework Initiative Terms and Definitions](#)

## **Degradation**

Changes within a natural ecosystem that significantly and negatively affect its species composition, structure, and/or function and reduce the ecosystem's capacity to supply products, support biodiversity, and/or deliver ecosystem services. [Source: Accountability Framework Initiative Terms and Definitions](#)

## **Ecosystem**

A dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit. [Source: Preferred by Nature \(www.preferredbynature.org\)](http://www.preferredbynature.org)





## Fossil Fuels

Decomposing plants and other organisms, buried beneath layers of sediment and rock, have taken millennia to become the carbon-rich deposits we now call fossil fuels. These non-renewable fuels, which include coal, oil, and natural gas, supply about 80 percent of the world's energy. They provide electricity, heat, and transportation, while also feeding the processes that make a huge range of products, from steel to plastics. When fossil fuels are burned, they release carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, which in turn trap heat in our atmosphere, making them the primary contributors to global warming and climate change. [Source: National Geographic](#)

## Genetically Modified Organism (GMO)

Organisms (i.e. plants, animals or microorganisms) in which the genetic material (DNA) has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination.

## Greenhouse gases (GHGs)

The atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and climate change. The major GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). Less prevalent --but very powerful -- greenhouse gases are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). [Source: UNFCCC](#)

## Hazardous waste

Various types of waste with defined hazardous properties that are harmful for the environment and/or human health. [Source: Umwelt Bundesamt](#)

## Highly Hazardous Pesticides

Pesticides that are acknowledged to present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards to health or environment according to internationally accepted classification systems such as WHO or GHS or their listing in relevant binding international agreements or conventions. In addition, pesticides that appear to cause severe or irreversible harm to health or the environment under conditions of use in a country may be considered to be and treated as highly hazardous. [Source: FAO](#)

## Integrated pest management

Careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human and animal health and/or the environment. IPM emphasizes the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms. [Source: FAO](#)



## Maximum residue Limits (MRLs)

The highest level of a pesticide residue that is legally tolerated in or on food or feed when pesticides are applied correctly in accordance with Good Agricultural Practice. [Source: FAO Codex Alimentarius](#)

## Natural Forest

A forest that is a natural ecosystem. Natural forests possess many or most of the characteristics of a forest native to the given site, including species composition, structure, and ecological function. Natural forests include:

- a) Primary forests that have not been subject to major human impacts in recent history.
- b) Regenerated (second-growth) forests that were subject to major impacts in the past (for instance by agriculture, livestock raising, tree plantations, or intensive logging) but where the main causes of impact have ceased or greatly diminished and the ecosystem has attained much of the species composition, structure, and ecological function of prior or other contemporary natural ecosystems.
- c) Managed natural forests where much of the ecosystem's composition, structure, and ecological function exist in the presence of activities such as:
  - Harvesting of timber or other forest products, including management to promote high-value species.
  - Low intensity, small-scale cultivation within the forest, such as less-intensive forms of swidden agriculture in a forest mosaic.
- d) Forests that have been partially degraded by anthropogenic or natural causes (e.g. harvesting, fire, climate change, invasive species, or others) but where the land has not been converted to another use and where degradation does not result in the sustained reduction of tree cover below the thresholds that define a forest or sustained loss of other main elements of ecosystem composition, structure, and ecological function.

[Source: Accountability Framework Initiative Terms and Definitions](#)

## Personal Protective Equipment

Any clothes, materials or devices that provide protection from pesticide exposure during handling and application. It includes both specifically designed protective equipment and clothing reserved for pesticide application and handling. [Source:FAO](#)

## Pest

Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants and plant products, materials or environments and includes vectors of parasites or pathogens of human and animal disease and animals causing public health nuisance. [Source: FAO](#)



**Pesticide**

Any substance, or mixture of substances of chemical or biological ingredients intended for repelling, destroying or controlling any pest, or regulating plant growth. It includes herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, nematicides. [Source: FAO](#)

---

**Renewable energy source**

Energy that is derived from natural processes (e.g. sunlight and wind) that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed. Solar, wind, geothermal, hydro, and biomass are common sources of renewable energy. [Source: International Energy Agency](#)

---

**Water/energy efficiency**

Minimization of the amount of water/energy used to accomplish a function, task or result.

# GUIDANCE

The Guidance will be further developed with stakeholders and sustainability schemes that use the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code as a reference for their own programs. This will enable GCP to respond to users' questions on interpretations and develop consistency over time.

## Introduction

All Practices in the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code reflect a minimum baseline threshold of sustainability. The ambition is that all producers meet this baseline threshold. However, recognizing that for mainstream coffee production and in particular for smallholders, some of the Expected Results might not yet be in place, continuous improvement is essential.

Companies/organizations implementing a sustainability scheme under GCP Equivalence Mechanism have flexibility to set timelines and priorities for the implementation of the different Practices based on the context of the producers with whom they work, especially considering smallholders' realities and needs. The assessment/evaluation of the Practices and Expected Results at farm level provide useful information to identify gaps, inform trainings and implement further actions to foster continuous improvement.



## Economic prosperity

- Resources on living income (Expected result 1.2.2): [Living Income Community of Practice](#)
- Resources on diversity, equity and inclusion (Practice 1.3): [ILO](#)
- Research on gender equality (Practice 1.3) in the coffee sector and examples of actions that can empower women in coffee value chains: [International Coffee Organization Report: Gender equality in the coffee sector \(2018\)](#)
- Research and tools to accelerate gender equity in the coffee value chain (Practice 1.3): [The Partnership for Gender Equity](#)
- Practice 3.1: Relevant legal and regulatory frameworks includes local, regional, national and even international regulation with respect to the environment, social protections and business operations.



## Social well-being

- Expected result 5.4.1: Applicable to all farms, however, depending on the on the context and type of hired labour employed (e.g. seasonal vs permanent) this expected result by not be relevant.
- Expected result 6.2.1: For resources on living wages see (Practice 6.2.1) [Global Living Wage Coalition](#) and [IDH](#).
- Expected result 6.6.2: Examples of elements to include in the procedure are: statement of commitment to the goal of the policy, roles and responsibilities, point of contact, location and content of first aid equipment.
- Expected results 6.6.3: Examples of topics to be covered in trainings include: first aids, fire safety and emergency procedures, safe use of tools, machinery. For resources on safe and healthy supply chains see ILO VZF.
- Expected result 6.3.1: Oral agreements are acceptable if allowed by national law. Under the continuous improvement model, efforts should be made for written contracts as they offer more protection.
- Resources on workers' housing (Practice 6.5): [ILO](#)
- Expected result 7.1.1: The scope of this expected result is land and water used at the farm. Legal expropriation or temporary or permanent restrictions on land and water use may not occur without Free, prior and informed consent. Where involuntary resettlement is unavoidable, it should be minimized and appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts on displaced persons and communities including compensation.



## Environmental Responsibility & Stewardship

- Expected result 8.2.1: In the case of groups, the managers/leaders of the groups are responsible for ensuring that the information is available.
- Practice 9.1: For resources on Integrated Pest Management (Practice 9.1) see: [FAO](#)
- Expected result 9.1.2: In the case of smallholders the focus is on awareness and basic monitoring.
- Expected result 10.2.1: The objective of the soil and/or leaf analysis is to ensure the soil fertility is maintained and improved.
- Expected result 10.2.2: The expected result is to be seen at farm level even if actions are designed at group level.
- Expected results 10.3.4 and 11.2.2: Central processing/ central wastewater treatment refers to mills/washing stations being under control of the farm or group.
- Principle 11: The practices and expected results under this principle follow the logic prevention, reuse and recycling when prevention is not possible and then safe disposal.
- Expected result 11.4.2: By hazardous wastes/wastewater being “treated” is meant that actions are taken to ensure they are not harming the people and the environment.
- Expected result 12.1.4: The focus of this expected result is not on measurement and no specific methodology is being proposed. Rather, the focus is on the identification of the main sources of GHGs for producers as part of increasing awareness.



## GLOBAL COFFEE PLATFORM

Legal venue | Global Coffee Platform  
(Federal Reg. No. CH-660-2928006-4)  
Case postale 1270 | Rue Mina-Audemars 3  
1204 Genève | Switzerland

## GCP Secretariat

Charles de Gaulle Strasse 5  
53113 Bonn, Germany

**PHONE** +49 (0) 228 850 50 0

**EMAIL** [info@globalcoffeeplatform.org](mailto:info@globalcoffeeplatform.org)

**WWW** [globalcoffeeplatform.org](http://globalcoffeeplatform.org)

2021 | Global Coffee Platform



## Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license.

GCP has adopted "open source" copyrights for this document to advance coffee sustainability. Permission is hereby granted, free of charge, to share (copy and redistribute) and adapt (remix, transform and build upon this material), under the following terms:

Attribution - Appropriate credit should be given to the Global Coffee Platform, including a visible link to our website <https://www.globalcoffeeplatform.org> and indicate if changes were made. Please share with us a copy of any modified version.

Share-alike - remixes, transformations and builds upon this material, should follow this copyright license as well.

For documents translated into languages other than English, the English language version remains the definitive version and the Global Coffee Platform accepts no responsibility for any discrepancies between translated versions.

## Document history

Version	Effective date / as of	Details of Change
v1.0 en	October 2021	First version. Released with Coffee Sustainability Reference Code.
v2.0 en	November 2022	Inclusion of new terms in Glossary (farm and producer), added guidance for various Practices / Expected Results. Addition of document history.