

Code of Conduct Task Force 4 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Report of the first meeting – 11 March 2021

The first meeting of Task Force 4 on the monitoring and evaluation framework concentrated on the development and scope of this framework, as part of Component 1 of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices.

Participants agreed that an important starting point is that the Code includes a clear set of specific and measurable aspirational objectives and actions that operators ‘between the farm and the fork’ can commit to and that can be practically implemented by all actors regardless of their size. The following principles are deemed important when developing the monitoring and evaluation of these aspirations and actions:

- The monitoring can only be effective if the framework is simple and straight forward, its aims clear, and its implementation efficient, non-burdensome and suitable for the entire chain.
- The monitoring needs to be robust and trusted by external stakeholders.
- Alignment with existing frameworks and initiatives should be sought to ensure low reporting burden; learnings from existing codes should be taken into account.
- Companies should be incentivised to comply.

The framework will cover multiple components, which should be further defined, including the entity which will undertake the monitoring (e.g. independent body or industry associations), the indicators to be monitored, the frequency of reporting and the data to be considered.

Regarding data collection, most industry associations reported that they do not collect data within their sector themselves, but rather rely on publicly available data, where available. Some participants currently collect data around corporate sustainability issues, noting variance in the type of data sought and used, with different degrees of regularity and use of third-party data. Data gaps, a lack of transparency, lack of resources (costs and timing), and misalignment of metrics were considered key challenges.

By the next meeting of the task force, the other thematic groups of the Task Force are expected to have made progress on the aspirational objectives and actions. The next meeting of Task Force 4 will therefore focus on defining the monitoring framework for these aspirations and actions.