



3rd Session of the UNECE Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy

BETTER INFORMED DECISIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

Exploring ESG Traceability needs and challenges

23 November 2023, Meeting room H-207-208-209, Building H, Palais des Nations, Geneva

CHAIR OF THE SESSION: Mr. Christian Hudson, Chair of UNECE Team of Specialists on ESG Traceability for Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy

CONTEXT

Improving both environmental, social and governance (ESG) traceability and transparency of value chains has become a priority, recognizing its importance of to achieve SDG 12, responsible consumption and production.

The aim of the Team is to promote, facilitate and support policy and regulatory compliance, through ESG traceability approaches and systems for the exchange of data and information along global value chains, in critical sectors for the digital and the green transformations and the circular economy transition, such as the agri-food, fishery, garment and footwear, mining, transport and waste management sectors.

OBJECTIVE

The 3rd session will feature a dialogue on the importance of fostering international collaboration along global value chains, build synergies and alignment on the instruments available to support compliance in the UNECE region and beyond, in a fast-changing policy and regulatory landscape for sustainability.

New sustainability legislations are an important leap forward to drive the sustainable development agenda. At the same time every effort needs to be made to ensure that these do not turn into barriers to trade, especially for emerging and transition economies.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Where is global collaboration needed to achieve transparency and traceability at greatly increased scale and which opportunities exist to create it?
2. What will be the role of the Team of Specialists to support ESG traceability in supporting this collaboration and what are the priority focus areas for the Team?



Item 1: Opening & keynotes: drivers and challenges for scaling up of traceability

10:00 – 10:30 In the European Union (EU), about 16 legislative acts under development aim to advance the sustainability performance of companies operating in critical sectors for the circular economy, such as agri-food, IT equipment, construction, textile and clothing.

The opening will discuss the main implications of upcoming sustainability legislations on global trade, the development challenge for compliance and enforcement in the region of the UNECE and beyond, with ESG traceability as an enabler of a sustainable economy.

Adoption of the agenda

Panelists:

- **Ms. Elisabeth Türk**, Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade, UNECE
- **Mr. Aik Hoe Lim**, Director, Trade and Environment Division, WTO (online)
- **Mr. Carsten Sorensen**, Deputy Head of Unit E2, Directorate-General International Partnerships, European Commission (online)
- **Ms. Milena-Kristin Strathmann**, Division VC6-NKS, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK), Germany (online)

Item 2: Needs for the future of ESG traceability

10:30 – 12:00 This session will be based around inputs from the end-users and solution providers for ESG traceability and transparency, looking into the future and assessing challenges based on current experience.

a) Enabling transparency and traceability at scale in global markets

10:30 – 11:00 Exploring the performance features from systems and standards needed to enable transparency and traceability at scale in global markets in order to meet policy needs with brands and retailers and technology solution providers.

Panelists:

- **Ms. Ana Díaz Ibarra**, Head of Traceability, **Ms. Ruth Nistal Peraza**, Traceability Innovation & Tech Lead, INDITEX
- **Ms. Carolyn Bernier**, CIRPASS Consortium Coordinator, Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA)
- **Mr. Matthieu Hug**, CEO, TILKAL
- **Q&A with the audience**



b) Landscaping the initiatives in connection with ESG traceability

11:00 – 11:30 Collecting information on the initiatives (in place or being developed, outside, and inside) which are currently in place or being developed to understand the level of alignment and build synergies between initiatives to support needs that are common to the stakeholders.

Panelists:

- **Ms. Cecilia Valeri**, Senior Manager, Climate Transparency, WBCSD
- **Mr. Rakesh Vazirani**, Head of Sustainability Services, TÜV Rheinland Group
- **Mr. Gregory Sampson**, Solutions Architect, International Trade Centre
- **Q&A with the audience**

c) The role of multilateral co-operation and standard setting

11:30 – 12:00 Discussing the additional needs for multilateral cooperation and standard setting to foster ESG traceability.

Panelists:

- **Mr. Philipp Mayer**, Co-Founder & CPO, Retraced, GmbH
- **Mr. Steven Capell**, Managing Director, GoSource Pty, and UN/CEFACT Vice-Chair (online)
- **Mr. Rigo Wenning**, Legal counsel, W3C
- **Q&A with the audience**

Lunch break (12:00-14:00)

Item 3: Defining the challenges of ESG traceability

14:00 – 15:15 Discussion in break out groups running in parallel: deep diving into the challenges

a) Needs and challenges: the business' standpoint

Discussing the needs and challenges from the perspective of producers, manufacturers, retailers and brands in the garment and footwear sector, agri-food and critical raw materials.

Lead discussant: **Ms. Katarzyna Sulisz**, Sustainability Policy Officer, Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry

Facilitator: **Mr. Christian Hudson**, Chair of the Team

b) Needs and challenges: the compliance and supply chain services' standpoint



Identifying the needs and challenges from the perspective of policymakers, auditors, verifiers and civil society organisations in the garment and footwear sector, agri-food and critical raw materials.

Lead discussant: Mr. Jeffrey Thimm, Organic Production Specialist, GOTS

Facilitator: Ms. Nathalie Bernasconi, Vice-Chair of the Team and Executive Director, IISD Europe

c) Needs and challenges: the technology providers' standpoint

Analysing the needs and challenges from the perspective of technology solution and platforms providers in the garment and footwear sector, agri-food and critical raw materials.

Lead discussant: Andrea Redaelli, UNECE Business Project Expert and Chief Operations Officer, Globamind

Facilitator: Mr. Harm Jan van Burg, Vice-Chair of the Team and Senior Policy Advisor on International Standards, OASIS

Knowledge sharing about the needs and the challenges

15:00-15:15 The Team will collect the outcomes of the break-out group discussions and share them with all participants.

Item 4: Discussion of the Programme of Work

15:15 – 15:45 The Team will use the insights of the discussions to discuss the priorities and the next steps for 2024, including collaboration around the proposed Recommendation No. 49.

Lead discussant: Ms. Virginia Cram-Martos, CEO, Triangularity and UN/CEFACT Project Lead

Item 5: Adoption of decisions of the 3rd Session

15:45 – 16:00 The Team of Specialists adopts the decisions of the 3rd Session's discussions to be included in the report as guidance to the work of the Team.

Further Information [here](#)

Contacts

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