



THE DELTA FRAMEWORK

AGREEING ON A COMMON FRAMEWORK FOR
MEASUREMENT OF THE COFFEE AND COTTON SECTORS

Strategic Partners



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WHAT IS THE DELTA FRAMEWORK?

The Delta Framework is a multi-stakeholder project designed to bridge the gap in measuring and reporting sustainability performance across sustainability standards in the coffee and cotton sectors. This project creates a shared language and approach to measuring and communicating sustainability performance globally, aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Delta Framework will support public and private actors in quantifying their sustainability commitments, improve the quality of services farmers receive in the future and help create more favorable government policies that promote sustainability.

The Delta Framework brings together the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), the International Cotton

Advisory Committee (ICAC), the International Coffee Organization (ICO) and the Global Coffee Platform (GCP) on streamlining sustainability performance measurement across commodities aiming at a framework that is adaptable to other commodities as well. It was piloted in Vietnam (coffee), and in South Africa and India (cotton).

The resulting framework comprises 15 outcome and impact indicators, at the farm level, across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

This briefing paper highlights the lessons learnt by GCP through this collaborative work.

In mathematics, Delta means “the change” or “the difference”. The Delta symbol is a triangle. For GCP, the Delta Framework is an opportunity to make a difference in sustainability in the coffee and cotton sectors by bridging the gap between the collection of data in the field, and the use of this data by farmers, businesses and the public sector.



ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS



1

Use of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHP)

Unit: kg active ingredient (a.i.) of HHP per ha of harvested land.

2

Pesticide risk indicator

Unit: risk model based on kg a.i. of pesticides applied per ha of harvested land.

3

Irrigation Water Management

Water extracted for irrigation
Unit: water extracted for irrigation (blue water) per ha of harvested land.

Irrigation efficiency
Unit: percentage of water actually required for irrigation over water extracted for irrigation.

Water productivity
Unit: yield (kg of cotton lint or GBE) per m3 of water consumed per ha of harvested land.

4

Top soil carbon content

Unit: grams of organic carbon per tonne soil per ha land.

5

Fertiliser use by type

Unit: kg a.i. of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) per ha of harvested land
In future: Nitrogen Use Efficiency.

6

Forest, wetland and grassland converted for cotton or coffee production

Unit: ha of forest, wetland or grassland converted to cotton or coffee production.

7

Greenhouse gas emissions

Unit: kg CO2 equivalent per kg cotton lint or GBE.



ECONOMIC INDICATORS



8

Average yield

Unit: kg cotton lint or GBE per ha of harvested land.

9

Gross margin from cotton and coffee production

Unit: USD per ha seed cotton or GBE
In future: Living Income.

10

Price at farm gate (for premium-based organisations)

Unit: local currency per tonne of seed cotton or GBE.

11

Proportion of workers earning a legal minimum wage

Unit: daily average earnings for farm labour compared to (rural) minimum wage in USD or local currency, by gender.



SOCIAL INDICATORS



12

Incidence of the worst forms of child labour

Unit: number of children aged 5 to 17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age.

13

Incidence of forced labour

Unit: number of people aged over 17 years engaged in forced labour, by sex and age.

14

Women's empowerment

Composite indicator assessing leadership, decision-making and control of economic assets.

15

Frequency of fatalities and non-fatalities on the farm

Unit: percentage of fatalities and non-fatal injuries in the reference group, by gender.

Units: GBE coffee Green Bean Equivalent ha hectare kg kilogram



A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR MEASURING SUSTAINABILITY

The Global Coffee Platform (GCP) is a unique multi-stakeholder membership association of coffee producers, traders, roasters and retailers, civil society, governments, and donors, united under a common vision to work collectively towards a thriving, sustainable coffee sector for generations to come. GCP Members believe that sustainability is a shared responsibility and collectively seek to address the most critical sustainability challenges to enhance farmers' economic prosperity, improve well-being, and conservation of nature.

GCP does this by convening and aligning relevant coffee stakeholders to advance sustainability, act on local issues, and scale successful sustainability initiatives across the sector. With its members and the GCP Network of Country Platforms in coffee producing countries, GCP works on increasing demand and supply of coffee produced following at least baseline practices of sustainability in order to foster origin diversity and the viability of the coffee sector.

The Delta Framework is an opportunity to extend the convening, alignment and scaling efforts beyond the coffee sector. The Delta Framework is an opportunity to extend these efforts beyond the coffee sector to generate even greater impact.

Data is a critical issue facing not only the coffee sector, but any organization interested in reporting on their sustainability targets. Reporting on the SDGs requires a large amount of credible data from a wide range of stakeholders. This information needs to be collected in a manner that doesn't burden coffee producers, add pressure to standard holders or compromise privacy. Good data management and use are key if the coffee sector wants to be a leader in SDG reporting.

GCP led an initial consultation process on the Delta Framework indicators – hosting targeted discussions with stakeholder groups along value chains including producers, extension services, processors, governments and retailers among others. From this, GCP gained insight into how data could be collected, aggregated and used by different stakeholders.

Adopting a set of standardized and digitized indicators is expected to enhance clarity and transparency in data collection, reporting and ultimately to increase the sustainability of the agricultural sector as a whole.

DELTA FRAMEWORK PILOT IN VIETNAM

In 2020 and 2021, GCP together with a trader and local government collected data for Di Linh district. Afterwards, a supplementary survey was conducted by GCP in collaboration with a local NGO to gather information of 200 households in 3 communes of Tan Chau, Tan Nghia and Dinh Lac. Additionally, topsoil samples from 100 farm households were randomly selected for analysis by local experts.

From these efforts, GCP was able to develop farm profiles for the participating households and make recommendations on key issues such as soil health, agrochemicals and productivity. These recommendations were shared with farmers and a year later GCP Vietnam visited 14% of the farmers in the sample to understand the uptake and usefulness of these recommendation, which were implemented by 65% if the farmers interviewed.

“I found the recommendations from the project practical and useful. In fact, the recommended amount of fertilizers was fewer than the amount used currently however my family adopted these practices by reducing inorganic fertilizers and increasing organic ones. I know that adopting this good practice will strengthen health for the soil”

— Farmer participating in Delta’s pilot

Although the pilot was small-scale, valuable initial insights have been gained on how the Delta Framework can be used and scaled. GCP Vietnam was

able to provide recommendations to the Delta task force on data collection and how to analyse and disseminate results to local stakeholders. Feedback from farmers was also collected following the pilot. In addition, the report provides new information on the amount of GHG emissions from coffee production activities in the field. Together, these results and recommendations help pave a path for future interventions for sustainable coffee production.



Farmers of Di Linh participants of the Delta Pilot, discussing the key findings of the project. Workshop in Da Lat city on Jan 17, 2022.



Mr. Mai Xuan Thong, Technical Officer, GCP Vietnam and a farmer participating in the Delta pilot.



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT?



Designing a collective vision for measuring sustainability

GCP members share a global vision for a thriving coffee sector and there are many pathways to get there. GCP tackles complex sustainability issues across the value chain to generate shared interest for all stakeholders. The process to develop and test the Delta Framework highlights the importance of including multiple perspectives on how sustainability can be measured and the process to collect data and report on sustainability goals.

GCP has gained a wealth of experience in measuring outcomes with the Coffee Data Standard and the Delta Framework has provided an opportunity to critically and deeply engage with actors beyond the GCP membership. Through the development of the Delta Framework, GCP is collaborating with partners from other commodities as well as national and local governments. This has spurred conversation on how best to measure key sustainability issues and who will take ownership of the work required for a sustainable future for agriculture.

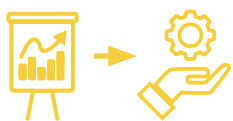


Prioritizing key sustainability issues

Working with new partners and thinking beyond the coffee sector creates space to reflect on the big sustainability questions. First steps in the coffee and cotton sectors show that while different commodities face different challenges, there is still great potential for common ground. Addressing sustainability holistically while prioritizing common issues is beneficial for all stakeholders. This is especially true for companies, retailers and traders who work with multiple commodities and national

governments, whose ministries cover multiple sectors.

With so many challenges at hand, prioritizing key sustainability issues through a multi-stakeholder process helps stakeholders take measurable and meaningful steps towards a thriving coffee sector. By designing a globally aligned set of metrics which prioritize critical sustainability goals, stakeholders are assured of comparable and credible reporting on their sustainability commitments.



From theory to practice

Piloting the Delta Framework in Vietnam has been important for ensuring that the chosen indicators reflect the reality of sustainable coffee production on the ground. Initial engagement with farmers highlights how the Delta Framework can be adapted to different contexts and commodities and still provide meaningful results. By piloting the Delta Framework in the coffee context, GCP and partners reduce the time and resources required by members to measure and report on sustainability targets.

provide feedback to farmers is a key first step in generating additional value for coffee producers.

Following the Delta pilot, GCP worked with a team of consultants to develop an [analysis report](#) which includes the current practices used by coffee farmers and the challenges farmers face in the three communes covered by the pilot project. Learnings such as the ones captured in this report hold value for both governments and the private sector. Governments are able to track progress and generate evidence-based policy for better targeted agricultural services as well as report their sustainability progress against their SDG commitments. Private companies can make informed investments in sustainable value chains, better communicate their sustainability progress and collaborate with complementary initiatives. Together, this ultimately leads to thriving and sustainable agricultural sectors at scale.

One key reflection following the pilot in Vietnam has been on how the Delta Framework adds value to farmers and encourages coffee producers to adopt sustainability practices. Soil analysis results and farm profiles are valuable sources of data, generating increased awareness for farmers and supporting the provision of better targeted services in the future. Going forward, scalable mechanisms to



NEXT STEPS

GCP has spent the last two years developing and piloting the Delta Framework – but this is just the beginning! The Delta Framework is more than a data collection exercise; it is a tool for members to meet their sustainability targets and a source of feedback to improve sustainable production practices. For the Delta Framework to truly be a common language for measuring impact, we need more stakeholders to adopt the Framework.

In Vietnam, the GCP team has captured data on the adoption of sustainability practices by

the farmers who participated in the first coffee sector pilot project. Feedback on farmers' progress will be used to report on sustainability performance and inform measurement efforts in Vietnam (and GCP global) going forward.

As the Delta Framework unfolds, it will also provide examples of good practices, tools to facilitate the Framework's adoption and recommendations on how companies can communicate their sustainability progress to the international community.

Use these indicators to show the progress in your supply chains.

GCP encourages use of the Delta Framework and the sharing of experiences.

Do you have something to share?
Get in touch with the team:

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HOW CAN THE DELTA FRAMEWORK BE USED IN THE FUTURE?

National reporting on the commitments set by the SDGs and the ratification of relevant international conventions on agro-chemicals, climate change, biodiversity and labour rights;

1

Evidence-based recommendations to streamline sustainability in agricultural policies;

2

Upgrading extension services to support continuous improvement at farm level;

3

Capacity building for farmers to improve farm sustainability performance;

4

Transparency and communication with consumers on the actual value of sustainably produced goods;

5

Identification of business opportunities leveraging sustainable value chains.

6

More information and resources about the Delta Framework are available on the website: <https://www.deltaframework.org/>



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