



Accountability  
Framework  
initiative

# HOW TO

## Use the Common Methodology for Assessment of Progress Towards Deforestation- and Conversion-Free Supply Chains

This guide provides more context on the use and applicability of the AFI's Common Methodology for Assessment of Progress Towards Deforestation- and Conversion-Free Supply Chains. It may be used by organisations looking to use the methodology in their own work.

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## What is the Common Methodology?

The [Common Methodology for Assessment of Progress Towards Deforestation- and Conversion-Free Supply Chains](#) provides a set of recommended metrics for assessing company policies, actions, and performance related to eliminating deforestation, conversion, and associated human rights abuses from commodity supply chains.

It was developed as part of a collaborative process, led by the [Accountability Framework initiative \(AFi\)](#), to increase alignment and reduce data gaps across reporting tools and methodologies. It represents the coordinated efforts of leading corporate disclosure and assessment initiatives to standardise and harmonise how commodity buyers, investors, and civil society groups evaluate corporate performance.

Over the past five years, the Common Methodology has been used to strengthen and standardise the methodologies of corporate disclosure platforms such as CDP, reporting standards such as GRI, assessment initiatives such as Forest 500, as well as the policies and KPIs of financial institutions and industry associations. In January 2024, the AFi and its partners released Version 2.0 of the Common Methodology, which includes new metrics related to deforestation-free and conversion-free production and trade, which complement and are interoperable with new target-setting and accounting frameworks for climate and nature.

## Why use the Common Methodology?

The AFi and its partners developed the Common Methodology as a resource to support common and aligned approaches to collecting information on, and assessing progress towards, achieving supply chains that are free of deforestation, ecosystem conversion, and associated human rights impacts. The Common Methodology is intended to be used by initiatives and organisations that develop questionnaires, disclosure methodologies, assessment tools, and KPIs related to corporate action on these topics. These organisations are encouraged to use the metrics of the Common Methodology to increase alignment with other initiatives working towards similar goals in order to send clear signals regarding best practice and reduce reporting burdens.

The use of the Common Methodology supports consistent assessment across stakeholders related to:

- Strength and clarity of company goals and policies related to deforestation, ecosystem conversion, and human rights.
- Actions companies are taking to address deforestation, conversion, and related human rights risks in their operations and supply chains.
- Company performance in terms of eliminating deforestation and conversion in their supply chains and on the ground.

The Common Methodology is not designed for direct use by companies to structure their own reporting. Rather, companies are encouraged to report and disclose in accordance with reporting standards and disclosure platforms that adopt this methodology.

## How should the Common Methodology be used?

The Common Methodology is organised according to ten components of company performance. These components reflect the elements of the Accountability Framework's Core Principles. Each component includes a set of topics, and a thorough assessment of company performance will include all topics in the methodology. However, organisations may select the topics most relevant for their objectives and scope.

For each topic, the Common Methodology provides a set of commonly accepted metrics that can be used to assess specific aspects of company performance, progress, and outcomes. The majority of these metrics are relevant for companies at all stages of the value chain, including companies that produce agricultural and forestry commodities, as well as those that purchase or source these commodities. Where they are not applicable to all supply chain actors, metrics are identified as being relevant for either:

- companies that own or control production areas; or
- companies that source, purchase, or use material from suppliers.

Additionally, the methodology indicates the way in which metrics should be disaggregated to convey the appropriate level of detail and specificity. For example, some metrics should be reported or collected for each relevant commodity, for each product origin, or for each commitment. Users may also adapt metrics to better capture their specific context or needs.

The Common Methodology can be used for all agricultural or forestry products that are associated with deforestation or ecosystem conversion. Users of the Common Methodology may also adapt metrics to be more specific to the commodity or supply chain of interest, such as has been done in the development of an [assessment tool for palm oil traders](#)

The [Common Methodology for Assessment of Progress Towards Deforestation- and Conversion-Free Supply Chains](#) can be found on the AFi website. For more information on development and use of the Common Methodology, please email [contact@accountability-framework.org](mailto:contact@accountability-framework.org).

## Contents of the Common Methodology

The Methodology includes metrics on the following topics:

Components	Topics
1. Company information and risk exposure	a. Commodity exposure b. Land ownership and control c. Commodity sourcing
2. Product origin and supply chain transparency	a. Location of land holdings b. Supplier information
3. Content of commitments	a. No-deforestation and no-conversion b. Respect for human rights c. Implementation mechanisms
4. Scope and specification of commitments	a. Scope and exclusions b. Time frame
5. Internal management systems	a. Governance b. Risk assessment c. Grievance mechanisms
6. Land acquisition and management	a. Land acquisition and site development b. Ecosystem protection c. Remediation and restoration
7. Implementation in supply chains and landscapes	a. Traceability b. Supplier management c. Certification d. Landscape and sectoral collaboration
8. Monitoring	a. Monitoring of own operations b. Monitoring of supply chain volumes c. Monitoring of suppliers
9. Deforestation and conversion impact	a. Deforestation-free and conversion-free (DCF) production and sourcing b. Non-DCF production and sourcing c. Deforestation and conversion footprint
10. Disclosure	a. Disclosure of DCF performance b. Disclosure of implementation and progress