



SAFA FOR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

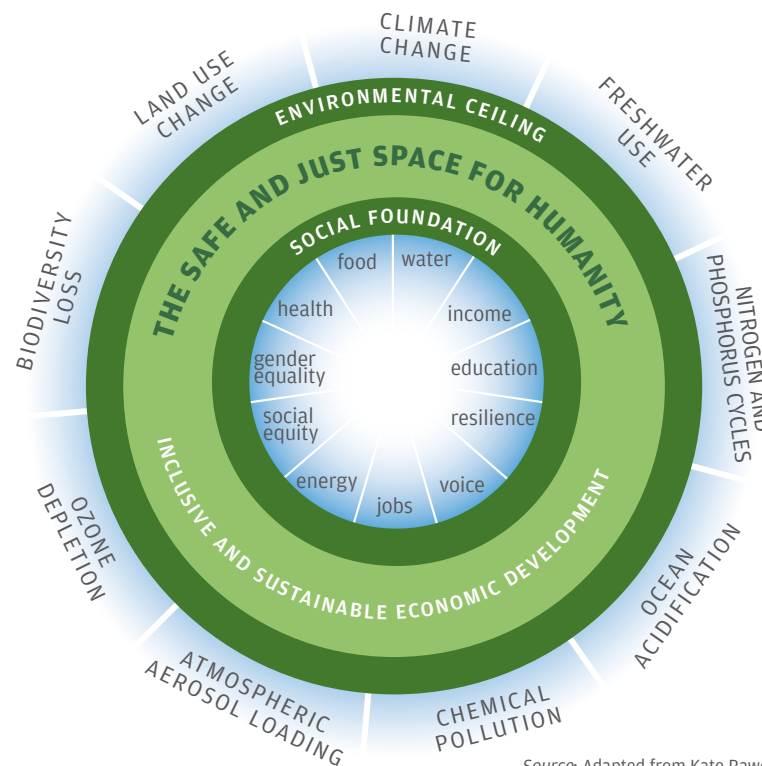
DID YOU KNOW?

ECONOMY Markets for sustainable products are growing at rates far beyond the growth of markets for conventional products.

	Share of sustainable supply in global sales in 2009 (%)	Sales growth of sustainable supply 2005-09 (%)
Coffee	17	433
Tea	7.7	2000
Cocoa	1.2	248
Banana	20	(2007-09) 63

Source: The SSI Review on Sustainability and Transparency (2010)

CAN WE LIVE INSIDE THE DOUGHNUT? WHY WE NEED PLANETARY AND SOCIAL BOUNDARIES.



Source: Adapted from Kate Raworth, OXFAM 2012

GOVERNANCE More than 100 countries have established national sustainable development strategies and related sustainability reporting. Hundreds of sustainability frameworks have been developed in the last decade by universities, civil society and national and international institutions, ranging from environmental and social standards to corporate social responsibility and codes of good practices that apply either to operational units (e.g. farms) or to specific supply chains (e.g. fish, coffee, cotton, palm oil), with or without labeling.

ENVIRONMENT Most voluntary sustainability initiatives, which could include either environmental and/or social claims, have: predominant environmental criteria; social criteria related mostly to health, safety and employment conditions; and economic criteria limited to product quality and minimum wage requirements, or no economic criteria.

SOCIAL The expansion of sustainability tools and various claims place a burden on producers and traders and frustrate consumers in the market place. A tool that supports harmonization can help connect all those seeking to deliver sustainability.



WHY DOES SAFA MATTER TO SUSTAINABILITY?

- Sustainable development has numerous definitions and its environmental, economic and social principles received universal agreement at the 1992 Earth Summit; all definitions have in common the interdependence between nature, people and the economy and the concept of equity among and between generations. However, developing and implementing an integrated approach to analyzing all sustainability dimensions as a coherent whole and integrating them into business or development strategies remains a major challenge.
- Sustainability cannot be achieved without due attention to all environmental, social and economic aspects, as well as governance systems that enable their implementation.
- None of the existing approaches in food and agriculture simultaneously covers all dimensions of sustainability and the whole supply chain, including production, processing, transportation and marketing.

- There is a need for a universally accepted definition that provides a fair playing field for food and agriculture producers, manufacturers and retailers who wish to substantiate their sustainability claims.
- The numerous sustainability approaches have been brought together into a coherent whole and through an open and participatory process through the FAO Guidelines for Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA).

Sustainable development is defined as *“the management and conservation of the natural base, and the orientation of technological and institutional change in such a manner as to ensure the attainment and continued satisfaction of human needs for present and future generations. Such sustainable development (in agriculture, forestry and fisheries) conserves land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, is environmentally non-degrading, technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable.”* (FAO Council, 1989)



HIGHLIGHT

WHAT IS SAFA?

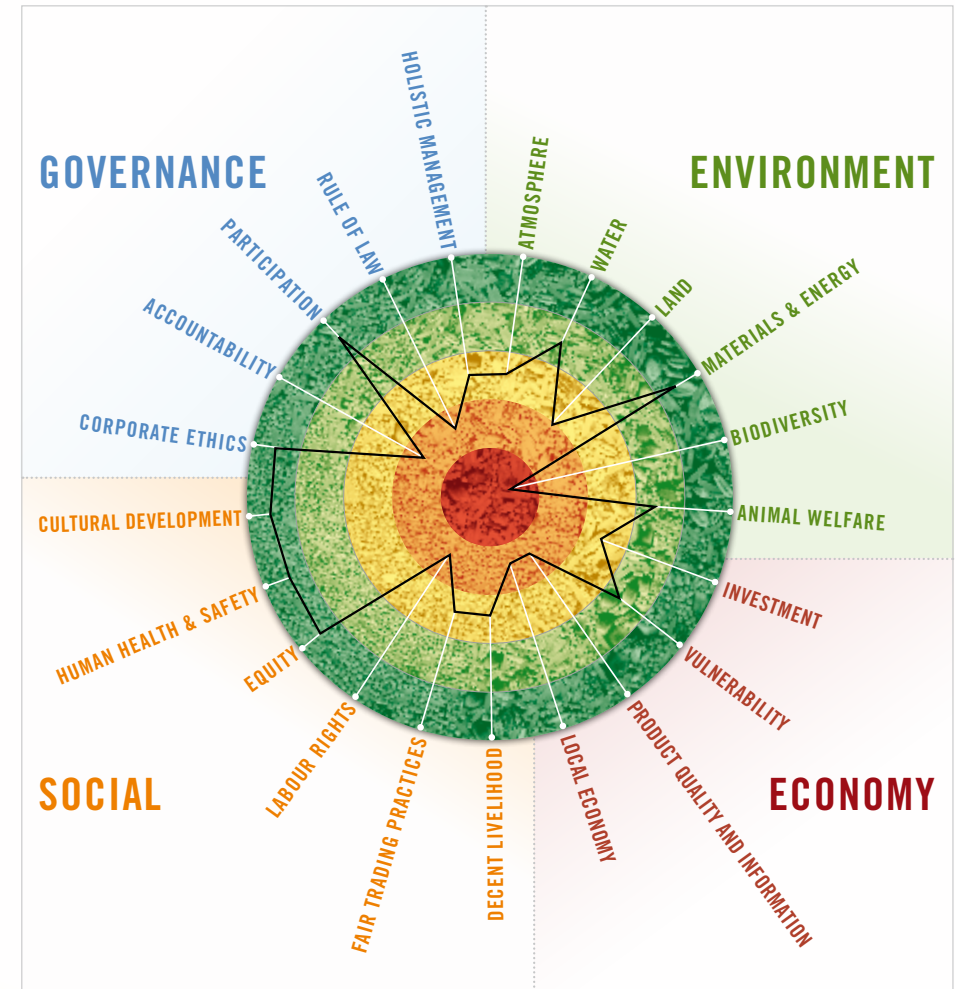
The FAO Guidelines: Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA), provide an international reference for sustainable management, monitoring and reporting in food and agriculture at all levels of the supply chain. SAFA is not a sustainability index, nor a sustainability standard, nor a labelling tool. SAFA:

- defines what sustainable food and agriculture systems are, including environmental integrity, economic resilience, social well-being and good governance;
- outlines a procedure for an integrated analysis of all dimensions of sustainability, including the selection of appropriate indicators and rating of sustainability performance (best, good, moderate, limited, unacceptable); and
- describes sustainability themes, sub-themes, goals and indicators.

A SAFA is an assessment of the sustainability performance of one or several entities forming part of a value chain rooted in agriculture, forestry, fisheries or aquaculture. It can address all entities from the site of primary production to that of final sales to the consumer. SAFA can take the form of a self-evaluation for the use by primary producers, food manufacturers and retailers in every part of the world.

Running a SAFA results in a “sustainability polygone” that presents the performance of each of the 21 issues that are crucial to the environmental, social, economic and governance dimensions of sustainability. This “traffic light” representation highlights where an activity performance is unacceptable (red), limited (orange), moderate (yellow), good (light green) or at best (dark green). The thick black line connects the scores between the sustainability issues, unlocking areas of weaknesses. Thanks to this representation, an entity can quickly understand where it stands in the sustainability landscape and where it may need to forge partnerships to improve its performance.

EXAMPLE VISUALIZATION OF THE SAFA CATEGORY SCORES OF A COMPANY





PRODUCERS

- Improve sustainability performance by taking measures to use natural resources more efficiently, team-up with peers and share resources.
- Communicate your sustainability performance to your buyers.
- Engage in SAFA assessments and other sustainability initiatives.

CONSUMERS

- Seek information about the products to purchase.
- Choose items that clearly contribute to enhanced environmental and socio-economic performance.
- Ask food retailers and companies to provide data on their socioeconomic and environmental performances.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

FOOD INDUSTRY

- Publicly commit to improved sustainability targets.
- Provide incentives for suppliers to improve their sustainability performance.
- Develop partnerships to enhance sustainability performance.

POLICY-MAKERS

- Promote full-cost pricing of environmental and socio-economic externalities.
- Include, in the national sustainable development strategies, commitments and targets for sustainable food and agriculture and allocate the corresponding capacity-building budget.
- Require that food companies and their suppliers regularly publish data on social, economic, environmental and governance performance.

RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

- The continuous improvement of SAFA will need the participation of producers, manufacturers and retailers in SAFA self-assessments and capacity building.
- More comprehensive knowledge is needed on the sustainability of food and agriculture systems, and in particular of whole supply chains.
- Practical experience concerning the efficiency of different approaches in enhancing the overall sustainability of supply chains, as well as the impact of different sustainability initiatives and approaches on market trends, need to be exchanged and compiled through a common neutral platform.



FAO has been building on existing efforts in order to develop the SAFA Guidelines for value chain analysis, based on sets of indicators primarily targeting manufacturers and retailers. SAFA, which has evolved in the last four years in a participatory process through expert meetings and E-forums, has now completed its pilot phase and the Guidelines are being finalized.

For more details: www.fao.org/nr/sustainability